

and at length I was compelled to acknowledge that what I had chiefly loved in the virgin was her youth and beauty, her pure and graceful form, not her moral character, nor her intercession with Jesus Christ.

That fact once admitted, I wished to know for myself that blessed Mary whom I still respected, but to whom I could no longer pray without hesitation. I opened the Bible that you sent back to me, and there, in sight of the portrait, I felt my old ideas removed one after another, and the young, the gentle, and beautiful Virgin, mediatrix between Jesus and men, in short, the queen of Heaven, changed into a humble servant of the Lord, happy because she had been received through grace; and who, far from being able to contribute anything to the salvation of others, needed a Saviour herself. This is the passage that struck me most. And Mary said: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." (Luke i. 46.)

If God be her Saviour, thought I, Mary might have been lost; she was not without sin! but I go on quoting from the gospel: "For He hath regarded the low estate of His hand-maiden."

You see Mary speaks of her lowliness! She adds: "All generations shall call me blessed, for He that is mighty hath done to me great things."

So, if Mary has been lifted up, it has been done by the power of God, not through any power in herself. But listen to what the angel Gabriel said to her at the 30th verse of the same chapter: "Mary, thou hast found favor with God."