

their mutual confidence, their emulation in procuring the glory of God, their sighings towards the Messiah, the blessings that Heaven poured down upon their undertakings, their fields and their flocks? Who can tell us of their love in God, love a thousand-fold more sincere than the affections whose foundation lasts but a day, and how common trials, generously overcome, finished by purifying and transforming it into the most perfect charity.

"She will render him good, and not evil, all the days of her life." How glorious it is for St-Joachim to have deserved such a spouse! What riches has she not brought into his house! She has given him by her Daughter a real although indirect power over all creatures, and in a certain manner the command of heaven and earth. What a consolation to have spent many years with a spouse so accomplished and so kind, with Anne the *All-gracious*!

"She hath sought wool and flax, and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands."

This verse, as well as the others, agrees with tradition. Contemplative souls have never disdained manual labor; but St-Anne did not treat such work as a simple relaxation or an honest means of livelihood, a higher motive stimulated the activity of her hands, it was piety and charity; the price of her labor was destined to the Temple and to the poor. Her example, followed later by great queens and high born princesses, will always stand as a censure against idle women, or such as foolishly pride themselves in their inability to ply the needle or the spindle.

"She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her bread from afar."

With the noble end in view of being useful to others, she keeps her house in perfect order; she wisely multiplies her resources, and, thus becomes able to meet all wants, all afflictions that may visit the people of her tribe and of her neighborhood. But this active zeal and charitable forethought of the holy housewife, are