

seen her glory and her prerogatives shadowed forth in every chapter and on every page. As for the New Testament, no special superiority of intelligence is required to discover therein ample guarantee for all the honor paid to Mary by even the most enthusiastic of her devotees; and it argues a positive perversion of ordinary common-sense to assert that Mary's place in the Gospel narrative is insignificant or obscure. No insistence on two or three isolated circumstances, such as the incident that occurred at the marriage of Cana—circumstances explained in a fashion discredited by the Gospel itself,—can avail to lessen the magnificent role which Our Lady plays in the story of the Evangelists.

For, after all, what does the Gospel tell us of Mary? It tells of a Virgin greeted by an Angel in the name of God; of a woman chosen from among all women and declared "full of grace"; of a creature deliberating with the Most High concerning the salvation of the world, giving the consent awaited by heaven and earth: "Be it done unto me according to thy word." The Gospel shows us a Virgin-Mother—virgin while becoming a mother, mother while remaining a virgin,—the greatest prodigy effected by the Almighty in His dealings with mankind. It shows us St. John the Baptist sanctified in his mother's womb on the occasion of Mary's visit. And shall we be told that Mary does not co-operate in the sanctification of souls? Or, with the account of the first miracle of Our Lord, wrought at His Mother's request, before our eyes, shall we be censured for holding that Mary's prayers are most potent? Finally, the Gospel shows us Mary living for thirty years in daily and intimate intercourse with Jesus;—not only receiving His caresses, profiting by His instruction and example, drinking full draughts at the very source of grace, but also exercising her

authority over the Son of God, giving Him orders to which He was ever obedient: *Et erat subditus illis.* (St. Luke II, 51.)

What panegyric is comparable to this simple recital, or in what can we exalt our Blessed Mother more than she is exalted here? On the very face of it the Gospel attributes to Mary a glory congruous to no other created being; places her on a plane of inconceivable grandeur, lower only than that whereon the God-head reigns supreme. So, too, with tradition. As far as the Apostles are concerned, we have in their Creed, or symbol of faith, a more than sufficient reason for all the honor we pay Our Lady,—aye, for greater honor still. In this necessarily brief summary of Christian dogma, the Blessed Virgin and her place in Christianity is not left unnoticed. She is there, associated with the three Persons of the Adorable Trinity, taking active part in the regeneration of mankind,—sharing with God the Father the privilege of engendering the Word; because the Word, conceived eternally in the bosom of the Father, was conceived in time in the womb of Mary by the operation of the Holy Ghost. "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," says the Apostles' Creed; affirming the two privileges to which our Blessed Mother owes all others, and justifying superabundantly the veneration due and given to her above every other created being on earth or in heaven.

As with the Apostles so with all the Fathers of the Church in every century of the Christian era. Mary the Mother of Jesus is the theme of their most eloquent eulogies, the subject of their continuous praise and homage. Listen to St. Epiphanius, a Bishop of the fourth century, when heretics would have us believe Mary's cult had scarcely begun: "What shall I say or how shall I speak of the glorious and holy Virgin? God alone excepted, she is above