

church is entirely empty. Men and women on their way to their work come in for a moment's prayer. Old men and women, whose ebbing strength can bear the weight of toil no longer, totter feebly up the aisle to the altar where they kneel in the lengthy, unimpassioned prayer of age, or they slowly make the round of the stations.

The sacristan rings the bell for the noon-day Angelus and immediately there is the tramp of little feet and the sound of childish voices subdued into reverence as the door swings open and the children run in from school and after a few moments prayer, clatter noiselessly out again. Sometimes two or three tiny little girls make the round of the stations hand in hand. Their innocent eyes, of sin and suffering alike unaware, gaze wonderingly at the gaudy pictures which tell the story of the passion. Wondering, they pause before the great mission crucifix. Their minds do not realize the story it tells, often though they have heard it, but their hearts do and a tender love and pity shines on their unconscious faces. Well-content they wander here and there about the church. Every day it is new to them. They are as perfectly at home here as are the tiny Roman children who wander in and out, all day long, of St. Peter's, toddling through the vast interior and lingering fascinated before the great bronze statue of St. Peter, whose foot, burnished by generations of ardent salutation, they can scarcely reach. A keen fascination for these little Italians has the gleaming Holy Ghost window over the high altar of the basilica, and around the tomb of the Apostle there is always a group of them to be seen spell-bound by the glory of the innumerable ever-burning lamps.

Many times as the afternoon passes the door swings on its hinges, and every variety of human being is represented in the people who enter for a brief renewal of the oxygen of the soul. Old and young and middle-aged; the joyful and the sorrowing; the

strong and the weak come to feel for a brief space the sweet calm, the healing peace of this consecrated place.

As the hours advance the western windows are flooded with the sunshine. They have become for the nonce brilliant as any of the splendid windows that shine like gems in the grey walls of the famous old cathedrals. It seems as if all the joy and happiness that enter into the lives of all who have knelt within these walls were concentrated within the slanting sunlight. Or is the sunshine more truly a symbol of the perfection of unalloyed happiness that the saddest of those lives may know in the ineffable hereafter?

Very soon the brilliant light burns out its heart in the glory of the sunset and the day begins to wane. Even while the twilight gathers its shadows from statue to pillar, from window to door, there is the continual sound of hushed footsteps, as fresh worshippers come and go. At last the darkness has fallen completely and only the red and distant glow of the altar lamp is visible. The air seems heavy with sighs, animate with the combined sorrows of all who have come here for consolation. The throbbing flame of the lamp burns clearly and intensely—forever as the light of faith, the steadfastness of hope, the everlasting intensity of charity.

MARIE LOUISE SANDROCK.

MARY is the glory of virgins, the joy of mothers, the support of the faithful, the crown of the Church, the true model of faith, the seal of piety, the rule of truth, the ornament of virtue, the sanctuary of the Holy Trinity.

NOAH'S Ark was a type of Mary, for as by its means men were preserved from the deluge, so are we all saved by Mary from the shipwreck of sin—with the difference that few were saved in the ark, but by Mary the whole human race was rescued from death.