

Devotion to the Mother of God was established by Jesus Christ Himself. He founded it when, nailed to the cross, He pronounced the words : " Behold thy Son ; behold thy Mother." It is an article of His testament, and one which He consecrated with His Blood. Calvary was the cradle of devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and this devotion was baptized in the Blood of Jesus Christ.

ABBE RAUVAL.

THE " ECCE HOMO."

A letter from an old friend and fellow artist in Florence brings tidings of the total destruction by fire of the church of Santa Lucia, together with the priceless paintings and ornaments which had adorned this edifice ; and the communication makes me sad, for the little church is intimately associated in my mind with the purest soul and the noblest man I ever met, Raffaello Amati, whose wonderful painting of the " Ecce Hemo " had hung upon its wall and awakened the admiration and devotion of many souls who gazed upon it. With the destruction of this great work of art must come to light again the romance, if I may so call it, attached to the painting ; and though it is familiar to many Italins, yet to you, I am sure, the story will be altogether new, albeit I shall prove a poor chronicler.

It must be at least twenty years ago that I first met Raffaello, while spending my time " copying," as he was, some gems in oil in the Academy. His great beauty first attracted me, for never before nor since have I seen a man so generously endowed, so physically perfect as he was. His eyes were the typical Italian, but his hair was a wonderful brown with a strange golden light in it, that curled closely about his small head, and presented a most pleasing contrast to his dark brows and olive complexion.

A few words, which he addressed to me in the purest English, yet with the slightest foreign accent (his mother was an Englishwoman, he afterwards told me) led to our becoming better acquainted ; and it was not many months before we had decided, as we were both alone in the world,