LECTURES

ON

HOLY WEEK.

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FOUR LECTURES

ON THE

OFFICES AND CEREMONIES

OF

HOLY WEEK,

AS PERFORMED IN THE PAPAL CHAPELS.

DELIVERED IN ROME, IN THE LENT OF

MDCCCXXXVII.

BY

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MDCCCXXXIX.

PREFACE.

The late lamented Cardinal Weld was in the habit of having occasional courses of Lectures delivered in his apartments, upon the ceremonies of Holy Week. The series now offered to the Public was one of these. The Author was preceded on the subject by the Right Rev. Dr. England, bishop of Charleston, in the United States, and by his much esteemed friend, the Rev. Dr. Baggs, vice-rector of this College, whose course is likewise preparing for the Press in this city. Perhaps a third series may be considered by some superfluous. In

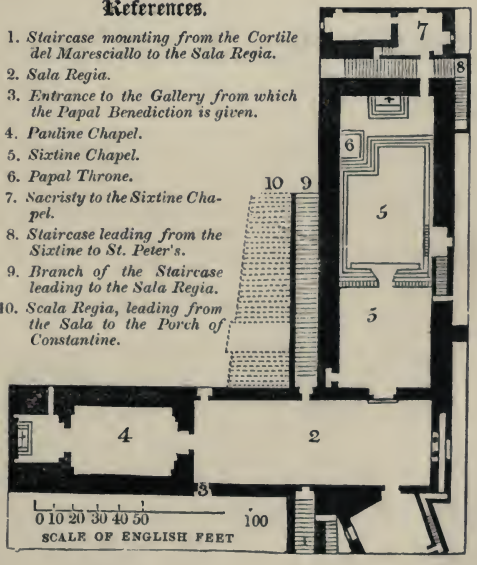
reply to this objection, the Author begs to remark, that the plan which he has pursued varies materially from the other two; inasmuch as they follow the order of the functions of Holy Week, describing and explaining them one by one, while he has rather endeavoured to give their spirit, and suggested principles which may assist strangers in attending them with profit. They are published almost verbatim as delivered; and they were prepared without much leisure for study. On undertaking, therefore, to prepare them for the press, he would have willingly remodelled or extended them, had not friends, upon whose judgment he could rely, dissuaded him, on the ground, that they would lose the lighter character they originally bore, and be transformed into treatises. They are consequently sent forth with most of their original imperfections upon them.

The illustrations which accompany this small volume, require no commendation from the Author, but only an acknowledgment of his obligations. The Frontispiece was kindly drawn for him by the illustrious Overbeck; and represents, at once, the entire subject of the work; the Church inviting us to mourn the death of her spouse, under the symbol of One who, alone on earth, could ever adequately mourn it, with a mother's mourning over her only begotten. The drawing has found an engraver worthy of it, in Ludwig Grüner, Esq., whose works will descend to posterity in close connexion with those of the ancient Roman school which he has so well followed both in spirit and in execution. Each Vignette, at the head of a Lecture, represents the subject of which it treats; the Passion of Christ viewed in relation to the arts of design, to poetry and music, to

history and to religion. Those at the close give a scene from each of the great days of Passion-tide :—the first from Palm-Sunday, the second from Holy Thursday, the third from Good Friday, and the fourth from Easter Sunday. For all these the Author is indebted to the kindness of W. Furse, Esq., an artist whose ability, however great, is not the quality which most endears him to his friends. In fine, for the better understanding of parts of these Lectures, the Author has placed below a ground plan of the chapels in which the principal ceremonies take place, with their approaches. This was drawn for him by Sig. Giorgioli, a young architect of tried taste, as will be proved by the sepulchral chapel now erecting from his designs, by the Rt. Hon. Lord Clifford, for the remains of Cardinal Weld and his daughter, in the church of St. Marcello. If, therefore, the

Author has shown in these Lectures the intimacy of Art with the sacred commemoration of the Passion, Art has here more than fully borne him out; and proved, by its readiness to assist him, how akin his theme is to its inspirations.

English College, Rome,
St. Andrew's Day, 1838.



Plan of the Papal Chapels.

LECTURE THE FIRST.

LECTURE THE FIRST.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FUNCTIONS OF HOLY WEEK AND CHRISTIAN ART.

Introduction.—General division.—These functions considered in connexion with Art.—And first in their outward relations.—Places in which they are performed.—The Sixtine and Pauline Chapels.—St. Peter's.

Of those who have journeyed thus far to study the wonders, ancient and modern, of this great city, few, I believe, will fail to discover, among their motives of curiosity, a desire to attend the offices and ceremonies of the approaching sea-

son. This desire will, indeed, be modified into various feelings by many more peculiar considerations; there will be some who look forward to these scenes, as they would towards any others, big with novelty and strange representation; there may be a few whose prospect is soured by harsher preconceits, and the forethought of severe condemnation; many, I hope, desire to derive from them a solider and more wholesome enjoyment, through the manifold beauties and soothing impressions therein to be found; and not a few, I am sure, who have been for some weeks walking through the painful avenue that leads to them, will prepare their hearts as though it were for a visit unto Calvary, and study to secure all those appliances of grace which the coming time may well afford. But, to none can it be amiss to approach with some degree of preparation; for none can wish to be present as ignorant spectators, who applaud or condemn that which they understand not. It would be but a sad waste of time, and of long expectation, to gaze, as though it were an unmeaning pageant, on things full of deep mysterious meaning; or to listen to what is said and sung, unmindful of the deeper voice of antiquity, or of the pathetic words of religion, which thrill through the matchless strains. This preparation may be various, according to the

aspect under which these sacred offices are to be viewed. Some may desire to learn the age and origin of each rite, others their secret meaning; one will be content with information regarding the outward forms, and successive arrangements of the holy ceremonies; and his neighbour may ask by what laws and on what principles they are generally regulated. To satisfy these various desires, so as to content each, would be a task long and uneasy. Neither would it be practicable, in the compass of a few discourses, one by one, to explain each ceremony, or, day by day, to follow the functions which will be on each performed. Moreover, such a course would be, to not a few, unintelligible, inasmuch as their attention would soon be wearied, and their minds entangled in the multitude and perplexity of rites unknown by them until now.

I have, therefore, upon deliberation carefully made, resolved to follow a different plan in this brief course of Lectures upon the Offices and Ceremonies of Holy Week; seeking rather to provide my hearers with such previous knowledge as I think necessary for fully understanding them, and with such principles as may lead them to form an accurate estimate of their worth. It is my wish to prepare the mind and the heart, rather than the understanding and

the senses, and to secure the good effect of the general impression, more than the relish of smaller particulars. They who are anxious to trace out the working of such general rules, as I shall lay down, in lesser points, (though I shall be careful, in my application thereof, to omit no circumstance of moment) may still find it necessary to consult works easily procured (as a course delivered in this place, by the Rt. Rev. Dr. England), for a hand-book or accompaniment to the ceremonies of Holy Week.

But, before explaining more particularly the method I intend, according to my small ability, to pursue, I will give a brief and condensed view of each day's respective functions, which are about to demand your attention.

The week which closes the fast of Lent is generally by us called *The Holy Week.* In the Latin Church it bears the name of the *greater week (major hebdomeda)*, as it did of old among the Greeks; according as St. John Chrysostom testifies. The Germans call it the *Charwoche*—a word of doubtful etymology, but probably signifying "the week of sorrows," from *char* or *kar*, grief. In a similar sense it is sometimes termed by them the *marter woche*, or week of sufferings.* These various names,

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Wachter, tom. I.—p. 246.

some glorious and others sorrowful, are sufficient indications of the event which the week commemorates; the only one in the annals of this world which can fully deserve both titles, and that which combines within itself a greater portion of majesty and dignity, and a larger share of grief and mourning, than any other could separately contain. It is a week put by with especial consecration, from the course of the year, to sympathize in our dear Redeemer's sufferings.

The first day is known by the name of *Palm-sunday*, so called from the rite then observed, in the Catholic church, of blessing and distributing palm or olive branches; or, where the climate does not produce them, branches of other trees, in commemoration of what the Jews did when Jesus entered into Jerusalem. The principal function on that day takes place in the papal chapel, commonly called "the Sixtine," and consists of the Mass. The only points wherein the service differs from that of any other sunday, are the Blessing aforesaid, which is followed by a procession, similar to that of Candlemas-day, round the *Sala regia*;* and

* The large and splendid hall, which connects the two papal chapels, known by the name of the Sistina and Paolina, from the Popes who erected them, in which the principal functions of Holy Week are performed.—See the ground plan at the end of the preface.

the chaunting, in place of the gospel, of the Passion, according to St. Matthew, in a peculiar manner, which will be touched upon in its proper place.

During the two following days, there is nothing in the public offices of the Church peculiarly attractive, though there is a vein of rich religious pathos running through her liturgy; and the office, or public and private devotions, prescribed to her ministers throughout the week, which would well repay the attention of the curious. In fact, the moment this daily form of prayer becomes public, it seizes powerfully on the attention of all; and this takes place for the first time on the afternoon of Wednesday. The office, or course of prayer, daily enjoined by the church on her ministers, is divided into several portions, receiving names from the hours of day, at which, anciently, they used to be recited. The largest portion, however, may be more properly said to belong to the night, and is subdivided into "Matins" and "Lauds;" the first ordinarily consisting of nine psalms, and nine lessons from Scripture and the ancient Fathers; and the latter of eight psalms or canticles of a more joyful character, together with various hymns, antiphons, chapters and prayers. Since the custom of reciting this portion of the office at midnight has become confined to religious communities (many whereof in this city, whe-

ther of men or of women, nightly rise to praise God in that silent hour), it has been customary to perform it early in the morning, or by anticipation on the preceding evening. The latter is done, in respect of the Matins, or morning office, of the three last days in Holy Week; so that the Matins of Thursday shall fall on the Wednesday afternoon, and so of the days ensuing. And these are the offices known by the name of *Tenebræ*, or darkness. For a certain number of candles, placed on a triangular stand, are by degrees extinguished; one, that is, after each psalm, until a mystical darkness (it being still day) is produced. These offices begin each day about four of the clock in the afternoon, or rather sooner; and are in the Pope's chapel chiefly remarkable for two things.—The first is, part of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah* sung after the first nocturne, or division of three psalms, in matins. Three portions of that feeling elegy are given to each day; the first being arranged in such exquisite harmony as ravishes the sense; the two latter sung by one voice in an inflexion of ancient and most moving melody. The second thing to be specially noted, is the well-known music of the *Miserere*, which closes the service, leaving on the soul a solemn impression of harmonious feeling which no words that I have would describe.

Thursday is called by us Holy, or Maunday Thursday—the second name being derived from the latin word *mandatum*, or "precept;" the first word of the anthem—"A new commandment I give you," which is sung while the feet of certain poor men are washed, as will be by and by declared. The office in the morning consists of the mass, almost in every respect like that of any other day. It is in the Sixtine chapel, and is performed in white, contrary to the usage of this penitential time. But at its close, a very beautiful function takes place. As, on the following day, it has been of most ancient custom not to consecrate the sacred elements, a previous consecration is made on this day of bread into the divine Sacrament of our Lord's body. The consecrated species is borne in solemn procession to the Pauline chapel, where an altar, splendidly lighted up, preserves it till next day. This forms what Catholics know by the name of the "Sepulchre;" and it is customary to visit with devotion in the evening the churches where such altars are most reverently prepared.

From the Pauline chapel the pope proceeds to the great gallery over the porch of St. Peter's, and thence gives his blessing to the people, assembled in the square below. As this splendid ceremony is repeated with greater magnificence on Easter-day, and as it is almost impossible to

return from it to witness the remaining functions, it may be as well for many to pass it over, on this occasion, and rather descend, from the Sala Regia, having seen the procession, into the church, where, in the right-hand portion of the transept they will find preparation made for the washing of feet. This in other places is performed on poor men, but at Rome, by the Pope, upon thirteen priests, generally poor, of different nations, who are afterwards by him served at table, in a hall upstairs. For conveniently seeing all these functions, tickets are necessary, which may be easily obtained.*

Friday, called by all other nations that I know, *holy*, has received amongst us alone, the better and more moving title of "the good." The service throughout is lugubrious and sad; the throne and altar are stripped of all ornament, the floor and seats in the chapel are bare, the sacerdotal vestments black. After some moments of silent prostration, the priest proceeds to a broken and almost disordered service, the Passion according to St. John is chaunted, in the same strain as was St. Matthew's on Palm-sunday; then follow prayers for all orders of men; the image of Christ

* These tickets (for ladies) are issued by Monsignor the Pope's Maggiordomo, at his office in the Vatican palace. Application should be made for them through the resident of each one's country, or through some person known to him, who thus vouches for the respectability of the applicant.

crucified is unveiled with solemnity (having been kept covered for a fortnight before), and reverently kissed by all the clergy on their knees, while the *Improperia*, or "reproaches," as they are called, are sung to the most pathetic music; and, finally, a procession like that of the preceding day, having brought the consecrated species from the Pauline chapel, the priest receives them, and the service ends with Vespers solemnly recited.

In the afternoon, when the office of Tenebræ is finished, the Pope, with all his court, descends into St. Peter's, to venerate the holy relics of Christ's passion which are there kept.

Saturday, properly speaking, has no office; that which is performed on it belong to the following night, and being entirely appropriate to Easter. The attention of strangers is generally drawn off from the Vatican to the Lateran Basilica, where a long and complicated function takes place; to wit, in addition to the proper service performed in every church, the conferring of orders of every degree, from the tonsure to the priesthood (which may be witnessed with greater convenience at the same church on Saturday next),* and the baptism and confirmation of any

* "Sitientes" Saturday, or Saturday before Passion-Sunday. It may be proper to add that the last Sunday in Lent is called in the Catholic calendar Palm-Sunday, and *the last but one* Passion-Sunday.

converted Jews or Mahomedans who may be ready for these sacraments. But in the Pope's chapel the entire ceremony is singularly beautiful, consisting of the blessing of new fire, and of the paschal candle; then of the Mass, in which, as will be declared in proper time, a music is sung that should be dear to all lovers of sacred harmony.

In conclusion comes Easter-day, the glorious consummation and crown of preceding sorrows, the goal of Christian desires, the spring-festival, as its name doth signify, after the griefs of a mourning winter. The Pope sings solemn mass at the high altar of St. Peter's, and at its close gives his benediction to thousands crowded in the square below, many of whom are often pilgrims come from considerable distances. The rejoicings of the evening, expressed by the illumination of St. Peter's, and the fire-works of the Castel Sant' Angelo, however notable and splendid, do not enter into the limits of my theme.

