

he appointed him in 1662 director of all works connected with drawing and granted him a pension of twelve thousand livres. From that date painters and jewellers, sculptors and marble-cutters, all obeyed LeBrun. His genius was equal to his arduous task. LeBrun painted up to the time of his death in February 1690. He loved to reproduce on his canvass the works of Raphael, Rubens, Murillo, Annibal, Carrache. The *Holy Family* that we reproduce is an imitation of the *Silent Virgin* by the last named painter with the addition however of a certain number of personages, St. Anne among others to whom he wished to call attention.

For the composition of his picture of St. Anne presented to the church of Ste Anne de Beaupré by the Marquis de Tracy in 1666, he imitated Rubens for the lower part and Murillo for the upper part. This explains the great resemblance between this painting and that of the Flemish master. We have also in hand a photograph of another picture painted for the Hotel Dieu of Baugé, France, in which St. Anne is represented in the same attitude of nobility and greatness. We shall reproduce it later on.

P. GIRARD, C. SS. R.

XX

SAINT PATRICK'S FLOWERS

THE following very interesting account of what appears to be a remarkable phenomenon in the vegetable kingdom is described in the « Life of St. Patrick, » by Rev. W. B. Morris :

On the banks of the Loire, a few leagues from Tours, a very remarkable phenomenon is repeated, year by year, from time immemorial — one concerning which science has as yet given no satisfactory explanation. This phenomenon, too little known, consists in the blooming, in the midst of the rigors of winter, of the blackthorn (*prunus spinosa*), commonly called the sloe. We have lately verified this circumstance with our own eyes, and can vouch for its truth without fear of contradiction. We can appeal to the testimony of thousands who, at the end of December, each year, are eye-witnesses to its repetition, and we have ourselves gathered these extraordinary flowers. This remarkable shrub is to be found at S. Patrice, upon the slope of a hill not far from the chateau de Rochecotte. The circulation of the sap, which should be suspended in winter, is plainly revealed by the moist state of the bark, which easily separates from the wood which it covers. The buds swell, the flowers expand as in the month of April and cover the boughs with odorous and snow-like flowers, while a few leaves more timidly venture to expose their delicate verdure to