

for it was the Lord created her body and soul—it was he who, out of his pure gratuitous mercy, designed her from all eternity to be the Mother of his only Son. When, therefore, she was honoured for the first time as Mother of God, she very properly broke out into expressions of gratitude and praise :]

! AND MY SPIRIT HAS EXULTED IN GOD
MY SAVIOUR.

Behold a repetition of her delight and joy. She first, with all the powers of her soul poured out her gratitude to the Almighty Father, and then a torrent of exultation burst forth from her bosom, at the consoling thought of possessing within her, the desired of all ages and nations, her Saviour and Redeemer.—Who can describe her ardent transports at the time she uttered these words?—Who can conceive the ineffable union which then subsisted between her and her Jesus? “And my spirit has exulted in God, my Saviour!” But how did she know that her spirit exulted in God, her Saviour? She learned it from the angel, when he declared, “Thou shalt conceive, and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins?”

Whilst others praised their Creator on harps and organs, and other instruments of music—whilst several hymned his praise with corporeal tongues, why did Mary’s most pure soul magnify the Lord? Why did her spirit exult in God, her Saviour? What was it caused her to be ennobled in such a manner by heaven, that the assistance of the Holy Ghost became necessary for her to return suitable thanksgiving?—Learn it, O Christians! with astonishment. Let the proud be confounded,

at its recital, and the humble rejoice.—
It was

BECAUSE HE HAS REGARDED THE HUMILITY OF HIS HANDMAID!

Thus, though Mary was endowed with every virtue to an eminent degree, yet we find that none was more pleasing to the Almighty than her humility; for it was in consequence of her humility he raised her to the dignity of mother of God. O ye followers of Mary! learn this sublime virtue: for if you do not possess it, your prayers and your tears, your fasting and watching will be of no avail. Unless humility be the foundation of your virtues, the whole superstructure will fall to the ground. Unless your apparently good actions spring from humility, they shall be changed into deformed vices—they shall fade as the tender flower which droops its withered head, when its root is not watered by the careful hand of the gardener.

FOR BEHOLD ALL GENERATIONS SHALL
CALL ME BLESSED.

Here is a remarkable prophecy which is literally verified to the present day, and will continue to be fulfilled until the consummation of ages. For has not the gospel light of salvation beamed on every nation of the earth? And is it not there recorded, that “Mary is blessed among women?” Are not the choicest epithets which language

* That the virtue of humility was here meant by the Blessed Virgin, and not her lowliness or abjection, is the opinion of most commentators, amongst whom are Origen, Rupertus, Venerable Bede, St. Bernard, St. Ildaphonsus, Cassian, Cardinal Hugo, Dionysius, the Carthusian, &c.