

eral complaints, not without tears, about the infirmity of the old man and the misery of their house. Anna went out with her soul full of pity; she went up the coast toward the belfry of the church, feeling anxious on approaching it.

Around the Farnese palace the people surged like billows; and that great feudal relic ornamented with figures, magnificent in the sunlight, was most conspicuous. Anna passed through the crowd, alongside of the benches of the silversmiths who made sacred apparel and native objects. At all of that scintillating display of liturgical forms her heart dilated with joy and she made the sign of the cross before each bench as before an altar. When at night she reached the door of the church and heard the canticle of the ritual, she could no longer contain her joy as she advanced as far as the pulpit, with steps almost vacillating. Her knees bent beneath her and the tears welled up in her eyes. She remained there in contemplation of the candelabras, the ostensories, of all those objects on the altar, her mind dizzy from having eaten nothing since morning. An immense weakness seized her nerves and her soul shrank to the point of annihilation. Above her, along the central nave, the glass lamps formed a triple crown of fire. In the distance,