

cessions. St. John was the Apostle to whose care she was committed by her dying Son, yet in that Book of the Revelation which bears his name, and describes heaven opened, there is no mention of the Virgin Mary—let alone of the Virgin enthroned.

Her name is with us, as in her own day, one of the commonest—a name shared by maid-servants with queens. It is the same as Miriam, who was sister of Moses, and it means "revolt"—one had almost said "militancy." The first Miriam—born a slave under that Egyptian terror which did not spare the infants—was devoted from birth to the desperate hope of liberation. Mary, bred under the yoke of Rome, was not less inspired by a passion for freedom. What flamed through her memory was Hannah's defiance of the proud—her passionate belief that God would humble the princes on their throne and exalt them of low degree. But in Mary's song there is a more personal note, a gentler melody, as if oppression were not only by princes and the proud and the rich, but were a more intimate affair, only to be resisted through "God, my Saviour."

Since the period of the Nestorians there has been a tendency to fortify the Incarnation by attributing Divine honors to the Lord's mother. Anyone who, in one of our museums, looks at a later Buddhist shrine, will there find a statue of the Queen of Heaven which is, at first glance, indistinguishable from a Roman Catholic image of the Blessed Virgin. Mary of Nazareth was no such abstraction. Let us think of her, not as a pale and cloistered nun, but as she was painted with broad and human brush by Raphael, in whom were blended the reverence of the Middle Ages and the freedom of the Renaissance. He shows