

*Acta Sanctorum* of their order, mention a monastery and a small hospital under the title of St. Anne, built at Floriac, by the liberality of a pious gentleman name Freric. This institution passed later into the hands of Pepin the Short before his accession in the throne of France. But although such a fact supposes that the devotion was already established and in practice, it is nevertheless probable that it then was the almost exclusive privilege of some chosen souls or some fervent community. It would be equally impossible to determine the precise date when her Office passed into the different liturgies, and when for the first time her feast-day was solemnized. All the *Martyrologia*, in truth, commemorate her feast, but they are silent as to the time when it was instituted. However, reasoning by analogy, we may affirm that the Church did not impose it on the faithful, and that it was preceded by the eagerness of clergy and people to adopt it. The wise Spouse of Christ does not invent devotions, she seals them with her approbation if they are concordant with Faith, or else she expurges them, or even proscribes them, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit ; she authorizes them, only to meet the desire of the faithful, and imposes them only when their wants oblige her to do so. For the last nineteen centuries she believed in the Immaculate Conception ; yet, how long she waited before commanding a worship therefore optional, and before imposing belief in the dogma ! Public and private devotion must, therefore, have rendered filial homage to St. Anne several centuries before the Sovereign Pontiffs prescribed her solemnity to the whole Church.

We are, nevertheless, able to give a few dates :

In looking over the constitutions of the Regular Monks of Ostia, drawn up, according to Montfaucon, in the course of the twelfth century, we find that the Monks of the Rhenish provinces had already celebrated the solemnity of St. Anne, and that in there