This is a calendar, or brief catalogue of the principal scenes which will shortly invite your attention. They will be much disappointed who expect any gorgeous display of laboured ceremonial, or sudden bursts of theatrical effect, or many overpowering strokes of choral music. With the exception of the ceremonies of Easter-

day, where the massive action of elements in themselves simple, but powerfully combined, produces a splendid result, the eye must not look forward to stirring or bustling scenes; and excepting some few passages of truly "eloquent music," in the offices of Sunday and Friday, the ears must be prepared for the instillation of only the simplest, purest, but withal richest harmonies, which can insinuate themselves through that living labyrinth. The gratification to be derived is of a character more deeply mystical; it must be the result of considerations, complex in their origin, which have previously worked in the mind, and of an abandonment of the feelings and the soul to the tide of various emotions which will overflow them. Those who, in the language of the day, *lay themselves out* for seeing every thing, as though it were a show (for some have even been known to go to the indecent extent of taking refreshments with them into the chapel), will very soon be wearied. The Tenebræ, which many frequent entirely for the sake of the *Miserere*, lasts upwards of two hours, occupied in simple, unharmonized chaunting; and the experience of every year proves that on the first evening confusion and inconvenience ensue from the eagerness of hundreds to enter the chapel; but by the third day, when the office is much shorter, the lamentations more exquisite,

and the Miserere in general the best, it is left to the occupation of a few, whom better feelings than mere curiosity inspire with perseverance. In the same manner the office of Thursday morning is usually thronged to excess, while that of Friday, which is infinitely more beautiful, is comparatively deserted.

Now, my desire, as I before intimated, is to suggest those considerations which may prepare the mind for setting a due value on these holy functions, and properly receiving their impressions. I will endeavour to suit my observations not only to the circumstance of time, but still more particularly to that of place: that is, I will not so much treat of the functions of Holy Week as they are performed all over the Catholic world, and even in most churches of this city, but I will ever keep in view that performance of them which you will principally be attracted to witness, in the presence of the Sovereign pontiff.

For this purpose, I will divide the subject into three parts. I will first consider the offices and ceremonies of Holy Week, in their connexion with art; secondly, I will consider them historically, or in reference to their various antiquity; and, thirdly, I will view them in their religious light, considering them as intended to excite virtuous and devout impressions. This triple view will, I think, allow me to place before you

all the information which can be interesting or useful for understanding them.

My first point again naturally subdivides itself into two, the consideration of their external and of their internal relations with art. By the first I mean those connexions which exist between them and art, through the places and circumstances in which they are performed, and which give their peculiar character to the functions of the Vatican; and of these I will treat to-day. By the second I mean those artistic principles, so to speak, which pervade the ceremonies themselves, their poetry, principally of the highest dramatic power, and the music which accompanies it. This will be the subject of my next lecture; my second and third heads will be discussed in the third and fourth discourses.

Allow me, therefore, to proceed. When I mentioned "the Vatican" as the seat of those ceremonies which you will attend, you, no doubt, felt the additional advantage that I meant to imply they possessed over those of any other spot. Where could a more magnificent theatre be selected for their exhibition, than the vast and splendid area of that Basilica? Where could the sounds of sacred music be better heard than in the tempered light and under the solemn vaults of the Sixtine chapel? These are doubt-

less reflections most natural and true, but not under this view did I make my remark. For I think that a Christian mind will discover a deeper and intenser motive of interest, on seeing these ceremonies performed in places powerfully connected with the history and fate of Christian art. And first as to the chapel.

Upon entering it, there is certainly nothing striking to the eye in its architecture; or perhaps the first impression it produces is rather gloomy and unpleasant. Its loftiness seems almost excessive; at the same time, that, instead of architectural advantage having been taken of the circumstance, it is broken by two insignificant cornices, which destroy the proportion between the walls, and the high attic in which are placed the windows. This defect, or peculiarity, proper to the architecture of the age in which the chapel was built, is in this case more apparent, from the inversion of order in which its decorations seem disposed. For the lower division presents a series of curtains or hangings imitating brocade, and therefore seems too light a base to what rests above; although this effect would be in former times greatly lessened by the broad and noble tapestries of Raffaelle, which were hung, on festivals, over this lower part. Above and over the first cornice, comes the second division, covered with paintings of the old school, and

consequently in a finished, minute and almost miniature-like style; then over all presses the heavy ceiling, loaded with the massive, gigantic, and awful figures of Michel Angelo's sublime composition.

This overpowering work has necessarily the effect of rivetting for a time the entire attention, and while it crushes, in a manner, all below, in an architectural sense, absorbs in most spectators the notice which the other paintings deserve. "To speak truly," says a late French writer, "these paintings swallow up and enslave the attention of most travellers, who, in addition to the irresistible authority of a great name, so often heard by them pronounced with enthusiasm, undergo the impression of terror and admiration which the *Prophets* on the vault, and the *Last Judgment*, never fail to inspire. The mind is too much overcome to appreciate, on the first or second visit, the simpler and quieter compositions, which are distributed on twelve compartments along the sides of the chapel. But rarely will the eye and soul omit at the third visit, to seek repose amidst these patriarchal scenes, to which the freshness of the landscape gives an additional charm; and these paintings would in the end obtain all the attention they deserve, in spite of the neighbouring colossal figures which oppress them, were they less dis-

tant from the spectator, or were their figures better proportioned to that distance, or to the dimensions of the chapel."*

The first part of these observations is undoubtedly correct; I wish I could say as much of those which follow. For it is to be feared, that many visit this chapel again and again without having deigned to cast an eye upon these beautiful compositions, or reflecting and feeling that they are standing in the very sanctuary of Christian art. In the last century, it became the fashion of English writers to indulge in an admiration, almost idolatrous, of Buonarotti; and after the excessive enthusiasm with which Sir J. Reynolds closes his *Discourses*,† every successive lecturer followed in his steps. Fuseli is certainly right when he enthusiastically considers the vault of the Sixtine chapel as a magnificent epic: for it possesses perfect and progressive unity of idea, adorned with most appropriate and harmonizing episodes, and is executed with a Homeric grandeur and breadth of manner: but it is surely lamentable to hear a tenth-rate artist, like Opie, solemnly declaring, in the professorial chair of our Royal Academy, that Leonardo da Vinci's works are comparatively of

* Rio, "De l'Art chrétien."—p. 124.

† Discourses—p. 161: Lond. 1820.

little value :* then passing over the entire space from Cimabue (for he overlooks Giotto and his school), to Masaccio, by calling it "the stammering and babbling of art in its infant state,"† and speaking of all that was executed before Michel Angelo as "little and meagre," "confused and uninteresting," "feeble and unmeaning." The present generation is not inclined to judge by the same rules as the last; and it is delightful to witness the reviving taste and relish of our days for primitive Christian art.

What the Campo Santo of Pisa, or the Basilica of St. Francis at Assisi, was to the revival of art under Giotto, in the fourteenth century, the Sixtine chapel was in its full developement at the close of the fifteenth. It brought together, into a noble emulation, the best artists of the day, by uniting their efforts in sight of one another; and sent them to their respective countries improved by the contemplation of ancient monuments, and the comparison of modern systems of art. From the beginning, it is needless to observe, art had possessed no existence disjoined from religion. The Byzantine artists and their Italian disciples had, for centuries, occupied the field in Italy; and, from a strange distortion of ideas, had degraded the

* Lectures on Painting, 1809; p. 40. † Page 37.

types of sacred art, representing the Son of God and his Blessed Mother under forms revolting, and even hideous, when compared with the purer traditions of ancient Christianity. The very master of Giotto, who was Cimabue, Duccio, and other artists of his time, adhered with frightful obstinacy to the model of that degraded school. Giotto, the admiration of Dante aud Petrarca, broke through the established rules, neglected the received types, and gave a new grace, a softer colour, and a sweeter expression to his sacred figures.* As he travelled over all Italy, from Milan (not to speak of Avignon), to Naples, and left in every great city specimens of his skill, he may be considered as a husbandman who cast a good and prolific seed over a land well fitted to receive it. Two centres, however, principally, he formed; whence, after a time, art was destined once more to spread. Florence, his chief residence, never, after him, wanted diligent and able artists. But, unfortunately, the study of heathen monuments, and a certain decline from first purity of sentiment, generated a more earthly and less Christian style,—a departure from first fervour, which would have been fatal, earlier than it proved,

* Lanzi, Roscoe's Trans. 1828, vol. i. p. 24. Rio. p. 62. To the charming work of this friend, I shall have constant recourse through this Lecture.

to religious art, had not an antidote been provided in that other seed-bed, wherein better principles were left for a long space to ferment before they sprung up. Paolo Uccello first deviated at Florence into too close a copying of natural objects; and this taste increased, to the gradual extinction of symbolical types and forms, till that evil reached its growth in the still charming Masaccio, who filled his pictures with spectators and idle persons—portraits of living men—that took no part in the action of the piece. His dissolute disciple, Lippi, made this profanation blasphemous, by presuming to substitute not only living but worthless characters for the chaste beautiful models which tradition had preserved of Christ and his mother.

But the frescoes which Giotto had left upon the walls of that solemnest and most mystical of temples, the church of St. Francis, at Asisi, were, perhaps, the germs of the Umbrian school, which never declined from its pure Christian character. When the Florentine lost a part of its vital inspiration, the spirit of Christian art retreated into the secluded mountains of the Appenines. The blessed Angelico Fiesoli, of whom not only his contemporaries, with pope Eugenius IV, but men, like Vasari, of a degenerated age, knew not whether most to admire the consummate talent or the saintly virtues, then

his dear disciple Benozzo Gozzoli, Gentil di Fabriano, Taddeo Bartolo, and many others, to Nicholas of Fuligno, maintained a union of art and virtuous devotion, in a succession, that gradually drew round the sepulchre of the wonderful St. Francis, and reached its perfection in the persons of Pietro Perugino and his immortal scholar.*

Now it is the first meeting of these two great schools—the one somewhat corrupted, the other in its purest bloom—which the chapel built by Sixtus IV effected. This pope sent for the most eminent artists from Florence and Umbria, and committed to them the joint task of decorating its walls. On the left, upon entering, is the history of Moses; on the right are represented the principal events of our Saviour's life. The series was originally more complete, when on the wall, over the altar, were painted, by the hands of Perugino, the births of Christ and of Moses, with the assumption of the blessed Virgin between them: but these paintings were demolished to make room for Buonarotti's terrific composition of the *Last Judgment*. The principal artists employed were Sandro Botticelli, Dominico Ghirlandajo, Cosimo Roselli, Luca Signo-

* See Rio, p. 206, 214, &c.

relli, and Pietro Perugino.* It would be departing from my subject to enter into the description of these beautiful paintings, or a criticism of each artist's work. I think that most will give the preference to the *Delivery of the Keys*, the work of Pietro, for in it nothing is wanting: nor can we better discover the difference between the religious state of the two schools, than by comparing the head of our divine Redeemer in this painting, with that given him by Ghirlandajo, in the neighbouring picture, which represents *The Calling of Peter and Andrew;* in which, though the other heads are full of religious expression, that which should have been the most noble is devoid of dignity and beauty.

Who then, that believes religion and its history to be the true theme of art, and the elevation of mind to its sublime contemplations the highest object it can have on earth, will not feel the peculiar interest attached to the place which so strikingly displayed its solemn consecration in a combined effort to that noble and holy cause, under the natural patronage of religion's supreme minister? It was, in fact, for the performance of the very ceremonies which you are about to

* See Agincourt, "Storia dell'Arte," *Prato*, 1826, tom. iv. p. 570. Lanzi, loc. cit. p. 91. "Beschreibung der Stadt Rom." 2 B. 1 Abt. p. 245.

witness, that this chapel was built; and thus they may be said to have brought about an event which, in the annals of sacred art, is considered by all its historians an epoch.

But, methinks it were an injustice to these sacred functions to connect them with Christian art by so slender a thread. For, no one that has turned his mind to it, will, I believe, gainsay, that these sacred Offices have been the very school of art, or rather the very food on which it was nourished. I remember some years ago, when one of our most celebrated artists was in Rome, how he was conversing with a late most respected friend of mine during the *lavanda*, or ceremony of washing the feet, which used then to be performed in the *Sala Ducale*. Tapestry was, as usual, hung upon the wall behind the thirteen priests engaged for the functions, and a lattice-window, looking into the room, had been seized upon by a curious party, so, that through a separation, between two arrases, a small group of picturesque heads, chiefly children, peeped out upon the ceremony. This little incident, which a painter of the old school would have introduced or even invented, could not escape the notice of our artist, and he remarked to my friend, how completely the picturesque seemed inherent in the character of the people. "Their costumes," said he, "their heads, their attitudes, are all

studies; three of them cannot stand together, without forming a group fit to be sketched." He then remarked, how pictorial every ceremony which he had witnessed had appeared, and what lessons of art were to be learned from studying them. But any attention to the works of the older masters will completely prove, that their models were drawn, and their groups formed, upon what they were accustomed to see in these sacred functions. Why are their angels, instead of being, as in later works, well fed infants playing and tumbling in the clouds, clothed in white tunics, girded round, and kneeling in attitudes of solemn adoration? but because such was the dress and posture of the more youthful assistants in ecclesiastical ceremonies. Whence are drawn the costumes of their saints, who stand beside the throne on which the mother of God is seated, with their precious embroidery, and noble folds, that give such play to the rich colouring of their school? Whence were their positions about that throne, their modest looks, their unaffected attitudes, taken, but from the venerable ministers at these holy and splendid Offices? A sweet solemn feeling overspreads their entire composition, which, certainly, there is nothing else in nature to have inspired, except what we see performed in the church service: indeed, their most beautiful paintings bear an

analogy with these, in disposition and sentiment, which it is impossible to mistake.

It would not be difficult to give proofs of this influence, drawn from the very neighbourhood of the Sixtine chapel. Near the "Loggie di Raffaello" is an exquisite oratory, rarely visited, painted entirely by the blessed Angelico. It is a work of art that ravishes any mind that has imbibed a taste for its Christian principles. Throughout, the holy artist has most rigidly adhered to the ecclesiastical costume; and the holy martyrs, Lawrence and Stephen, are represented, through their sufferings, in their proper vestments; so that a recent writer has observed, how attentively he must have studied ecclesiastical monuments for this purpose.* It is thus that painting, brought into existence in Christian times by religion, derived all its thoughts and sentiments from it, and became really a heavenly art, sanctifying at once those who exercised it, and those who received its influence. The saintly artist, whose works I have named, never commenced his work without fervently invoking the inspiration of heaven, and never painted the crucifixion without tears streaming from his eyes. Eugenius IV, for whom he adorned that chapel, was so enchanted with his virtues,

* Rio, p. 198.

as to press on his acceptance the archbishopric of Florence. But his humility shrunk from the burthen; and he recommended in his place, one, who in that station illustrated the Church, under the name of St. Antoninus.

When Vitale and Lorenzo, scholars of Franco Bolognese, celebrated by Dante, painted in the cloisters of Bologna, they worked together as brothers upon the same picture, except when they reached the subject of the crucifixion. For on those occasions Vitale found his feelings completely overpowered by the subject, and abandoned it exclusively to his friend. The same is recorded of Giacomo Avanzi, his disciple and his companion Simone, called, from his always painting the crucifixion, "Simone dei Crocefissi." The most remarkable example of this deep religious feeling in art, is, perhaps, that of Lippo Dalmasio, who, from devotion, never would paint any subject but Madonnas; and was so thoroughly impressed with the holiness of his undertaking, that he prepared himself for it by a strict fast on the vigil, and by approaching the altar on the morning of his task; so to purify his mind and soul for his occupation. Hence Guido has owned, that no later painter, with all the resources of modern art, could ever come up to the sanctity, modesty

and purity which he has impressed upon his countenances.*

This may be considered a digression from my subject, which was the influence exercised by the ceremonies of the Church upon Christian art, exemplified as it was in the Sixtine chapel. Suppressing, therefore, many reflections which I feel called up by this subject, I will return by remarking, that even those who regret not the destruction of that primitive religious style, by the bolder, earthlier, and sterner manner which from that ceiling above, frowns, and presses down on its representatives below—even they must attach a particular interest to this place, which alone could or would have produced the substitution.

