

polytheism and the liberation of the Church. The first monument of it that we find in history does not go beyond the pontificate of Leo III, 795 to 816 ; but it supposes that St. Anne and St. Joachim had, for many years past, been known and venerated by the faithful. This remarkable Pontiff had their history represented in gold embroidery on a priestly vestment. The precious ornament belonged to the basilica of *St. Mary of the Manger*.

The two holy Patriarchs had always been held in great veneration in the Capital of the Christian world. The Romans, as well as the inhabitants of the Marches and of Umbria, have dedicated to them a great number of churches and chapels, for which in all times the faithful have shown a marked preference. In these countries, they generally prepare for the feast of St. Anne by preaching and well attended religious exercises. One of the finest churches of Rome bears her title ; it is situated in the quarter of the *Trasportini*, not far from the Vatican ; it may be considered as the centre of devotion to our Saint in the Eternal City. Each year, on the 26th of July, in this sanctuary, a procession takes place in which is triumphantly borne a statue religiously preserved in the pontifical palace and borne by the Pope's household. What we say of Rome and of the country forming the *Patrimony* of St. Peter equally applies to the whole of Italy, where the so tender and popular devotion to the Madonna naturally brought a large share of veneration to her glorious parents. We find proofs of this in the local archives, or in the dates inscribed on certain monuments, and a marked preference has ever been given to the bearing of their names. But in this time-honored confidence in St. Anne, Sicily deserves a special mention. That island was devoted to her from the remotest antiquity ; far from growing cold, as is it only too often the case, it grew in fervor towards her until the seventeenth century, when the Venerable Innocent of Clusa, of the Seraphic Order,