

of the Holy Virgin—who out of the millions of girls upon earth was chosen by God as a “vessel of grace”—should have commenced much later than that of the crazy and unclean hermits called saints. Even in the fourth century nobody thought of adoring the Virgin Mary—in fact, many things were said derogatory to her character. For instance, Chrysostomus considers her capable of suicide, and relates that the angel notified her of the conception of Jesus before she discovered her state, otherwise the discovery might have led her to end her life out of shame. The adoration of Mary commenced in the fifth century, but very soon she had outstripped not only all saints, but even Christ and God himself. The name “Mother of God,” now so common, created much bitterness in the fifth century. Nestorius thought “Mother of Christ” more sensible and decent, but the Ephesian Council decided for “Mother of God.” It was quite natural that afterwards people commenced to adore also the “Grandmother of God;” and if it had not been for Pope Clement XI., who interfered, the Catholics probably would to-day pray to aunts and uncles of God. Albertus Magnus, Bishop of Regensburg, who died at Cologne, 1280, studied the subject of the Virgin Mary most exhaustively, and has written many large folios about it. There are twenty-one of his books in existence. He is said to have written eight hundred. He tried to find out whether she was blonde or brunette, dark-eyed or blue-eyed, large or small. It is, however, doubtful whether he has settled the question. To judge by the existing relics her hair must have been variegated in color—brown, blonde, black and red. The hair with which, on St. Mary’s Day, she personally mended the shirt of the Archbishop St. Thomas was rather red. But all accounts agree that she must have been very handsome.

St. Damiani, who died in 1059, relates that God himself fell violently in love with her. He called together a special heavenly convention, in which he told the wandering angels about his love and the plan of salvation, and gave to the Archangel Gabriel a letter addressed to the Virgin, containing all particulars. Gabriel called on Mary, and as soon as he had spoken to her she felt that she would become the mother of the Saviour.