For Michael Angelo may be said to have painted nothing before he undertook this mighty work; and authors agree that he was recommended to Pope Julius II by his enemies, in hope of his failure and disgrace. He knew not even the method of fresco painting; and resisted to the utmost of his power the commission laid upon him. But Julius was not a pontiff to be thwarted; and, rejecting every excuse, insisted upon his making the attempt. He procured artists from Florence to execute his designs; but was soon dissatisfied with their work, and

* Rio, p. 198.

threw it down and recommenced it himself. He directed the construction of the scaffolding, ground and prepared his colours with his own hand; and after having painted several figures, was dismayed at finding the colours had run or blistered, so as to render the figures hardly discernible. Once more he went in despair to the Pope, and entreated to be released from a task out of his sphere. But Julius was inexorable; Sangallo taught him how to remedy the evil that had disheartened him; he resumed his work, and in twenty-two months completed the ceiling.* It had been his intention to retouch the painting when dry, and add gilding to the garments of his figures; but the scaffolding had been removed, through a natural impatience on the part of his patron to see the works, and never was replaced. It is clear, that no other place and no other commission would have ever brought out the talents of Buonarotti, as a painter, on this wonderful scale; and, that the influence of his style upon Raffaello, and all succeeding artists, could not have been exerted, had not Julius been anxious to finish the chapel of his uncle Sixtus, and had he not, to all appearance, obstinately and almost unreasonably, forced the painter to an exertion before which he shrunk.

* "Beschreibung," &c. p. 255, seqq. where the authorities are quoted.

This chapel, then, must possess an interest which no other in the world can share, as the sanctuary of art in its two-fold form. It is the place in which the last great act of patronage to older, patriarchal Christian art was exercised; on the walls of which it inscribed its last memorials, under the sanction of the highest religious authority which could guarantee them from destruction; it was at the same time the very nursery and birth-place of that more daring, and eventually profane, art, which, here at least, consecrated the energies of its herculean infancy to the best and holiest of purposes.

The other chapel used in the pontifical ceremonies of Holy Week is known by the name of the Paolina, from Pope Paul III, who built it after destroying one painted by Beato Angelico, a mischief never to be repaired. It contains two large paintings, by Michael Angelo, quite undistinguishable; not so much, as is commonly asserted, from the smoke of the tapers, which burn there during the sepulchre, as in consequence of their bad light, and still more of a fire which formerly took place there. They are works of that mighty genius in its decline.*

* Within these two last years the chapel, which before was almost black, so that its ornaments were no longer distinguishable, has been thoroughly renewed, and these two paintings have been covered over. At the same time, the immense

Having said so much of these chapels, I have left myself but little opportunity for discoursing on the other great theatre of these functions, the Basilica of St. Peter's. You certainly will not expect me to detain you by turning your attention to so trite a topic, as the magnificence of that matchless edifice, and I shall there confine myself to a few remarks more intimately connected with my present subject.

I will premise, that the Church architecture of every age should be a monument of its religious condition, and a memorial of its spirit. The first ages, for instance, beheld the Church in a state of affliction, oppression and persecution; and its subterranean oratories amply record these facts. The faithful shaped them among the tombs of their brethren; thus showing how their spiritual life was in the midst of death, and adorned them with paintings most suitable to their condition, chusing such Scriptural subjects as best alluded to their sufferings and still more to their hopes. When peace was restored to the Church, under Constantine, the season of triumph,

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wooden tabernacle, and other ornaments behind the altar, which formed an artificial perspective, designed by Bernini, were judiciously taken down; for they neither accorded in taste with the rest of the chapel, nor were they of safe materials, amidst the splendid and massive illumination which is made there on Holy Thursday.

and, in all the mildness of the Christian spirit, the season of reprisals, came. The remains of paganism were seized as trophies and lawful spoil; the form of the church was copied, and took its name from the heathen basilicas; pillars from different edifices were appropriated to the use of these new temples, and afterwards entire buildings were converted from an impure to a holy worship. Many churches in Rome yet survive to attest monumentally this transfer of the religious sceptre, and the possession which Christianity had gained of the stores of art accumulated by their oppressors.

In northern countries, art, and consequently architecture, arose from Christianity; there were no previous feelings to gratify, nothing to record, but what that holy religion taught; and hence arose that style, most barbarously misnamed "the Gothic," which a modern French writer so happily describes as "la pensée chrétienne batie," the architectural expression of Christian thought. The architectures of Greece and Rome, like their religion, kept their main lines horizontal or parallel with the earth, and carefully avoided breaking this direction, seeking rather its prolongation than any striking elevation. The Christian architecture threw up all its lines, so as to bear the eye towards heaven; its tall, tapering, and clustered pillars, while

they even added apparent to real height, served as guides and conductors of the sense to the fretted roof, and prevented the recurrence of lines, which could keep its direction along the surface of the earth. Nothing could more strongly mark the contrast between the two religious systems. The minute details of its workmanship, the fretting and carving of its many ornaments, the subdivision of masses into smaller portions, are all in admirable accord with the mental discipline of the time, which subtilized and divided every matter of its enquiry, and reduced the greatest questions into a cluster of ever ramifying distinctions. The "dim religious light" that passed through the storied window, and gave a mysterious awe to the cavern-like recesses of the building, excellently became an age passionately fond of mystic lore, and the dimmest twilights of theological learning. Nothing could be more characteristic, nothing more expressive of the religious spirit which ruled those ages, than the architecture which in them arose.

But in Italy, and principally in Rome, it was otherwise. The type of art had been cast in those ages of triumph, and it was not rashly nor easily to be abandoned. She did not receive her art from Christianity, and therefore did not adopt the new and beautiful order. When all

the arts revived, and among them architecture, it turned its attention, like the rest, to the embellishment of God's house, and the splendour of his worship. The old basis of the Roman basilica was preserved, with the substitution, however, of arches for pillars. This, many will reprove; I own I do not entirely. We no longer possess the splendid columns of the ancients; we have lost their quarries, and the command of their slaves to work them. We have not the materials for their style. Then the Catholic worship requires now various chapels; to these the arches on either side form an appropriate opening; in Santa Maria Maggiore and S. Martino, the side altars are completely masked, and lose their dignity. But the dome! that truly Christian, sublime conception,—that raising of a temple to the God of heaven, far above the earth,—this grandest invention of modern architecture, is incompatible with columnar architecture, as St. Généviève, now, I believe, called by a heathen name, sufficiently proves. And who would have wished *that* to have been given up in St. Peter's, or any other Christian church?

We may, therefore, say that this basilica is the proper expression of Christian art upon its revival on old models; and it will be particularly found to express the Catholic spirit of its age;

by centering on itself all the powers of representative art at the moment when the Reformation was waging war against it, and preventing our country possessing, like every other people, a national school. But who can doubt that this unrivalled building received its grand characteristics of amplitude in dimensions, and exquisiteness in its ornaments, from the special circumstance of its having been destined for the very functions you will therein see performed? Nothing but its erection as the theatre of the papal celebration could have suggested the idea of such an unusual scale. No other procession could have filled such a nave, no other ministration could have grouped round such an altar, no other hierarchy could have graced such a sanctuary. It was evidently the same spirit, comprehensive, grand, and magnificent, that had created the ceremonial, which could alone have planned this its theatre.

It would be interesting to follow these remarks into details. I will content myself with one or two, calculated to show the influence of these functions upon minor parts of this great work of art. Most of you are aware that some years ago the entire church of St. Peter's was lighted up on Thursday and Friday evenings of Holy Week, by one huge brazen cross, studded with lamps, and hung below the dome.

The play of light and shadow, in bold masses, edged bluffly one by another, through the aisles, was splendid beyond description. Now it is certain that Canova designed the beautiful monument of Rezzonico (Clement XIII), its fine lions and reclining genius, with an eye, most particularly, to the effect upon it of this religious illumination. He had it carefully covered till the first of these evenings, and exposed it to view under the influence of this unusual light. I well remember its splendid effect under such circumstances; and can imagine the general delight upon its first exhibition. Indeed, so anxious was Canova himself to try the experiment fairly, that he employed his friend, Cav. D'Este, from whom I have the account, to procure for him a disguise. "My friends," he observed, "are sure to praise the monument; and my enemies are sure to find fault with it. I will go among the people, and hear their opinions." After vain attempts to dissuade him, the costume of a very poor priest was procured, and he was soon so disguised as to defy detection. D'Este saw him thread his way through the admiring crowd, and listen to the judgment of every little knot, till he stood by the group in which the senator Rezzonico, nephew to the Pope, was asking, "Where is Canova, that we may congratulate with him?" eyeing, at the same time, askance,

the dilapitated sacristan, as he thought him, who was almost intruding upon them. But Canova was not discovered, and returned home satisfied, having received sentence of approval from an unpacked and unprejudiced jury.

This instance shows how the subordinate parts of the building, and consequently the arts of design, have been influenced by the great functions which are therein performed; another example may be brought, in extenuation of criticism. The departure from Michael Angelo's front, a portico like the Pantheon's, has been severely blamed. Those who have resided much in London or Paris, will, I think, have been thoroughly disabused of any idea of the eye's insatiability in respect of columns surmounted by a pediment. Such porticoes lead now a-days to every thing,—to the Mansion-House and its proverbial convivialities—to the National Gallery of Paintings—to Archbishop Tillotson's Chapel—to the Haymarket-theatre—to the College of Physicians, and to half-a-dozen clubs. It is manifestly an architectural generality, that may be seized by the smallest genius, and applied to every possible object. Can we regret so much that it was not adopted in St. Peter's, to deprive us of that most glorious of functions, the papal benediction? For it is acknowledged, that the necessity of providing a fitting position for the chief actor in

that momentary, but momentous, spectacle, led to the alteration, and suggested the present plan. If specific adaptation to an end be truly a merit in architecture, much beyond that of mere imitation, the present front, with all its defects (which I acknowledge), should be valued by a fairer standard than mere comparison with works of another style and system. For my part, I would gladly look all the year round on the broken, and disproportioned, and confused front which that church now has—to enjoy twice a-year, through such defects, the great and glorious sight with which they are connected: that variegated multitude of citizens, peasants, pilgrims, and foreigners, and that glittering array of equipages and troops, which fill the basin of its magnificent court; and the emotion which the benediction of the Father of Christendom sends, as if by electric communion, through the dense assembly.

This want of attention, in architectural strictures, to local proprieties and characters of style, is very glaring in modern writers. A popular work, lately published in England, expresses the writer's astonishment and disappointment at finding St. Peter's without painted windows! I think the astonishment is, that he discovered its windows at all on his first visit. The traveller's mind must have been devoid of all

enthusiasm, and his eye must have been singularly its master. The architecture of the church necessarily led to a desire to conceal them, by placing them above the cornice; and it is generally long before attention is turned to whence the light is derived. But what havoc would painted glass have made with marbles and mosaics! Fancy a confused patch-work of yellow, green, and red light streaming from such a window upon the *Transfiguration*, or a ray of unmitigated blue turning into a livid corpse the Angel of Death upon Canova's monument! I remonstrated with the author, and alleged these objections; but he was irreclaimable. He had never seen a cathedral in England without painted glass, and consequently repeated his disappointment in three successive editions!

St. Peter's, therefore, considered in reference to its great destination to be the theatre of a particular and splendid ceremonial, principally that which you are about to witness, is the most perfect specimen of a style of sacred architecture, peculiar as the modern adaptation of the basilicar style to the forms and wants of the Catholic worship; and not to be tried by the rules of any other, but rather by its fitness for its own purposes, and for the expression of the sentiments of its age. And for this, so perfect a specimen, we are mainly indebted to that very ceremonial.

I have thus pointed out the interesting connexions which the functions of Holy Week, as performed before the Pope, have with Art, and the influence they have exercised upon its development. In my next Discourse, I shall treat of their more intimate relations with Art, through their essential forms.

LECTURE THE SECOND.

LECTURE THE SECOND.

ESSENTIAL AND INWARD RELATIONS OF THESE OFFICES WITH ART.

Their poetry.—Their dramatic construction.—Processions.—The Passion.—Distribution of the entire service.—Their music.—Church chaunt, its antiquity and character.—Peculiar chaunt of the Papal choir, especially in Holy Week.—Palestrina.—*Missa Papæ Marcelli.*—The Lamentations.—The *Improperia.*—Allegri, the *Miserere.*

After having seen what an influence the ceremonies of Holy Week have indirectly exercised on art, by inspiring it with the noblest ideas, in

preparing a fitting theatre for their performance: it will not be surprising to discover in themselves the finest spirit of artistic vigour, as the source whence those emanations flowed. The division which I made of the first portion of my subject leads me to-day to direct your attention to this point; and to consider the essential connexion which they have with the principles of true art. I have already suggested some ideas upon this subject, when I spoke of the effect produced by them upon the Christian schools of painting. No eye will fail to be struck with the perfect grouping that takes place in many of the ceremonies; such, that had the first masters been employed, to regulate the ceremonies for the production of effect, they could not have devised anything more beautiful. I would notice particularly the pyramidical groups which are formed at the altar or the throne during the Mass on Easter-sunday, where everything is in the most progressive order—the richness of the costumes, and the dignity of the persons, from the base to its highest point. But these are matters that require little notice; for the eye of each will discover them. I am rather desirous to turn your attention to the more hidden points of beautiful arrangement and feeling with which these functions abound. Whoever will read with an unprejudiced mind the Office of the week,

will be not only charmed, but, I think, astonished, at the perfect taste, harmony and dignity of sentiment which pervade them, as though the genius of sacred elegiac poetry had presided over the composition. A great part of them, indeed, consists of Scriptural passages allusive to the Passion, and this at once speaks their highest commendation. But still the selection and union of these passages into a whole, will be found on every occasion the most happy and harmonious that well could be imagined. In addition to these are many antiphons and hymns, both in classical measures and in ecclesiastical; which will be found upon examination full of the most touching sentiment. Of the former class, I may instance the hymn sung during the procession of Palm-Sunday, and beginning "Gloria, laus, et honor," connected with which there is an interesting history. For it is said to have been composed by Abbot Theodulf, when in prison at Angers, for a conspiracy against the emperor Louis the Pious, and sung by him in a moving strain, as the emperor, in procession, on that sunday, passed under the prison wall. The words and music touched the offended monarch's heart, and procured his liberation. This is said to have taken place about the year 818; and even if the legend be inaccurate, as some have thought, it proves the character and power which

the public voice attributed to the composition. Of the second class, are the hymns sung in the service of Friday, particularly the first, "Pange lingua gloriosi lauream certaminis;" which has a returning burthen of exquisite tenderness.

