

With a knowledge of what God had already done for us, had it been left to our ingenuity to devise some new token of special love and favor, some new mark of predilection, coming from the Creator to the creature, which of us would have so far presumed as to have asked for our constant, ever present and willing guardians those bright spirits who stand around the throne of the Most High? And yet it was this signal boon, unsought for by man, which God conferred upon us, for the Psalmist tells us: "God has given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."*

The first motive which should induce us to be devout to the Holy Angels is that they are our heaven-appointed guardians.

That in general angels are deputed to watch over man, is of faith, and on this point all theologians agree. And although it be not of faith that every human being is given in charge to some one of the heavenly spirits, still it is the common opinion of the Fathers and the one universally received in the Church.

That they watch over the elect of God none may doubt. This doctrine is set forth in St. Paul: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?"†

But that even the reprobate, in this world, have their guardians is theologically certain, for this aid is to be classed among the sufficient helps of salvation. It may therefore be safely held that all indiscriminately have their good angel. If such be our belief, then what, may we ask, is the nature of that guardianship or of their good offices towards us?

There is one office we may call of *protection* and an-

* Ps. xc. 11.

† Hebrews i. 14.