

a fire of love kindled in their hearts for which they could not account. Subsequently a chapel was erected on the spot.

Thus the representations of the stable of Bethlehem, or the Christmas crib, now so familiar and dear to all Christians, owe their origin to the Seraphic St. Francis.

(*The "Socialist."*)

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## THE CANTICLE OF ANNE OF ELCANA

The canticle of Anne of Elcana, of which we said a word in our issue of June last, is so deep and sublime, that the learned, though impious Volney asked himself: "How can the wife of a well-to-do farmer, who in spite of her husband's wealth, remains nevertheless the wife of a peasant, and a peasant herself, have composed a poem enriched with the most graceful forms of language?"—A simple child, learning his catechism, might dispel the doubt of the faithless philosopher by saying to him: "He who hath composed the varied tunes of the sweet singing of birds, who made even the beasts of the field to speak, and told His servants to leave the plough to take up the pen of the prophet, who inspired with divine Accents the holy sister of Moses, Deborah, and Judith, and above all the God-given Daughter of good St. Anne, the Blessed Virgin Mary, He is the same who giveth a voice to Anne of Elcana."

According to St. Augustine, this holy canticle was composed in the sacred tongue which traces its origin to the creation of man. It was written in Hebrew, in the second chapter of the first Book of Kings, then translated into Greek by the seventy-two Interpreters. It is from that holy version that St. Augustine took it, to transcribe it in the 17th Book of his learned work on the City of God.