But the prevailing character of poetry throughout these services, is the dramatic, in its noblest sense. Before, however, exemplifying my observations, I have something to premise. I may be thought incautious in the selection of the term I have just used; as though it gave some countenance to the silly remark so often made upon the Catholic worship, as scenic, showy, or theatrical. Even if what I am going to say brought me in contact with such common-place sneers, I should not shrink from it, because I do not think the poverty of words, which is felt in all languages, should be the basis of an argument. Nor, if pomp and magnificence, which formerly belonged to every thing royal and noble, have in modern times been confined in our country to theatres, and have thence received a reproachful name, will any one conclude that the church, which has preserved them, ought to abandon them in consequence? Nay, I should think any one betrayed great want of sense, who traduced as theatrical that which existed before theatres. The pomp of the Levitical worship was certainly great and imposing; and would bear that ignominious name as well as ours. Yet God com-

manded it; and it is but a poor speech that can find no better epithet to give it.

But when I speak of the dramatic form of our ceremonies, I make no reference whatever to outward display; and I choose that epithet for the reason already given, that the poverty of language affords me no other for my meaning. The object and power of dramatic poetry consists in its being not merely descriptive but representative; and that, not only when reduced to action, but even when only consisting of words. Its character is to bear away the imagination and soul to the view of what others witnessed, and excite in us, through their words, such impressions as we might have naturally felt on the occasion. The inspired poets of the old law, the prophets I mean, are full of this lofty and powerful poetry; nothing can be more truly dramatic, as Louth has observed, than the opening of the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah,* where the Messiah and a chorus are represented as holding a splendid colloquy together. The latter first asks—"Who is this that cometh from Edom with garments dyed in Bozra?" The other replies:—"I am the proclaimer of justice, mighty in salvation." The chorus again demands:—"Why then is thy raiment red, and thy garments as of one who hath trodden the wine-press?" And he again answers:—"I have trodden the wine-

* "De Sacrâ Poesi," p. 318: Oxf. 1810.

press alone." This is dramatic in the noblest sense of the word, as are many other passages in the same sublime prophet. The Psalms are often constructed in the same manner, as I may have occasion to observe later; but the Canticle of Solomon and the book of Job are examples of a dramatic composition of a much higher order, where scene succeeds to scene, and a growing beauty or majesty of dialogue respectively is exhibited; which will defy all rivalry from the fairest specimens of uninspired poetry.

The service of the Church is throughout eminently poetical. Not a portion of its Office is without some hymn, often of singular beauty; and it would be easy to point out a tendency to poetical construction even in many of its prayers, litanies and antiphons. But the dramatic power, such as I have described it, runs through the service in a most marked manner, and must be kept in view for its right understanding. Thus, for example, the entire service for the dead, office, exequies, and mass, refers to the moment of death, and bears the imagination to the awful crisis of separation between body and soul. No matter that the anniversary of one deceased be commemorated a century or more after his death, and its object be to obtain release from a place of temporary chastisement, where, at least, his eternal lot of happiness is secured; the prayers of the Church represent him as in peril, strug-

gling against foes, upon the edge of the dismal pit of endless woe. In the pathetic Offertory of the Mass, our Saviour is entreated to "save him from the lion's mouth, lest hell should swallow him up, and he fall into darkness." In the Gradual, he is implored to absolve the dead from sin, "that they may escape the judgment of his vengeance;" and through the Office the versicle is repeated: "From the gates of hell snatch their souls, oh Lord!" In like manner, words of the most solemn expression are put into the mouths of the departed; which represent them as still engaged in doubtful contest. All this is exceedingly awful and beautiful, when considered in the light I have suggested, as transporting us to that scene where the real reckoning between justice and mercy takes place, and working up our feelings of fervour and earnestness to that intense energy, which a prayer at that decisive moment would inspire.

In like manner, and with the same beautiful spirit, the Church prepares us during Advent for the commemoration of our dear Redeemer's birth, as though it were really yet to take place. We are not drily exhorted to profit by that blessed event, and its solemnization; but we are daily made to sigh with the Fathers of old, "Send down the dew ye heavens from above, and let the clouds rain the Just One: let the earth be opened, and bud forth the Redeemer!" The

Collects on three of the four sundays of that season begin with the words "Lord raise up thy power and come:" as though we feared our iniquities would prevent his being born. It is curious to remark, how the compilers of the English Liturgy, who have throughout the year kept the Collects almost literally translated, startled, perhaps, by the bold poetry of this idea, which in our Liturgy accords with the rest of the service, substituted new prayers on two of these days, and altered the third so as to destroy that sentiment, by adding after "come" the words "amongst us," and completely changing the sense in the latter part.* But, through the Ca-

* Here are subjoined the two collects as they stand in their respective Liturgies.

ROMAN LITURGY.	ENGLISH LITURGY.
Exert, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy power and come: and succour us by Thy great might, that by the assistance of Thy grace, Thy indulgent mercy may hasten what is delayed by our sins. Who livest, &c.	O Lord, raise up (we pray Thee) Thy power, and come amongst us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, Thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of Thy Son, our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory world without end.—Amen.

tholic service of that season the same sentiment is kept alive, becoming more and more defined as the festival approaches; and still on it the same ideal return to the very moment and circumstances of our divine Redeemer's birth is expressed. The shepherds are desired, in poetical language, to declare what they have seen; and all the glories of the day are represented to the soul as if actually occurring.

In all this it is impossible not to recognize the highest poetical expression of the feelings most suitable to the event commemorated, by carrying them back, with dramatic power, to the scene itself. This principle, which will be found to animate the church service of every other season, rules most remarkably that of Holy Week, and gives it soul and life. It is not intended to be merely commemorative or historical; it is strictly speaking representative. The Church puts herself into mourning, as though her spouse were now undergoing his cruel fate; she weeps over Jerusalem, as if the measure of her iniquity were not yet filled up, and the punishment which has overtaken her might yet be averted. Our blessed Saviour is made, in the beautiful *Improperia* on Good-Friday, to address the Jews, as though still his people, and expostulate with them on their ungrateful return for his benefits; not, of course, speaking to the unfor-

tunate remnant of that people scattered over the world, but to the entire nation, as though actually engaged in their barbarity towards him. Whoever looks not at these functions in this sense, and reads not the Offices, sung or recited during them, with this feeling, will certainly neither relish nor understand them.

Why, he will ask, are the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah sung in such pathetic melody, bewailing the destruction and captivity of the Jewish people, while we should rather be lamenting our own sins which crucified the Son of Man? Because the Church rather hopes to win her way, by these very sentiments, to our hearts,—by movingly exciting analogous feelings respecting the old people of God, through that mixture of indignation and compassion which the witnessing of their crime would most powerfully have excited. Wherefore, throughout the antiphons and versicles, and other minuter parts of the service, are the words so selected, that they could appear spoken by none but our Saviour himself during his Passion? Because it is wished to represent that very scene in such a manner, that our affections should be excited rather as they would have been had he addressed us, or his people in our presence, in that solemn and feeling hour, than as they are likely to be by our own cold meditations.

But the rich poetry of this idea will be still more notably marked and felt if we analyse any of the services. Palm-Sunday is intended to commemorate the triumphant entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. and the first preparatory steps of his Passion. This might have been announced by a lesson or exhortation, informing the faithful of the object and character of the festival. Instead of this cold, formal method, a chorus, precisely as in the best Greek tragedy, is charged with this duty. It opens the service in true dramatic style, by singing, with noble simplicity, "Hosanna to the Son of David! blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Oh King of Israel, hosannah in the highest." After this burst, the priest, or officiating bishop, introduces the service by a short but expressive prayer, begging a blessing on the commemoration of Christ's Passion, which is going to commence. The subdeacon then reads a lesson from Exodus, in which, with an appropriate, and consequently beautiful analogy to the festival, God, after Israel had rested beneath the palm-trees of Elim, promises complete redemption, with the evidence thereof, from the Egyptian bondage.* Such an introduction is at once harmonious, noble, and most apt. It contains the type, whose fulfilment is about to engage our attention. The chorus

* Exod. xv. 27.

again comes in, and prepares the way for what will follow, by recounting the conspiracy of the Jewish priests for Christ's destruction, and the prophecy of Caiphas, that one should die for the people lest all should perish. Then, at length, the deacon fully unfolds the nature of the day's celebration, by chaunting the gospel that recounts the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and the song of joy with which it was accompanied. The celebrant (in the Sixtine chapel, the Pope himself) then proceeds to bless the prepared palms, —that is, to invoke the benediction of heaven on all who devoutly bear and keep them in remembrance of this opening event of our redemption.

Of the prayers employed in this benediction I will say nothing, but what may be said of all that occur in the Church Offices, that they possess an elevation of sentiment, a beauty of allusion, a force of expression, and a depth of feeling, which no modern form of supplication ever exhibits. They are on this occasion various; but are relieved by the choir, ever opportunely breaking in with its songs of gladness.

When the palms have been distributed, the scene of Christ's triumph is actually represented by a procession, in which they are borne. Here again the true dramatic feeling of the scene is kept up by the chorus, which, beginning with the account of our Saviour's sending two dis-

ciples to Bethania, to procure the humble ass on which he was to ride, describes that procession in a series of strophes, which increase in beauty till they reach a sentiment perfectly lyrical, and exclaim, "In faith be we united with the angels and those children crying out to the triumpher over death, "Hosanna in the highest!"

A ceremony now takes place, which to be understood must be considered in the same graphic and dramatic light. When the procession returns to the chapel, it finds the door closed: to represent how heaven's gates were barred against lost man. A semi-chorus within sings the two first verses of Theodulph's hymn, even as he did within his prison. The full chorus replies in the same strain from without. These two first verses are afterwards repeated as a burthen, or reply to each distich, sung as an antistrophe by the semi-chorus within. At the conclusion, the sub-deacon strikes the door with the staff of the cross which he bears, to denote, that through the redemption on the cross the bolts of heaven were withdrawn; the doors are opened, and the procession enters, while the chorus recounts the final entry of our Lord's triumphal procession into the holy city.

Should the mind of any one, used to consider such action, however simple in itself and symbolical in its meaning, as abhorrent from a true

worship, want a higher authority for its employment, I would refer him to two of the psalms, which evidently, and as accredited Protestant commentators admit, were composed for a similar dramatic recital. The first is the twenty-fourth psalm (Heb.) sung on occasion of the ark's translation to Mount Sion. It begins by a splendid chorus: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and all that therein dwell." After this noble introduction, as the procession ascends the hill, the chorus asks, "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord, or stand in his holy place?" When this query has been beautifully answered, the procession has reached the tabernacle and finds it closed. The chorus exclaims, "Lift up your heads, ye gates, and be lifted up ye ancient doors, that the King of Glory may enter." The semi-chorus, probably from within, demands, "Who is this King of Glory?" the chorus replies, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord strong in war." Again it repeats the invocation to the gates, again the semi-chorus asks its question; and then the doors fly open to the thundering choral burst, "The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory."* The one hundred and twenty-first psalm, according to Lowth, has the same construction. In it the king, about

* Lowth, p. 358.

to engage in war, approaches the Tabernacle, and standing without, implores the divine assistance; to which the priests from within answer in a chorus, assuring him of what he prays.* The analogy between these inspired dramatic actions, and the one performed at the close of this procession, seems to me singularly striking; and should not only remove all prejudice against it, which can hardly exist where good taste and a knowledge of its spirit direct the judgment, but invest it with an interest additional to its own.

But there is another part of the Office performed on Sunday and repeated on Friday, which goes much beyond all this in dramatic power and sublimity of representative effect. I allude, as many of you will readily understand, to the chaunting of the Passion, according to St. Matthew and St. John, in the service of these two days. This is performed by three interlocutors, in the habit of deacons, who distribute among themselves the parts, as follows.—The narrative is given by one in a strong manly tenor voice; the words of our Saviour are chaunted in a deep solemn bass, and whatever is spoken by any other person is given by the third in a high contralto. This at once produces a dramatic effect; each part has its particular cadence, of old, simple, but rich chaunt, suited to the character

* Lowth, vi. 390.

represented, and worthy of ancient tragedy. That of the narrator is clear, distinct, and slightly modulated: that in which ordinary interlocutors speak, sprightly and almost bordering upon colloquial familiarity; but that in which our Saviour's words are uttered, is slow, grave and most solemn, beginning low, and ascending by full tones, then gently varied in rich though simple undulations, till it ends by a graceful and expressive cadence, modified with still greater effect in interrogatory phrases. This rhythm is nearly the same in all Catholic churches, but in the Pope's chapel has the advantage of being sung by three of the choir instead of by ordinary clergymen, and consequently by voices most accurately intoned and most scientifically trained.

But the peculiar beauty, or rather the magnificence, of this dramatic recitation in the Sixtine chapel, consists in the chorus. For, whenever the Jewish crowd are made to speak, in the history of the Passion, or indeed whenever any number of individuals interfere, the choir bursts in with its simple but massive harmony, and expresses the sentiment with a truth and energy which thrills through the frame and overpowers the feelings. These choruses were composed in 1585, by Thomas Lewis de Victoria, native of Avila, and contemporary with the immortal Palestrina, who did not attempt to correct or

alter them; probably, as his worthy successor, Baini, has observed to me, because he found them so perfect and suited to their intention. These are twenty-one in the gospel of Sunday, and only fourteen in that of Friday. The phrases, too, of which they consist, in the first, are longer, and more capable of varied expression than in the latter, and the composer has taken full advantage of this circumstance. When the Jews cry out, "Crucify him," or "Barabbas," the music, like the words, is concentrated with frightful energy, and consists of just as many notes as syllables; yet, in the three notes of the last word, a passage of key is effected, simple as it is striking. In this, and in most of the choruses, the effect is rendered far more powerful by the abrupt termination which cuts the concluding note into a quaver (a note not known in the music of the papal choir), though in written measure it is a large, or *double breve*. The entire harmony, though almost all composed of semibreves, is given in a quick but marked, and, so to speak, a stamping way, well suiting the tumultuous outcries of a furious mob. These are all traditional modifications of the written score, preserved alive from year to year among the musicians since the original composer's time. In the third chorus of St. Matthew's Passion, where the two false witnesses speak, it

is in a duet, between a soprano and contralto, and the words are made to follow one another in a stumbling way, as though one always took up his story from the other, and the music is in a syncopated style; one part either jarring with or clearly imitating the other's movements; so that it most aptly represents the judgment, "that their testimony was not agreeing." In the sixteenth, nothing could exceed the soft and moving tone in which the words, "Hail King of the Jews" are uttered. With all the expression belonging to their character, they powerfully draw the soul to utter, in earnest, what was intended in blasphemy. But, towards the end, these choruses increase in length, in richness, and variety. The seventeenth and eighteenth are master-pieces; they are bolder in their transitions and most happy in their resolutions, and their final cadences, swelling, majestic and full. In the gospel of St. John, however, there are one or two phrases, which, if not so rich, are even more exquisite in their modulation. I would instance the tenth: "If you let him go, you are no friend of Cæsar's," which is delightfully modulated. But far the most beautiful and pathetic in all the collection is the last chorus, "Let us not divide it, but cast lots." The parts succeed one another in a falling cadence, growing softer and softer, and almost dying away, till the entire chorus swells in a mildened but majestic burst.

I have entered into these details, because I think the shortness of these beautiful compositions, the rapidity of their execution, and the suddenness with which they break upon the ear, and with which they expire, produce generally a feeling rather of wonder and amazement than of admiration, and prevent attention to the peculiar expression of each, and the scientific, though simple construction, of many of them.

