

THE WORSHIP AND PATRONAGE OF ST. ANNE

(Continued.)

DEVOTION TO ST. ANNE IS TRULY CATHOLIC. HOMAGE
PAID HER BY THE WESTERN WORLD. THE NORTH
OF EUROPE

Everything leads us to believe that the *cultus* of St. Anne is likewise very ancient in the North and in other portions of Europe, and that it shone brightly in England, in Poland, and particularly in several districts of Germany. But at what period was it introduced into these countries? To give a satisfactory answer to the above question, we should have to consult tradition and local archives, or those monuments which have escaped the vandalism of heretics; but such researches must be made on the very spot: they would necessitate voyages which we are unable to undertake. The result of these investigations brings us back to the latter part of the reign of Charlemagne. At that epoch, it is impossible to deny the spreading throughout the Western Empire of the worship of St. Anne, of which diffusion the finding of the body of that august mother was partly the cause and signal. The pious Emperor, as we have already seen, was a witness to that precious discovery; he saw with his own eyes the miracle that accompanied it, and he bore away considerable fragments from the treasure. He gave these relics to different churches, he bequeathed some of them to several monasteries as a pledge of his pious attachment. L'Île-Barbe, near Lyons, and the Rhenish Provinces had the better share in this pious distribution; the miracles which frequently took place soon rendered popular a devotion of which the great prince had become the zealous agent.

It is true that traces of the devotion may be found previously to that date. Dachery and Mabillon, in the