

THE WORSHIP AND PATRONAGE OF ST. ANNE

(Continued.)

DEVOTION TO ST. ANNE IS TRULY CATHOLIC.—HOMAGE
PAID TO HER BY THE WESTERN CHURCH.
—NORTHERN EUROPE

Devotion to St. Anne, until the period of religious relaxation which opened an easy way to heresy, had taken deep root in the heart of the English nation, and even since that sad hour, all vestiges of her worship have not disappeared among the ruins of religion in that island once so holy : monuments attest it, and the name of Anne, doubtless by force of habit, is still willingly borne in all classes of society. In Catholic Ireland, so devoted to her Apostle, St. Patrick, the mass of the people do not, as in some other countries, pay distinct homage to our Saint, but they honor her none the less perfectly, as a member of the Holy Family, devotion to which is so lively among the Irish : it is in that light and under that title that she is so dear to that heroic nation. There is a church dedicated to St. Anne in Dublin, and we know for certain that her name is often given in baptism. The nations of Cimbric Chersonnesus and on the shores of the Northern sea, followed the movement that led Catholicity to the feet of our august Princess. In 1425, as may be seen by the following decree of one of their Provincial Councils, the Danes placed themselves under her protection and took her for their patroness.

“ Likewise, we enact that the feast of St. Anne be celebrated every year, on the day following that of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as the feast of our country and of our people, throughout our whole Province.”

But long before this, in Hungary, in Bohemia, in Poland and Austria, the devotion had produced marvellous fruits of salvation and transformed whole