You will, I think, acknowledge that the entire arrangement of these Passions is upon a principle of deep dramatic design, well worthy of them, and calculated to produce more solemn and devout impression on the soul than any recital or exposition of their momentous contents possibly could. The measured, stately rhythm of the triple chaunt, in addition to the aid it receives from these choruses, has, besides, a poetical feeling superadded by the manner of its performance. For, without any appearance of artifice, the strong voice in which the historical recitation is delivered, will be observed to soften gradually as the catastrophe approaches—reduced almost to a whisper as the last words upon the cross are related—and die away as the last breath of our Saviour's life is yielded; when all, I would almost say, spontaneously fall upon their knees, and a deep silence of some moments is observed and necessarily felt.

After having dwelt at such length upon these two Offices, for the purpose of guiding the mind to a proper appreciation of the artistic, or poetical principle, on which they are constructed, it can hardly be necessary to accumulate other examples. For the feeling is one throughout; that of bearing back the mind and heart to the original scene, and concentrating their thoughts and affections upon the last moments of our Redeemer's life, as though we actually witnessed them. The same principle, farther enforced by a divine recommendation, if not a commandment, has preserved on Thursday the practice of washing the feet of the poor, as an ecclesiastical ceremony. The Pope strips himself of his rich sacerdotal robes, girds himself with a linen towel, and washes the feet of those appointed, and kisses them. The commemoration of our Lord's conduct, in his last days, would not have been complete, if that singular act of humility and kindness, which he coupled as an illustration with the precept of fraternal love, had found no place in the service of this week. And immeasurable, nay infinite, as must be the distance between the Incarnate Son of God and any man, however much exalted upon earth, can we imagine a closer imitative approach to that condescending manifestation of charity, a more graphic illustration of the command to do as

He did, than in witnessing one, whom the great majority of Christians believe to be his vicegerent and representative—one, whom all see to be a sovereign upon earth, and the spiritual chief of more subjects than any other, can, in his temporal dominion, count, thus fulfilling this duty, from which, in spite of its apparent formality, many would shrink, and at any rate literally performing towards his poorer brethren that which Christ did towards his apostles. This rite, considered upon our principle of *representing* our Redeemer's conduct, as in a sacred drama, becomes not only appropriate but almost necessary.

A number of other ceremonies will be explained in the same manner. For instance, at the beginning of the High Mass, on Easter Sunday, the Pope, as he proceeds towards the altar, is met by the three youngest cardinal deacons, whom he embraces, as emblematic of our Redeemer's first interview with his faithful followers when he rose from death. The custom of the sepulchre, or the depositing of the Eucharistic species in an altar prepared for that purpose, when considered in connexion with the Catholic belief of the real presence of Jesus Christ's true body and blood in that sacrament, becomes a lively representation of the closing circumstance of his sacred Passion.

But sensible that I have said sufficient to direct your attention towards the sentiments with which these Offices are to be considered and attended, and fearful of becoming tedious by prolixity, I will pass over the many other illustrations which occur to me, and rather make one or two observations on the service of the eight days considered as a whole. While every part has a character of life and of living action, which forms the very essence of dramatic representation, an attentive observer will not fail to notice the progressive and deepening tone of feeling which the successive days are calculated to produce, with such contrasts and partial alleviations as are necessary to give it vigour, and preserve its poetical power. And this is owing only to the fidelity with which the representation follows the original scene.

Thus the service of Sunday opens it in a sorrowful and solemn manner; but there is a mixture of passing exultation and triumph, as, bearing palms, we commemorate the entry into Jerusalem. During the three following days, the Office is all sorrowful, but without any public demonstration of moment, till the Tenebræ of Wednesday afternoon removes the veil, and shows the church in mourning, in the solemn chaunt of her Office, the Lamentations and the Miserere. Thursday checks, for a moment, the

course of grief. It is dedicated to the commemoration of the institution of the blessed Eucharist, and the sealing of the Covenant of love. The sacerdotal vestments are white; the "Gloria in excelsis" is sung, and everything indicates some mitigation of growing sorrow; for still the vein of religious melancholy may be distinctly traced running through all the Office. When this tribute of more joyful gratitude has been paid, every barrier has been broken down to grief; the altars are stripped not only of every ornament (that had been done from the beginning of Passion-tide), but of its daily ordinary coverings, and with them, of course, every other part of the chapel, from the canopy to the floor, is bared and unclothed; the purple colour worn on the Sunday is changed into the deeper mourning hue of black; the Cardinals, for this only day in the year, have their robes of serge instead of silk; the Liturgy itself seems to be confused and is imperfect; and then the church is left without her incense or taper, mourning and solitary, as on the loss of an only begotten. Saturday of old was spent in this abandonment of unspeaking woe, without a service or a chaunt. But according to the present ritual, the first dawn of consolation is allowed to appear, tidings of the Resurrection are communicated, the Alleluia of the following day is announced, and so is

that too sudden transition prevented, which otherwise would take place, from the depth of sorrow to the fullest consummation of spiritual joy, in the glories which the Resurrection of our Redeemer unfolds to the imagination and feelings of the faithful Christian. Such are the principles that pervade these sacred Offices of Holy Week, as performed at the Vatican; intended as representations, they act, rather than commemorate, the various scenes of our blessed Saviour's Passion; and they contain, both in their separate actions, and in their great combination, all the elements of a poetry powerfully dramatic.

Never has such poetry walked long alone, but the sister art of sound and harmonious expression is sure to join her. It would have been strange indeed, if the inspiring genius of Christian art, which had made every other form of the beautiful serve it, should have found music alone unavailable; or if the spirit, which had combined such noble and beautiful sentiments in one grand ceremonial, had not been able to breathe them in becoming accents. Music, then, alone seems wanting to complete our view of the artistic merits of these holy functions, which we have shown to have been most influential in developing the arts of design, and to possess in themselves the greatest poetical beauty; nor shall we find it here unworthy of its destination.

For I may say, contradiction nothing fearing, that you will hear during the next week such music, as that whether you consider its grandeur of effect, or the skill of its composition, its irresistible impression, or its historical interest, no other place in the world, in the same period of time, or indeed ever, can exhibit. Upon this matter, therefore, I now proceed to treat.

The music performed in the Papal chapel during Holy Week is of a two-fold kind, the plain or Gregorian chaunt, called in Italian, "canto fermo," or "canto piano," and the peculiar harmonized music, "canto figurato," there only used. I need not remind you that no instrument is ever admitted. In the first of these are sung the whole of the Tenebræ, excepting the first lamentation, and the Miserere at the end, and certain portions of the Mass, as the Introit, Gradual, Offertory, and Communion. The two portions of the Tenebræ just excepted, the Kyrie Eleison, Gloria, and other parts of the Mass, are sung in harmony. That you may understand the value of the various pieces which you will hear, it may not be without use to run cursorily over the history of sacred music.

We have no clear testimonies upon this subject before peace was restored to the Church; when Eusebius tells us that different places were assigned to the young and old who sung psalms.

St. Augustine attributes the introduction of alternate chaunting, in the west, to St. Ambrose, who, during his residence in the east, had learned it. There is a well-known passage in his *Confessions*, where he describes the influence the music of the Milanese church exercised on his conversion, by moving him to tears of tenderness when he heard it. The system introduced by St. Ambrose is not known; there is no doubt but it was founded upon the ancient Greek system; and as what is now called the Gregorian chaunt is based upon it too, we cannot doubt but it bore a great resemblance to this, and was, in fact, either superadded or absorbed by the reform which Pope Gregory the Great introduced into church music. I am far from wishing to enter into technical details, but it may be interesting to many to know, in what the scale or keys of the Gregorian, or plain chaunt, differ from those in ordinary music, and, therefore, I will briefly speak of them. St. Gregory gave to the octave scale the names which its notes now bear, A B C, &c. According to his and the present systems of music, any of these notes may be the key-note; but then we now introduce as many flats and sharps as are necessary to make the tones and semitones fall at the same intervals in every major and minor key respectively. Hence a melody written for one key can be sung

upon another, without any change thence resulting except as to pitch. In the Gregorian chaunt likewise, any note may be the key-note ; but no sharps or flats are allowed excepting B ♭ in the key of F. Thus in every key, the position of the semitones varies ; and a piece of music, composed on one key or tone, is completely altered, and becomes insufferable if transposed into another. Within a few centuries, sad corruptions had crept into the ecclesiastical music ; and great disputes arose as to how many keys or tones there were in it. Those were days of loyalty ; and the nice point was referred to Charlemagne. He studied the question deeply, took counsel, and issued his imperial decree, " that eight keys or modes appeared quite sufficient." Remonstrances seem to have been made, especially by the Greeks ; and a second mandate pronounced " there are twelve modes." *

The Gregorian chaunt is completely diatonic ; it is melodic, that is, sung by all the voices. Rousseau has observed, and every musician will agree, that no modern music can come up to it in that pathos, which a majestic strain can give to the human voice ; and another author has observed, that every modern attempt to compose in imitation of it has completely failed. The services of Holy Week will present the most

* Baini, " Vita di Palestrina," tom. ii. p. 81.

perfect specimens. As a chaunt, for a minister at the altar, I will mention, as unrivalled, the Passion, of which I have already spoken, and the Benediction of the Paschal Candle on Holy Saturday morning; as joyous yet as dignified a piece of declamatory music, if I may so speak, as is anywhere to be found. The psalms are chaunted at Tenebræ in plain Gregorian song; but I hardly know where to choose a more beautiful example of its rich and expressive modulations, than the verse which is sung just before the Miserere, "Christus factus est, &c." Christ was made obedient for us unto death. Each evening an additional clause is joined, and the strain increases in loftiness and beauty. The second and third Lamentations each day are sung by a single treble voice to a cadence well known, but particularly modified into additional sweetness in the Sixtine chapel. In general, the most delicately and most pathetically modulated is the prayer of Jeremiah, the last on Friday evening.

In all these instances, and many others, we have the most perfect examples of the true Gregorian chaunt. But there are other things to remark, still more interesting to those that study the history of music. It would appear that in the old church chaunt the melody was rhythmic, that is to say, there was no written distinction

of length in the notes; the letters which indicated them were noted only to express the tone, but the measure of the note followed the quantity, as grammarians call it, of the syllable it accompanied, so as to express the practical rhythm or prosody of the hymn. Shakes, however, and ornamental passages, were admitted, to add grace to the movement. Now, whoever would wish to have an idea of the music which this would produce must go the Pope's chapel on Good Friday, when the only piece that has been preserved, or is sung in the world, upon this system, is performed. This is the hymn, "Pange lingua gloriosi, lauream certaminis," sung during the ceremony of kissing the crucifix, after the "*Improperia.*" It is a lively, almost sprightly composition, not unsuitable to the triumphant words that are matched to it; and if any one should think it of too light a character for the occasion, he will, I am sure, cease to judge it so severely, when he thus considers it as the only remnant of that truly poetical music which accurately expresses the prosody of the words. Don Antonio Eximeno, an eminent writer on music, was so struck with this hymn, that he went year after year to hear it, and has written a long scientific eulogium of it. He pronounces it a work which every composer or director of church music should diligently study, as a beautiful specimen

of the rhythmic style.* Nor is this the only relic of music, else lost, which is here found; for, as in that instance, the Holy Week has treasured up for us the only example of an ancient system of melody, so has it kept the only remains of the oldest known system of harmonization. On Easter Sunday morning you will hear the part of the Office, called *Tierce*, sung before Mass, while the Pope is robing beside the altar. At the close of each psalm, you will not fail to notice the "Gloria Patri" harmonized upon a system manifestly different from anything you have heard elsewhere, but producing a rich and pathetic effect. This is the only instance remaining of what the French used to call *faux bourdon*, and from them, after the Pope's return from Avignon, the Italian's *falso bordone*, or *false bass*; for two other systems, since called by this name, are spurious and mere modern conceits. It is attributed to Guido, of Arezzo, the father of modern music, in the eleventh century, and is effected simply thus.—The contralto continues the tone or strain of the psalm just as the preceding verses were sung; the tenor takes the sixth and the bass the third, and these two parts follow the movement of the tone, always keeping the same interval, without regard of tones or

* "Dubbio;" Roma, 1775, p. i. p. 19.

semitones.* This would be considered by any composer contrary to all rule; yet the effect it produces is perfectly delicious. There are several other particularities in the Gregorian chaunt, as performed in the Pope's chapel, which, not to be tedious, I omit. I will only observe, that even the plain chaunt in the Mass and antiphons is there sung in two parts; the tenor and treble always taking the melody a third above the other two. This is done, by permission obtained, with considerable difficulty, from, I believe, Alexander VII.

Far the most interesting portion of the music, which enters into these Offices, is that disposed in parts, or harmonized. I have already remarked on the corruptions which had early crept into sacred music. The Roman Church had, however, always adhered to the plain song, though greatly debased, till the return of Gregory XI from Avignon, in 1377, when he brought with him his French choir, which he united with that of Rome. They introduced harmonized music of the most dangerous character, full of tricks, divisions, and meretricious ornament, which soon degraded church music from a science to a mere profane exhibition. Time

* A part has been added for the treble, which properly should be in unison with the bass. Even in the other parts, on some occasions, slight deviations have been introduced.

brought no improvement; and by the sixteenth century the evil seemed beyond the hope of any cure except the most desperate. The papal choir was almost exclusively in the hands of foreigners,—Spaniards, French, but chiefly Flemings. There was actually an idea that the Italians had no musical talent or power; the strangers made a complete monopoly of the pontifical chapel, engaged fellow-countrymen who could not sing a note, and jealously excluded all natives; so that at one time the number of effective performers was reduced to nine. But the corruption of sacred music became more decided than its decline; and consisted in two points:—First, in the confusion of the words. Instead of all the parts being applied to the same words, they were often singing phrases that did not belong in the least to the Office, but were either Scripture texts, or fanciful compositions. Thus in an old *Kyrie Eleison*, preserved in the archives of the choir, the tenor sings, "I am risen and still am with you, Alleluia," and other similar words. In another, entitled of the B. Virgin, the same voice sings through the Kyrie, Gloria, and Credo, a hymn in her praise. There is a motett of Obrecht's, in which four different sets of words are sung by the four voices. The confusion was such, that no words at all could be distinguished, but all was a jarring confusion,

most unbecoming a religious worship. When Nicholas V asked Cardinal Domenico Capranica what he thought of his choir, he boldly answered, with a comparison, not as elegant as it is expressive, that it seemed to him "like a sack full of young swine, for he heard a dreadful noise, but could distinguish nothing articulate." In 1549, Cirillo Franchi wrote to Ugolino Gualterruzzi, of the singers of his day, "Pongono tutta la loro beatitudine in fare che al medesimo tempo che uno dice *sanctus*, dice l'altro *Sabaoth*, e l'altro *gloria tua*, con alcuni urli, mugiti, gargarismi, che sembrono più gatti di Gennajo, che fiori di Maggio."*

The second and worse corruption was from the selection of the melodies. Originally, amidst all the degradation of church song, one of the voices at least preserved the established notes; which served as a ground for the absurd variations of the others. In course of time, composers chose for their theme other pieces of sacred music, to which they adapted the words of the Creed, or Gloria, always preserving more or less the strain. The Mass then received the

* Baini, tom. ii. p. 104. "It is their greatest happiness to contrive, that while one says *anctus* the other should say *Sabaoth*, and a third *gloria tua*, with certain howls, bellowings and gutteral sounds, so that they more resemble cats in January than flowers of May."

name of this piece; thus we have the Mass "Beatus Vir," the Mass "Ave Maria," &c. So far some indulgence might be granted; but the next step was intolerable. Composers proceeded to select for their themes, profane, vulgar, and even lascivious airs; and as most of the musicians were foreigners, so most of these strains were provençal. In this manner, we have Masses entitled "L'Homme armé," a theme often repeated; "Chiare, fresche e dolci acque," and innumerable others; some with titles which sufficiently express the style of the music. When these two abuses had reached their height of crying abomination, it might have been said with truth—

"Forse è nato
Chi l'un e l'altro caccerà del nido."

