

them. "They live outside the walls in gardens or solitary farms, loving solitude, not through hatred for man, but to avoid the company of persons of other habits. Their silence is kept so strictly that members of the same sect, moving from other houses, are received, treated and behave as if they had always lived in the house. The reverence which they showed to their superiors, we mentioned before.

All this proves that these Essenians, or Rechabites, or Carmelites, in the first century of the Christian Era, had a well developed community life, and their order of exercises and religious observance were not very dissimilar to what religious orders observe at the present day.

Year 35.—This year is remarkable as the year of the outbreak of the first persecutions against the Christians. Among the many victims who were killed in Palestine or driven out of the country, there were a number of Carmelites, some of whom went to Spain with the Holy Apostle James. One of them, Elpidius by name, became the first Bishop of Toledo, and dedicated the first chapel in Spain in honor of the Bl. Virgin.

Luitprand says in his fragments: "S. Elpidius, whom S. James made the first Bishop of Toledo, was a Carmelite monk and converted to the faith by the first sermon of S. Peter, came to Spain with many companions."

Luitprand refers to many oriental histories for his dates, which, however, in the persecutions of the Roman emperors and afterwards of the Saracenos, have disappeared. At this time also the chronicles and older books of the Carmelites perished.

Year 36.—In this year the inhabitants of Mount Carmel commenced to be called the Brothers of the Bl. Virgin of Mount Carmel. Their superior at the time was Enoch of Amathion, who converted the Seunion, or oratory of S. Elias, into an oratory of the Bl. Virgin. Amongst their number was also Agabus, the prophet mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.

Year 39.—Eusebius says of Antioch, where S. Peter had his chair at the time that owing to the persecution, raised in Jerusalem after the death of S. Stephen, many came to Antioch and

gathered there a most flourishing congregation, amongst whom there were a great many men of the prophetic order." In this same year the spot in which the Bl. Virgin was conceived was occupied and converted into a chapel by the Carmelites, after they, the year before, had built a chapel in Mary's honor on the slope of Mount Carmel.

Years 40-44.—A good many writers of Spain assert that at this time S. Elpidius founded in Toledo a monastery of Carmelite monks and nuns.

Year 45.—S. Mark, the evangelist, sent by S. Peter, founded the church of Alexandria in Egypt. He took with him Enoch, the hermit of Mount Carmel, who founded monasteries, introducing monastic discipline. After the martyrdom of S. Mark, he returned to Mount Carmel, where he died on July 7th, 64, and was buried by the brethren there with the greatest solemnity. S. Eugenie, in male attire and under the name of Helenus, was an inmate of one of these monasteries.

Year 48.—This is the year of the assumption of the Bl. Virgin. At her death and burial there were present Enoch and Agabus of Mount Carmel, who according to our chronicles, had been invited by Mary herself.

Year 60.—During the persecution of the Church under Nero, S. Elpidius, the Bishop of Toledo attended with other bishops a council held in Cherzonom (now Peniscola), near Valencia in Spain. There all were imprisoned and suffered martyrdom under Judge Alotus. His body was later on translated to Marsia, in Italy, and thence in the year 969, to Mete by Bishop Theoderis. (Taken from the lessons on the breviary of the Church of Toledo.) Elpidius, not long before his death, had visited S. Paul, then a prisoner in Rome, bringing him alms collected amongst the Spanish Christians.

Year 67.—This is the year of the martyrdom of S. Peter and Paul. We mention it because in the church of S. Maria Traspontina, which is the mother-house of the Carmelite Order in Rome, there are preserved parts of two columns, to which the holy apostles were tied during their flagellation; also a picture of Our Lord, which the Apostles had then be-