

1 extreme age. Passed down into a chapel in the crypt where several of the popes lie buried.
2 Here we found a beautiful statue of Mary with the dead Christ, a very excellent work of art.
3 Then visited the cloisters. In the centre of the court is a marble well curb with curious figures in
4 bas-relief said to be the very curb over which the woman of Samaria was drawing water when
5 the Savior had a talk with her. It won't do to say you don't believe it, for there is the curb. The
6 baptistery, located near the church, is a small octagonal building of great antiquity. Here
7 Constantine was baptized. The bronze doors are said to have belonged to the thermae of
8 Caracalla. The roof is supported by 8 columns of porphyry – ancient; above them are 8 marble
9 columns – modern. In the centre is a font being an ancient bathing tub of green basalt. There
10 are several frescoes and mosaics of the 8th century. The front entrance is between two
11 columns of porphyry, supporting marble cornice, richly sculptured. The columns and cornice as
12 old as the oldest parts of this very interesting structure. Next visited the Villa Massimo to see
13 the celebrated "Scala Santa" (sacred stairs). This is a flight of 28 marble steps from the Palace
14 of Pilate at Jerusalem. They were brought to Rome by the Empress Helena in 326. These steps
15 were ascended by Christ to Pilates Judgement Hall. No person is allowed to ascend these stairs
16 except upon their knees. And so many pilgrims have performed this feat that the steps have
17 been worn nearly 2 inches deep. They are about 10 feet in length. At the head of the stairs is a
18 small chapel containing a picture of the Saviour supposed to have been painted by St. Luke.
19 Also two groups in marble: Judas kissing Christ and Christ before Pontius Pilate. Returned to
20 our hotel and did not go out this afternoon. Mrs. Van feeling very much fatigued, we instructed
21 our guide to hold up for a day or two that we may have a rest and give Julia time to recover
22 sufficiently to accompany us in our explorations, as we regretted very much that she was
23 unable to be with us to day.

24 Decr 18th. Received an invitation to a party at Mr. & Mrs. Hookers (our banker) for Christmas
25 Eve. The girls have persuaded me to accept the invitation, although I would rather visit the
26 catacombs. Received a letter from J. Sollitt and wrote an answer to it. Julia & Martha walked
27 out for a short time to make some purchases. With this exception, remained at home
28 recuperating.

29 Decr 19th. Mrs. Van awake until 4 o'clock. Her sleepless nights give us some uneasiness. She
30 eats well and feels well, but spends her nights thinking about the wonderful things and places
31 we have already seen, and particularly "Michael Angelo's" Moses for which she has great
32 admiration. At half past nine with carriage & guide visited the "Forum Julium." It was begun by
33 Caesar and finished by Augustus and is known as the "Forum of Augustus." In the forum are
34 the remains of a temple erected by Nerva about A.D. 96. 3 columns and a pilaster remain of
35 the colonnade, with the frieze of the cornice, and a portion of the ceiling of the portico. The
36 style of architecture, full Corinthian. All the parts remaining are of white marble. They are
37 much dilapidated, grey and venerable. In the immediate neighborhood are the remains of the
38 Temple of Minerva, built many years before Christ. Paul 5th tore down this temple and used the
39 material for the front of his fountain on the "Ianiculus Hill." Two Corinthian columns yet remain
40 with the capitals and entablature complete. The present grade of the street has buried the