For amidst the corruption of the age arose the genius of Palestrina, pure as if angels had breathed into him their harmony, capable at once of conceiving, effecting, and maturing the perfection of music, whose spirit seems ever since to have watched in guardianship over the choir which he taught; and whose mantle has descended, almost in its freshness, to his living successor and biographer.

Giovanni Pierluigi, called from his native town Palestrina, was born of poor parents, in 1524; and, having been noticed by a musician for

his talents, entered as a singing boy in the choir of some church. He soon distinguished himself, and was named, at the age of twenty-seven, director of the music in the new Capella Giulia, established in St. Peter's, by Pope Julius III. Having, three years later, published his first works, which evidently far surpassed those of his age, the Pope desired him to abandon his post in the Basilica, and enter, almost the only Italian, into the choir of his chapel. He did not enjoy his painful situation long; for the severe Pope Paul III, succeeding in six months, commenced a reform in his chapel, by expelling Palestrina and two other married men; as none but clergymen were, by ancient enactments, allowed to sing there. Pierluigi, however, was soon appointed director of the music in the Lateran Basilica. Here he composed, in 1560, his celebrated "*Improperia*," which I have several times mentioned. They consist of mild reproaches, placed in our Saviour's mouth, to his people for their cruel and ungrateful conduct, intermixed with the *Trisagion*, as it is called, "Holy God, Mighty God, Immortal God," sung in Greek and Latin by a chorus and semi-chorus.

The impression made by this sublime, though simple composition, was such, that, in the following year, Pope Pius IV requested Palestrina to allow a copy to be taken for his chapel, where it

has been since performed every year in the service of Good Friday.

These Improperia are in form of a chaunt, where every verse is repeated to the same music, and divided into two parts, so that most of the words run upon one note, and resolve into a double cadence at the middle and end. To look at the score, it might be supposed that any one, almost a child, could have composed them. In the chorus and semi-chorus of the Trisagion, each voice has actually only two notes, and those of the most obvious harmony. And yet to hear those sung, slow yet bold, full yet soft, with the melting modulation which that choir alone can give, produces a feeling of sweet devotional melancholy, a mildened emotion, which not even the more artful and far-famed *Miserere* can excite. It is truly the triumph of nature over art; and it was a mighty effort of genius, to conceive, that the simplest possible combinations could produce such wonderful effect. Dr. Burney has called Palestrina, the "Homer of ancient music;"* and no composition, perhaps, more justly entitles him to that name. But the triumph of his genius was far from ending here: he may be really called the saviour of music.

The abuses which I have before mentioned, occasioned a decree from the Council of Trent,

* History, p. 198, vol. iii.

enjoining the abolition of all profane and lascivious music whether in air or movement ;* and in 1564, Pope Pius appointed a congregation, or committee of cardinals, to carry into effect the canons of that synod. Two of the number were the Cardinals Vitelozzi and St. Charles Borromeo, who, as all true saints ever were, was a man of real taste, and to them was especially committed the charge of musical reform. They held several meetings, and consulted with a deputation of the papal choir, as to the best expedients to carry it into effect. Cardinal Borromeo, as archpriest of Sta. Maria Maggiore, was acquainted with the abilities of Palestrina, who had now passed into the service of that church, and at his suggestion, the eminent but modest composer was called on the 10th of January, 1565, and commissioned to write a Mass, in which the theme should have no affinity to any profane air, and in which the words could be distinctly heard. He was warned, that on the success of his experiment depended the fate of church music; for if he failed, it should be for ever banished, as profane, from the house of God.

We may easily conceive the embarrassment, yet, at the same time, the honest pride, of a genius like his, upon being burthened with such a responsibility, and feeling the very existence of his favourite darling science dependent upon

* Sess. xxii. Dec. de Celeb. Missæ.

his sole efforts. But he shrunk not from the trial. Within three months he presented three new Masses, which were performed by the Papal choir, on the 26th of April, in the house of Cardinal Vitellozzi. The two first were greatly admired; although the genius of Palestrina had been cramped by the delicacy of his situation. But the third perfectly won the case; the congregation decided that nothing more could be desired, and decreed the preservation of music in divine service.

On the 29th of June, a solemn festival was held to receive the liberal offers of the Swiss cantons; and the Pope assisted at the Sixtine chapel. The victorious Mass was performed; every one was ravished with delight. The Pope exclaimed, "these must have been the strains which John the apostle heard in the heavenly Jerusalem, and which another John has renewed in that of earth!" It is said, that Cardinal Pirani, dean of the sacred college, turning to Cardinal Serbelloni, beautifully adapted to the music the lines of Dante:—

> "Render è questo voce a voce in tempra,
> Ed in dolcezza ch' esser non può nota,
> Se non colà dove 'l gioir s'insempra."*

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* Here words are joined, and sounds harmonious blend
In sweetness, such as can alone be known
In that blest place where gladness hath no end.
Paradiso x.

To which he answered with equal felicity—

" Risponda dunque ; oh ! fortunata sorte !
Risponda alla divina cantilena,
Da tutte parti la beata Corte,
Si ch' ogni vista ne sià più serena." *

This history of the salvation of sacred music has been erroneously related by all authors, including Dr. Burney, till Baini, in his interesting life of Palestrina, discovered the truth. It is generally said, that Pope Marcellus II, during the few days that his reign lasted, wished to abolish sacred music ; but that Palestrina requested a trial, and produced the Mass I have spoken of. But the title which it bears of " Missa Papæ Marcelli" was not given it until its publication, by request of Philip II, of Spain, several years after the date of its composition, which was in the third pontificate after Marcellus.

Whoever wishes to hear this magnificent composition, must attend the Pope's chapel on Holy Saturday ; the only day in the year when it is performed. It is in six voices, having two basses and two tenors. As Palestrina intended to avoid all air, and to give to each part an ever-varying movement, and as it was consequently necessary

* Respond then, blessed lot ! respond to this
Heavenly strain, the happy court above,
That so our pleasure may encrease to bliss.
Baini, tom. i. p. 231.

that each, from time to time, should repose, he took this expedient, and secured a fine substruction for his harmony by the stability of his lower and middle parts; as the treble and contralto could well sustain alternately the shriller harmonies. The effect of this arrangement is wonderful. In most modern choruses, one or two parts at most have movement, while the others are either kept on sostenuto notes, or else, if more than four, in unisons. But in this Mass, as in all his music, there is no *riempitura*, or filling up; every part, as Dr. Burney terms it, is a *real* part, as important as the other; all full of vigour, life and movement. The consequence is, that when performed, it has a power beyond most compositions in twelve or sixteen voices. Hence two adaptations which have been published of it, (sometimes erroneously attributed to the great composer himself), one for four and the other for eight voices, are devoid of effect, and spoil the character of the original. I will even say, from experience, that this Mass, performed with only one voice to a part, has more effect and vigour than any ordinary composition with twice the number.

The character of Palestrina's music is rich, harmonious, and imposing. It is essentially choral, as all church music should be. A plain litany, sung by the untaught multitude, with all

the earnestness of devotion, will affect the soul more powerfully than all the artificial divisions of a modern performer. The music of the Temple was evidently choral, sung by troops of Levites, and supported by the sound of trumpets. Whenever the Scripture mentions music, as heard in heaven, it is always of this character. Four spirits, the number of perfect harmony, unite in the song of "Holy, Holy, Holy." Countless multitudes sing together the magnificent canticle "To the Lamb that was slain," in a voice as the roaring of the sea; and the virgins who sing a a song, known to none else, are forty thousand in number. The music of the church should be in the same spirit; and as it is performed in the name of the multitude of faithful, knitted in the accord of charity, it should be, so to speak, multitudinous and harmonious. The exclusion, too, of the organ, and every other instrument, requires that an unceasing vocal harmony should be kept up. Palestrina is by no means, as Burney insinuates, devoid of melody: in his motetts there is a prevailing movement, which, though far from approaching what is called air or tune, gives a distinct character to each, and leaves an impression upon the memory—the truest criterion, perhaps, of melody. He varies his style with his subject; for he always felt what he wrote. When treating a pathetic theme, no

one can be more exquisitely tender and rich, without any such changes of key, or unexpected accords, as modern music has introduced. One of the finest specimens of his pathetic, devout style, will be performed on Sunday next (Passion Sunday) during the Offertory. It is a motett on the words, "We have sinned with our fathers, we have done wickedly." To the same class belong his "Stabat mater," only performed at the Offertory of Palm Sunday. Yet more delicious, though, perhaps, not so expressive, you will find the first "Lamentations" of Wednesday and Friday evening, which are harmonized by Palestrina, whereas that of Thursday is by Allegri, of whom I will say a few words just now.

I have observed, that the Lamentations are not, perhaps, so expressive as some of Palestrina's other compositions. By that I mean, that little or no attempt is made to render the varied expression of each passage. This I consider an essential characteristic of this style of music, and conducive to its perfect effect. When we look upon an old sacred picture, every part is intended to produce a single impression. Whether our eye turn to the calm sky, or the smiling landscape, or the saints that stand in simple attitude on either side, or on the countenance of them that are in the middle enthroned, there is

a unity of tone and sentiment; and an unmingled feeling of devotion is consequently excited. The old masters generally excluded from their crucifixions the ruffianly soldiers and crowd; and only allowed the compassionating friends of Jesus to be seen about his cross. Modern artists think they gain by contrast, as they certainly do in pictorial effect, exactly just as much as they lose in moral power; and, therefore, introduce groups of executioners and barbarous foes, who alloy the purer feelings of the scene with earthly passion. Such seems to me the precise difference between the older and the later musical performers even of the Papal chapel. Those of old took their tone from the character of the entire piece, not from particular words. They would, in a varied hymn, like the "Gloria," pass from the major to the minor mode, to express the feeling of each part; but there was no attempt to catch at words: "he descended into hell," and "he ascended into heaven," were not expressed, as in modern music, by runs from the top to the bottom of the gamut, and *vice versa*. They overlooked minor details, which would have broken into the general design; and checked the plan of swelling emotion which a course of music, in uniform style of expression, must produce. I will illustrate these remarks from the

Miserere, as performed in the Pope's chapel, on three successive evenings, merely closing my account of Palestrina, by saying, that, after having filled all Europe with his fame, and being venerated by all lovers of true harmony, he expired the 2nd of February, 1594, in the arms of St. Philip Neri, and was buried with great honour in St. Peter's.

Anciently, the Miserere in greatest repute was that of Luigi Dentice, a Neapolitan, published in 1533. Allegri, who was called to Rome, by Pope Urban VIII, from his native city Fermo, composed one which has been ever since considered a master-piece of sacred music. In 1714, Tommaso Bai, taking it for a model, and indeed doing nothing more than varying it for each verse, produced another scarcely inferior, but still in the form of an imitation. The present learned, virtuous, and amiable Director of the Papal choir, Guiseppe Baini, has composed another. I mention these three, because they are the ones yet performed; Baini's on Wednesday, Bai's on Thursday, and Allegri's on Friday evening. The difference of style which I have remarked between the old and the modern composers is here strongly observable. Baini's, I believe, generally pleases the uninitiated most; and would be a grand and beautiful composition

anywhere, but appears less so under the roof against which Allegri's strains are accustomed to die away. Every verse is varied, and betrays art. At the words *Et exultabunt ossa humiliata*, there is air, or rather time, upon the first part of the verse, in a rising, joyful movement, succeeded by a low, deep and sepulchral expression in the rest of the phrase. The verse *incerta et occulta sapientiæ tuæ manifestasti mihi*, begins with a soft stealthy expression, to convey the idea of concealment and uncertainty; then at the *manifestasti*, "thou hast declared," part succeeds to part, till a grand burst of full declaration is made. Every verse proceeds upon the same principle, and the mind is thus kept undecided between different feelings, watching the art and skill of the composer,—now held in suspense, and heaving upwards on a majestic swell, then falling suddenly, by its breaking, as a wave, on an abrupt and shortened cadence; and you arrive at the conclusion with a variety of images and feelings,—the mind, like a shivered mirror, retaining only fragments of sentiments and emotions. How different is the effect of Allegri's, upon the soul of one, who, kneeling in that silent twilight, and shutting up every sense, save that of hearing, allows himself to be borne unresisting by the uniformly directed tide of its

harmonies. It is but a chaunt twice varied: one verse being in four parts, and another in five, till both unite in the final swell of nine voices. The written notes are simple and unadorned; but tradition, under the guidance of long experience and of chastened taste, has interwoven many turns, dissonances and resolutions, which no written or published score has expressed. At first, the voices enter into full but peculiar harmony, softly swelling in emphasis on each word, till the middle of the verse, when a gradual separation of each part takes place, preparing for the first close; you hear them, as though weaving among themselves a rich texture of harmonious combination; one seems struggling against the general resolve, and refusing more than a momentary contact with another, but edging off upon delicious dissonances, till the whole, with a waving, successive modulation, meet in full harmony upon a suspended cadence. Then they proceed with the second portion of the verse, upon a different, bnt even richer accord, till once more they divide with greater beauty than before. The parts seem to become more entangled than ever. Here you trace one winding and creeping, by soft and subdued steps, through the labyrinth of sweet sounds; then another drops, with delicious trickling falls, from the highest compass to the

level of the rest; then one seems at length to extricate itself; then another, in imitative successive cadences; they seem as silver threads that gradually unravel themselves, and then wind round the fine, deep-toned bass which has scarcely swerved from its steady dignity during all their modulations, and filling up the magnificent diapason, burst into a swelling final cadence, which has no name upon earth.

After verse has thus succeeded to verse, ever deepening the impression once made, without an artifice or an embellishment to mar the singleness of the influence, after the union of the two choirs has made the last burst, of condensed, but still harmonious, power; and that affecting prayer, "Look down, O Lord, upon this thy family," has been recited in melancholy monotony amidst the scarcely expired echoes of that enchanting, overpowering, heavenly strain, the mind remains in a state of subdued tenderness and solemnity of feeling, which can ill brook the jarring sounds of earth, and which make it sigh after the region of true and perfect harmony.

I hardly think that once or twice hearing the Misereres of Allegri and Bai can impress the feelings which I have feebly endeavoured to describe. Perhaps, however, what I have said, may prepare your minds for them, and induce you

to assist at it; and at all the functions of this holy season, with the desire to appreciate in them the riches of art which they contain, in the exquisiteness of their poetry and its sister power.

