

"Comfortress of the afflicted," who surely would protect her husband and watch over him in that far off land.

But the world awoke to the year 1251, and the fame of the new devotion resounded throughout the church. It penetrated to France, and Lady Blanche was amongst the first to have herself enrolled in the confraternity, together with her child. She had the name of her husband inscribed therein, that he might have an additional claim on the protection of Mary. And her confidence was not misplaced. Not a day elapsed when the wanderer clasped his beloved ones to his heart.

As the legend runs, after a day upon which the ferocity of his tormentors surpassed even *itself*, Count Felix fell upon his knees, and with a fervent prayer to the Blessed Virgin and her divine Son, in whose honor he had become a soldier of the Cross, he resigned himself wholly into their sacred hands to live or to die. At that moment a venerable man in the garb of a monk appeared before him, and placing a *scapular* around his neck, opened the prison door and bade him "go in peace."

He knew nothing more until he found himself in his home—his own dear home. Thanks to the interposition of our Lady of Mount Carmel and her devout client—
ST. SIMON OF THE STOCK.

St. Mary's, Pa.

S. X. B.

THE QUEEN OF ART.

For the Carmelite Review.

ONE day while conversing with a gentleman who had spent much of his life in the centres of European culture, the talk drifted in the realm of art. "Why, the Madonna has been the inspiration of all true art. The greatest pictures have been painted in her honor," said he. This thought has dwelt with me ever since, while an appalling vision has come before me, a vision of the world swept desolate of all the churches, the pictures, statues and

carvings which have been achieved in honor of Our Lady. No human brain can compute the influence exerted over the entire race by great pictures—by even one of Raphael's Madonnas. None but an angel of light could see the ebbing to and fro of the ocean of human love, attracted by that Ideal Woman who inspired the painter. Can you fancy the blackness that the lack of sacred art would leave, or the dreary waste that would surround us, should all the devotional pictures of Our Lady be blotted out? Such a catastrophe would extend from Rome itself to the huts of the Aztec Indians. Not a country on the globe where the Gate of Heaven has been turned but would lose a ray of divine light. Thus we see how the Rose of Sharon has been wreathed about civilization, or rather how culture has followed the Ave Maria.

The recent excavations in the catacombs reveal pictures, if not portraits, of Our Lady, beautiful and ennobling—the centuries bring their varying types, but ever the same idea. In vain we try to build a history of art without a view of the old time monks illuminating their parchments, and with them the world. What chain but the Rosary binds the centuries from the days of our dear Lord upon the earth until now? The Blessed Virgin adds poetry to art, lifting it from the material into the beautiful and real. But Catholics can alone understand catholic painters; thus they have a special field of study and delight that should not be neglected. Even the English woman, Mrs. Jameson, whose books of art have been generally accepted, blunders over the "Worship of the Virgin," not knowing the difference between the Star of Heaven and Heaven itself. We may each recall some beloved picture of the Assumption, but do we know that the artist received his inspiration from that text from the canticles, which recalls "A woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars?"

Have you ever thought that there is a region of art well worth the trouble of studying? Or that a picture may contain much more than that we can see? There is indeed a world of art and the queen of that domain is the ideal woman—the Virgin Mary.

JOSEPHINE LEWIS.