LECTURE THE THIRD.

LECTURE THE THIRD.

THE CEREMONIES OF HOLY WEEK CONSIDERED IN CONNEXION WITH HISTORY.

Monumental character of church ceremonies—Records of the earliest ages.—Midnight service.—Symbolical power given to rites suggested by necessity.—Recollections of the triumph of Christianity.—Adoration of the Cross.—Procession on Palm Sunday.—Adoption of the Trisagion under Theodosius.—Recollections of the Middle Ages.—Rites once general here preserved from total extinction.—Connexion with the Greek Church.—Conclusion.

HAVING now considered the Offices of Holy Week in their relations with Art, as well external, or in their outward circumstances, as

internal, through their essential forms; the plan which I have laid down brings me to treat of them in their historical character, or as connected with various epochs of ages past. Into this portion might most properly be said to enter the learning of my task; as it would seem to require a minute investigation of the cause and origin of each ceremony observed in these sacred functions. But I much doubt whether such particular discussions would lead to much practical benefit; and not rather, by the variety of subjects and arguments, produce some confusion and dissatisfaction. I prefer, therefore, a method more according with that which I have hitherto kept—of presenting more general views, and classifying objects under heads which may be remembered, and,—when remembered, produce a wholesome impression.

On hearing that I am about to treat of the historical value of these offices and ceremonies, perhaps many will be inclined to prejudge that I am anxious to prove them all most ancient, and trace them back to the earliest times of Christianity. Whoever shall so imagine will be completely mistaken. If the Catholic Church, in all things essential of faith and worship, lays claim to apostolic antiquity, she no less holds a right to continuity of descent; and this, as well as the other, must be by monuments attested. When we

cast our eyes over England, and see, in every part, remains of ancient grandeur belonging to a very early age,—raised lines of prætorian encampments and military roads, or sepulchral mounds with their lachrymals and brazen vessels; then in our search find nothing more, till, many centuries after, noble edifices for worship, first somewhat ruder, then ever growing in beauty, begin to cover the land; we conclude, indeed, that it has long been peopled, but that the break of monumental continuities proves the later race to have had nought in common with the earlier; but that a dreary waste of some sort must have widely spread and lasted long between them. Not so on the other hand is it with this city, in which an unfailing series of public monuments, from the earliest times, shows that one people alone have ruled and been great within it, and guided its policy upon a constant plan. It is even thus with the Church which, in many and varied ways, has recorded its belief, its aspirations, and its feelings, upon monuments of every age,—in none more clearly than in her sacred offices. It would be unnatural to refer many of the rites now observed to the very earliest ages. What have joyful processions in common with the low and crooked labyrinths of the catacombs? How would the palm branch grate upon the feelings of men crushed under per-

secution, and praying in sackcloth and ashes for peace? These are the natural symbols of joy and triumph; they express the outburst of the heart when restored to light and liberty; they are forms of Christian lustration over scenes and places that have been defiled with previous abominations.

One striking difference between the old and new law seems to consist in this, that the latter was not content to form the spirit of the religious, but moulded its external appearance to an unalterable type. The Jewish nation might undergo any political modification, but the forms of its worship, its place and circumstances, its ceremonies and expressions, were ever to be the same. And yet, with this stiff unvarying character, its worship was essentially monumental. The paschal solemnity was a ceremonial rite, acting dramatically, and so commemorating the liberation of Egypt; the Feast of Pentecost reminded every succeeding generation of the delivery of the law: that of Tabernacles celebrated the long sojourn in the desert. Later, new festivals were added, to record the dedication of the Temple, under Solomon, and its purification, under the Macabees, and the salvation of the people from the cruel designs of Aman. Many of the Psalms, or canticles sung in the Temple, were likewise historical, or composed by David on particular passages of his life.

But in all this we see no power of developement; no expressive force which allowed the feelings and powers of each age to imprint themselves on the worship, and characterise it in later times by the monumental remains of discipline and customs variable in every age. In the sense which I have spoken of the Jewish religion, the Christian worship is eminently monumental, as the very festivals of which we are treating do abundantly declare. And in addition to this, it has continued, from age to age, both to institute new festivities as memorials of its varied relations with outward things, and to mark its feelings at peculiar seasons, in every part of its offices and prayers. The discovery of the cross, under Constantine, the dedication of the Lateran and Vatican basilicas, and the recovery of the symbol of our salvation, under Heraclius, are thus commemorated. In later times, the foundation of institutes for redeeming captives, celebrated in a peculiar feast,* records the miserable subjection of great part of Christendom to barbarian tyranny; and festivals yet celebrate amongst us the victories by which that power was broken, and the west freed for ever from its fear.† When, in 1634, Pope Urban VIII discovered the relics of St. Martina and

* S. Maria de Mercede. † On the festival of the Rosary.

rebuilt her church, he himself wrote the hymns for her office; and there deposited the last feelings of anxiety and the last prayers of the Church for her liberation from the terrors of Mahomedan power. In like manner will posterity commemorate each succeeding year, in the hymn and lessons appointed for the 24th of May, the unexpected return of the venerable Pius VII to the throne of his predecessors, after his long captivity.* In the service of the Church of England three or four historical events have been, I believe, recorded; the murder of Charles I, the restoration of his family, the arrival of king William, and the Gunpowder Plot. Each of these commemorations is more connected with political events than conducive to religious feelings; the last, perhaps, may be considered as rather tending to keep alive a spirit very different from charity and brotherly kindness. When the contests for the crown of Naples used to bring into Italy periodical incursions of French armies, whose track was ever marked by rapine and desolation, they were viewed in the light of a public scourge, and their removal was deemed a fitting subject for prayer. Hence in the Missals of Lombardy, at that period, we find a mass entitled, "Missa contra Gallos." But no sooner was the evil at an end than the prayer

* A Festival observed peculiarly in Rome.

was, in good taste and charitable feeling, abolished. The day, perhaps, will come when similar motives may produce, in our country, similar effects.

But what forms a distinctive property of Christ's religion, is, that he left few or no regulations concerning external worship. He instituted sacraments that consist of outward rites; but left the abundance, or parsimony of external ceremony, to depend upon those circumstances or vicissitudes through which his Church should pass, and the feelings which they might inspire. It is this idea which my discourse of to-day is intended to develope, by representing to you the ceremonies of Holy Week, as monumental records of various times and ages, each of which has left its image stamped upon them as they passed over. And thus, methinks, they will possess an additional interest, as monumental proofs of the continuous feeling which has preserved, as it embellished, them, from the very beginning.

The most important functions of Holy Week are referred to the common and daily liturgy of the Church, and are joined to it as to a base which they adorn for the time, with records of events by them commemorated. Palm Sunday has its blessings and procession only in preparation for the Liturgy or Mass; and its solemn

Passion is only the gospel adapted to the occasion. Thursday and Saturday present nothing peculiar, except additional ceremonies before or after the same celebration; and Friday's service is a modification thereof, peculiarly formed to express the mourning and the graces of that day. The substance, therefore, so to speak, or foundation, upon which every age has placed its contribution, must form the oldest and most venerable portion of the service, and should, in fact, be as old as Christianity itself. And so in truth it is. For the mass, whereunto all the other ceremonial is mainly referred, is nothing else than the performance of the eucharistic rite instituted by our blessed Saviour. It may be considered as consisting of two distinct portions,—one essential and the other accidental. The first consists of such parts as are, and must be, common to all Liturgies, and comprises the Offertory or oblation, the Consecration by the words of Christ, and the Communion. These are all to be found substantially the same amongst all those Christians who believe the Eucharist to be a sacrifice, and to contain the real body and blood of Jesus Christ; for they occur in the Liturgies of Latins and Greeks, Armenians and Copts, Maronites and Syrians; and, moreover, in those of Jacobites and Nestorians, who have been separated from us since the fifth century.

But to this remotest period belong also many ceremonies which, though not essential for the integrity of the Liturgy, are clearly traceable to the apostolic time. Such, for instance, is the prayer for the departed faithful, which is wanting in no Liturgy of the East or West; the commemoration of the Apostles and Saints; the mingling of water with the wine, the use of lights and incense, which have been severally acknowledged to be derived from the time of the apostles, by Bishops Beveridge and Kaye, by Palmer, and other Protestant writers. Most of the prayers which constitute the present Liturgy, are to be found in the rituals of St. Gregory the Great, St. Celestine, Gelasius, and other early popes; and may be supposed, consequently, to be still more ancient. I hurry over this period, both because I have lately had occasion to treat concerning it in another place,* and because it is only remotely connected with the subject of these Discourses. It was, however, necessary to say thus much, to show the groundwork whereon the solemn functions of this season rest.

For three centuries the Christians lived in persecution and concealment. This naturally led to the selection of night, as the fittest time for

* This alludes to a sermon delivered shortly before. It would be easy to add the acknowledgement of the "Tracts for the Times," &c.

the celebration of their sacred rites; and caused the greater portion of the Church office to be allotted to that silent hour. We might likewise expect to find whatever ceremonies retain the remembrance of this state, partaking of the symbolical and mystical spirit which such awful assemblies must have inspired. Of this early period, monuments are not wanting in the offices of Holy Week. The very office of Tenebræ is, in truth, no more than the midnight prayer of that early age. It continued to be performed at midnight for many centuries, especially at this time, as appears from a very ancient manuscript of the *Roman Ordo* published by Mabillon,* in in which it is prescribed to rise for them at midnight. Many centuries ago, the anticipation of time, now observed, took place; but the name and other terms were kept to record its earlier method of observance. The service itself was called *Tenebræ* (darkness), and *Matins*, or morning office; and each of its three divisions is styled a *Nocturn*, or nightly prayer. Another monument of that early period may be found in the mass of Holy Saturday. Throughout it, the service speaks of the "night;" it is the night in which Israel escaped from Egypt, and which preceded the resurrection of Christ. For the entire service, as I observed in my first

* Mus. Ital. tom. ii. 19.

Discourse, refers to this joyful event, and used to be celebrated at midnight.

The rites connected with these primitive and solemn offices are, as I have intimated, singularly mystical. There have been two classes of writers regarding ceremonies. Some, like Du Vert, have wished to trace them all to some natural cause; others have wished to give them exclusively a symbolical and mysterious signification. It is probable that here, as usually, truth lies between the two extremes; and that, while circumstances suggested the adoption of certain expedients, the faithful ever preferred so to modify them in application, as to make them partake of that deep mysticism which they so much loved. Thus, no doubt, necessity as well as choice compelled them to use lights during those nightly celebrations; but they arranged them so as to give them a striking figurative power. In fact, Amalarius Symphosius, (whom Benedict XIV confounds with Amalarius Fortunatus, a writer early in the ninth century), tells us that in his time the church was lighted up with twenty-four candles, which were gradually extinguished, to show how the sun of justice had set; and this he adds, we do thrice, that is on three succeeding evenings.* This shows the union, even at so late an epoch, between the obvious use of these

* Bib. Pat. tom. xiv.

lights and their mystical application. The present disposition of them on a triangular candlestick, is, however, much older than his time; and has been preserved in a manuscript *Ordo* of the 7th century, published by Mabillon. The connexion between the rite and the hour in which these offices were originally celebrated, may warrant us in considering both of equal antiquity.

The midnight service of Easter-eve, now performed on Saturday morning, gives a similar coincidence, and stronger authority for this connexion. Before the mass, new fire is struck and blessed, and a large candle, known by the name of the paschal-candle, being blessed by a deacon, is therewith lighted. This blessing of fire or light is a very ancient ceremony, originally practised every Saturday, and apparently restricted to Holy Saturday in the eleventh century. In the Roman Church, however, according to Pope Zachary, in 751, this ceremony was practised on Thursday. These observations are but cursorily made. It is the benediction of the candle which is the principal feature of this ceremonial. The beautiful prayer in which the consecration, or blessing, takes place, has been attributed to several ancient fathers: by Martene, with some degree of pro-

bability, to the great St. Augustine,* who very likely only expressed better what the prayers before his time declared. It very beautifully joins the two-fold object of the institutions. For, while it prays that this candle may continue burning through the night, to dispel its darkness, it speaks of it as a symbol of the fiery pillar which led the Israelites from Egypt, and of Christ, ever true and never failing light. But the rite itself is much older than that age. Anastasius Bibliothecarius says of Pope Zozimus, in 417, that he allowed to parishes the power of blessing this candle. This, as Gretser remarks, supposes the blessing to have existed before, but to have been confined to basilicas. St. Paulinus speaks of the candle as painted according to the custom yet practised in Rome; and Prudentius mentions its being performed in allusion, as F. Aravalo plausibly conjectures, to the incense which then, as now, was inserted in it. What still more pleads for the antiquity of this rite is the existence of it in distant Churches. For St. Gregory Nazianzen mentions it, as do other fathers, in magnificent terms.

This year, being the seventh of the pontificate of the present Pope, you will have the opportunity of witnessing another very ancient rite, only performed every seventh year of each reign.

* Bened. xiv. p. 292.

This is the blessing of the *Agnus Dei*, waxen cakes stamped with the figure of a lamb. It will take place in the Vatican Palace, on Thursday in Easter Week, and a distribution of them will be made in the Sixtine chapel, on the following Saturday. The origin of this rite seems to have been the very ancient custom of breaking up the paschal candle of the preceding year, and distributing the fragments among the faithful. Durandus, one of the eldest writers on church ceremonies, tells us, that on Saturday in Holy Week, the acolytes of the Roman Church made lambs of new blessed wax, or of that of the old paschal candle, mixed with chrism, which the pope, on the following Saturday, distributes to the faithful.* He then enters upon their spiritual and mystical signification. Alcuin, our countryman, and disciple of venerable Bede, tells us, that "in the Roman Church, early in the morning of Saturday, the archdeacon comes into the church, and pours wax into a clean vessel, and mixes it with oil, then blesses the wax, moulds it into the form of lambs, puts it by in a clean place." These, he says, "are distributed on the octave of Easter:" and he adds, "the lambs which the Romans make, represent to us the spotless lamb made for us, for Christ should be brought to our memories frequently

* Rationale Divin. Offic. lib. vi. cap. 69, p. 349.

by all sorts of things."* In the ceremony, as you will witness it, the Pope himself will bless, and mingle with chrism, the figures of the Agnus Dei already prepared.

Another portion of the service, which bears us back to those earliest ages, deserves particular attention, from its being now, like the last, peculiar to Rome. It is well known to all that have ever slightly applied themselves to the study of Church history, that a system of public penance existed of old, whereby such as had scandalously transgressed God's law, were, for a time, excluded from the communion of the faithful, and subjected to a course of rigorous expiation. This penitential system is acknowledged by all to have reached back into times of persecution; for, we have repeated mention of it in Tertullian, the oldest Latin ecclesiastical writer; and we possess entire treatises, or epistles, of the glorious martyr St. Cyprian, regarding it. The Catholic Church has everywhere preserved the ceremony whereby the public penance was enforced, to wit, on Ash-Wednesday: so called, from ashes having been, on that day, placed on the public penitent's heads, as now they are on those of all the faithful, with the very

* De Divinis Offic. *ap.* Ferras. De Cathol. Ecclesiæ Divinis Offic. Varii vetustor.... Libri, Rom. 1591, p. 82. Vide also Amalar. Fortun. ib. p. 110.

same words, "Remember that thou art dust, and to dust thou shalt return." The course of penance, thus enjoined, might last many years: but, unless shortened by an indulgence, or brought to a close upon danger of death, or of persecution, the reconciliation of the penitents always took place within Holy Week. St. Jerom tells us, that Maundy-Thursday was the day fixed for this solemn absolution,* and Pope Innocent I confirms this observation. St. Ambrose, however, observes, that the rite sometimes took place on Wednesday, Friday, or some other day in Holy Week.†

A remnant of this ancient custom has been scrupulously preserved here. For, on the afternoons of Wednesday and Thursday, the cardinal-penitentiary proceeds in state to the basilicas of Sta. Maria Maggiore and St. Peter: and, seated on a tribunal reserved for that purpose, receives the confession, or other application, of such as may wish to advise with him and obtain spiritual relief, in matters reserved to his jurisdiction.

Another, and a still more interesting usage, of those primitive times, is yet retained in the Roman Church, almost exclusively. In the early ages, baptism was solemnly administered only twice in the year, on the eves of Easter

* Epist. ad Oceanum. † Ad Marcell. Soror, Ep. 33.

and Pentecost. The adult catechumens were carefully instructed in the Christian faith; although many important dogmas were withheld from their knowledge till after baptism. On Holy Saturday, or Easter Eve, they proceeded to the church, under the guidance of the deacons who had prepared them. Twelve lessons from the Old Testament, descriptive of God's providential dealings with man, were then read in Greek and Latin; during which, they received their final instruction in the faith. After this, the baptismal font was blessed with many solemn ceremonies. Thus far the rite is universal, to the extent that circumstances will permit: the lessons are everywhere recited, or sung, and the font is blessed wherever the privilege of having one exists. But in Rome, the ancient usage is imitated to the end. For, solemn baptism is always administered to converts, who are reserved for that occasion, generally Jews, of whom a certain number yearly enter into the Catholic church. This takes place in the baptistery of Constantine, adjoining the patriarchal basilica of St. John Lateran.

Such are the principal points in the ceremonial of Holy Week, which can be traced with sufficient probability to the oldest period of the Church, when she yet was in an humbled and persecuted state: and they clearly

bear the impress of her condition and feelings. The midnight assemblies still commemorated, both in her sacred offices and in the Eucharistic celebration, show the state of alarm in which she then existed; and the mystical signification given to institutions, in a manner dictated by necessity, exhibits the depth and nobleness of idea which even then regulated her in her worship. The commemoration of that solemnity wherewith she received repentant sinners back to her peace, is a record of the purity which distinguished all her members, and the zeal for virtue which animated her pastors. In fine, the rare and cautious initiation of her catechumens through the sacrament of baptism, from danger of their betraying the secrets of religion, is commemorated in the lessons, and still more in the actual rite as performed here on Holy Saturday. And thus too, at Rome, there is a consistency in the entire office of Easter, not to be found elsewhere, inasmuch as the liturgy, during the following week, prays most especially for those who have been just born again of water and the Holy Ghost, that they may persevere in the faith; and the Sunday immediately following Easter is still called, every where, *Dominica in albis*, "Sunday of the white garments," as on it, the new baptized should lay aside the white robe, put on them, by most

ancient usage, on their baptism. And this reminds me of another ceremonial, not quite so ancient, but still reaching to the fifth century. I allude to the custom of the neophites, after baptism, going to visit the tomb of the holy apostles at the Vatican. Ennodius of Pavia mentions this as a custom in his time. "See," he observes, "how the watery chamber (the baptistery) sends forth its white-robed troops to the portable chair of the apostolical confession."

Under Constantine the Church gained freedom, and the right to breathe, and still more the power of expanding her outward form and displaying all her beauty. To this period belong many of the functions of Holy Week, one or two of which deserve more particular notice; and first is the act of solemn veneration shown to the cross of Christ on Good Friday, known by the name of "The Adoration of the Cross." Two things seem to deserve particular notice, the origin of the ceremony, and the term applied to it.

When Helen, the emperor's mother, discovered the cross of Christ in his sepulchre, we are told that it was exposed to the veneration of the faithful. From this moment the custom arose in the Church of Jerusalem, and from it spread so rapidly over the East and West, as to become very soon universal. St. Paulinus informs us, that once a year the portion of the

same cross preserved there was solemnly brought out, and that this was at Easter; and he defines the day more accurately, by saying it was on the day which celebrated the mystery of the cross, that is Good-Friday. St. Gregory of Tours mentions the same custom.* This rite was soon adopted at Constantinople, where a portion of the same cross was offered to the veneration of the faithful in the church of St. Sophia, as Ven. Bede and other writers inform us. Indeed, the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus has described minutely the ceremonies used on that occasion. Leo Allatius has proved the prevalence of the custom among other nations in the East. Cardinal Borgia published a manuscript preserved in the Propaganda, and written in Syriac, entitled "The rite of saluting the Cross as observed in the Syrian Church at Antioch." Two other copies of the ceremonial, formerly belonging to the Maronite College, are now in the Vatican Library, and amply attest the prevalence of this rite in the oriental Church. Naironus, himself a Syrian, has minutely described the ceremony as performed by the Maronites, or ancient Christians of Mount Libanus,

* Sophronius attributes the conversion of St. Mary of Egypt, to her making a voyage and journey to Jerusalem to kiss the cross on this day, and finding herself unable to enter the church.

on this very day. The ritual is entitled, "Order of the adoration of the Cross," and is prescribed to be observed on Good.Friday. The proclamation and prayers are nearly word for word the same as ours, and after them the cross is placed on a seat or cushion in the church, and surrounded by two priests and two deacons, who sing the Trisagion, or "thrice holy," before mentioned, just as you will find observed in the Pontifical chapel.

The exact conformity of rites, and even words, in the liturgies of different countries, is a strong presumptive argument of great antiquity. In fact, this rite seems to have been soon adopted in the Western Church; for we find it mentioned in the Sacramentary of Pope Gelasius, the most ancient existing, as approved and corrected by the learned Muratori. The antiphon now used at the ceremony is in the Antiphonary of St. Gregory, and in the Roman order, which Mabillon refers to that Pontiff's time. What farther confirms the origin of this rite from the custom of the Church of Jerusalem is, that the expressions used in it clearly refer to the true cross there preserved: "Behold the wood of the cross whereon our salvation hung." We have then clearly, in this instance, a ceremonial expressive of the triumph of Christianity—of the exaltation of its sacred emblem above every other badge,

a proclamation of the principle, that through it alone salvation was wrought, the vindication of it from ignominy and hatred, which, for three centuries, had been its lot, and the paying of a public tribute of honour, love, and veneration, to him who hung upon it, in reparation of the blasphemy, and, in his disciples, persecution, wherewith he had been visited. All these are precisely the natural feelings of the age, which first saw Christianity not only free, but triumphant; and which, having discovered the very instruments of redemption, would have acted unfeelingly, if, like the murderers of our Lord, it had allowed them to be again thrown into oblivion, and had not displayed, in their presence, some of the affectionate sentiments inspired by the event which they attested.

But I may be asked, why make this declaration of sentiment in so strong a form, and why give it so grating a name as "adoration"? In fairness, I should send any one asking such a question, for his answer, to them who first introduced the rite, and with it the name. For, had we brought it in, since this word sounds harsh, we might, peradventure, deserve blame, as not having regard to others' feelings. But if a word changes its meaning, after we have adopted it, it would argue great weakness and fickleness of purpose in us to abandon it, as it

supposes some extravagance in those who ask us to do it. For it is meet on the contrary, that, amidst the fluctuations and changes in speech, some landmarks should remain, to ascertain the original meanings of words ; which would not be the case if every use of them varied with them. Our lawyers and our statutes chuse to preserve the old words of our language, even where custom has long since changed their meaning, when they speak of the *seizin* of an estate to signify its lawful possession ; or of *letting* a man do an action, when they mean to signify preventing it. As the dialect of law, so is that of religion ; or rather this is far more unchangeable, as are its purposes ; and as the Church has chosen to preserve the Latin language rather than adopt the later tongues that have sprung up, so has she in this kept her words as she first found them, and not altered them when men have given them new meanings. The same principle has prevented either change.

Now, wherever the rite of venerating the cross of Christ has been introduced, it has ever borne that maligned title of "adoration." Nay, I can show you, that in the East and West this expression was used, even when the hatred to idolatry was the strongest. Lactantius, or the author of a most ancient poem upon the Passion, thus exclaims—

"Flecte genu, lignumque crucis venerabile adora."

"Bend the knee, and adore the venerable wood of the cross." An ancient martyr is described, by Bishop Simeon, as thus addressing his judge: "I and my daughter were baptized in the Holy Trinity, and his cross I adore; and for him," that is Christ, "I will willingly die, as will my daughter." This passage is from an oriental writer, who surely would not have put into a martyr's mouth, about to die for refusing to worship idolatrously, words which savoured themselves of that heinous crime. The Greeks used the very same word. For in the old Greek version of St. Ephrem, who was the most ancient Syriac father, and which was made, if not in his life-time, very soon after, we find these words, "The cross ruleth, which all nations adore, (προσκυνοῦσι) and all people."*

The word, therefore, signified veneration, and the rite must be more ancient than the modern meaning of "supreme worship," which it now bears. And it would be as foolish in us to change the word, because others have changed its meaning, as it would be for the Anglicans to alter the marriage rite, where the bride and bridegroom declare, that with their bodies they worship one another; because the Presbyterians, or rather Independents of Cromwell, would have *worship* paid to no man; or, because in modern

* De Corrieris de Sessorianis Reliquiis. Romæ, 1830, p. 134.

speech, the word is restricted to divine service. But if any one should prefer to give our word its ordinary meaning, I have no great objection, provided he will allow us, who surely have the right, to determine the object towards which our homage and adoration tend,—to wit, Him who hung and bled and died upon the cross, and not its material substance. Nor would such a distinction savour of modern refinement and sophistry, seeing it is that of St. Jerom, who thus speaks of Paula, in her epitaph: "Prostrate before our Lord's cross, she so adored, as though she beheld our Lord himself hanging thereon."* The fathers of the seventh general council fully explain this matter, and vindicate the words and forms in which this worship is at present exhibited. Thus much has seemed necessary, to prevent any of you being withheld, by any mistaken feelings, from fully valuing this most ancient and venerable recollection of the first liberation of Christianity from the house of temporal bondage, and its first erection of a public triumphant worship. To this same period, I think, we may safely refer the use of processions, especially that of Palm Sunday; for it, like the foregoing, is to be found, immediately after, universal throughout the Church. For in the East they have, from the earliest ages, practised the cere-

* Gretser. De Cruce, p. 566.

mony of carrying palm and olive branches to the church on Lazarus Saturday, as the eve of Palm Sunday used to be called, and having them blessed the next day. At Constantinople it was customary for the emperor to distribute the palms with great solemnity to all his courtiers. In Rome it would seem, from old documents published by Mabillon, that originally the blessing of the palms for the papal chapel took place in a small church, called our Lady of the Tower, (Sta. Maria ad Turrim), from its being situated beside the belfry of the old Vatican church, and that thence the procession moved and ended at the high altar of St. Peter's. It may not be out of place to mention, that, anciently, the ceremonies of each day used to be performed in different churches, with the Pope's attendance, and that the memory of this circumstance, unimportant as it may be, has been carefully recorded in the service. For, to that of each day, you will find prefixed the title of a church, as the station of the day; that is, as the place where the pontiff and the faithful stood to pray. But, for some centuries, this custom has been disused; and all the functions have been reunited in the Vatican and its chapels.

Martene had affirmed, that no trace of the ceremonies of this Sunday could be discovered in the Roman Church before the eighth or even

the ninth century. But this assertion has been fully refuted by Cardinal Tommasi, Meratus, and others. For the old Roman calendar, published by Martene himself, as belonging to the fourth or fifth century, mentions the palms and the station at St. John's. In the sacramentary of St. Gregory, the prayer mentions the palm branches borne in their hands by the faithful.*

This again is a ceremony strongly bearing, like the one before described, the signet of its age, beautifully characteristic of the season of triumph and preeminence which the Church had begun to enjoy: and an apt record of that feeling, in which it could take part in the glories of its acknowledged Lord, as well as sympathize with him in his sufferings.

In the service of Good Friday, we have a little fragment which belongs to a period somewhat later than the foregoing, and betrays its origin by its language. This is the *Trisagion*, sung alternately with the *Improperia*, both of which I have several times had occasion to mention. The Scripture has more than once recorded the song of the spirits, who stand nearest to God's throne, as being an unceasing repetition of "holy" thrice pronounced. This formula of solemn veneration the Church soon adopted in her daily liturgy, where it yet remains. In the time of

* Benedict xiv., De Festis, p. 78.

Theodosius an epithet was added to each of these exclamations, and a prayer for mercy at the conclusion. The Greek Menology not only records this date, but gives a marvellous account of the origin of the triple invocation. It tells us that, in the reign of Theodosius, the city of Constantinople was visited by a frightful earthquake and apparently a whirlwind, in which a boy was caught and raised aloft in the air. The emperor and the patriarch Proclus were present, with an immense multitude, and cried out in the usual form of supplication, "Kyrie eleison," "Lord have mercy upon us." The child came down safe, and called aloud to them to sing the Trisagion, or "thrice holy" in this manner: "Holy God! Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal." He had scarcely finished these words when he expired. Whatever may be thought of this legend, there can be no objection to the date which it supposes; and certain it is, that, from that time, it has often and often been repeated in different parts of the Greek ritual. Thence it passed into the office of Good Friday, where it is repeated both in Greek and Latin;—another proof of antiquity, as it must have been admitted before the separation of the two Churches by Photius.

After this period we begin to plunge into the obscurity of an age less distinct in its historical

monuments. It becomes extremely difficult to assign the exact date of these ceremonies, which, during it, sprang up, or to discover the authors of the beautiful canticles then inserted into the service. Yet this darkness is not without its interest; and powerfully attests the spirit of those ages in regard to religion. For a difficulty in ascertaining the origin of certain rites proceeds from the gradual, and almost imperceptible, manner in which they were communicated from Church to Church. The love of dangerous innovation had not yet appeared; and it had not been thought necessary to repress any manifestation of devout feeling which might accidentally spring up in particular places, from an assurance that it would be innocent, and strictly according with sound doctrine. In this manner, each great Church came to have its own peculiarities; and if they were really worthy of the honour, were soon embraced, at least in part, by others; and so being sifted through the experience of ages, that which was best came to be universally kept, and the less perfect went into disuse, till a certain uniformity was introduced.

The same is to be said of the hymns and other compositions of the middle ages, as they are called; beautiful specimens whereof have been preserved in the Holy Week service; but here is an additional obstacle to our discovery of their

origin. For, as in the former, there was no particular necessity for ascertaining the Church from which any special ceremony was received; so here the modesty, or, more christianly to speak, the humility, of the authors, led them to conceal, in every way, their names; so that while every one admires those sweet, and often sublime compositions, such as are also the *Dies Iræ*, *Stabat Mater*, &c., hardly one can be attributed to its author with any degree of certainty. The causes of obscurity are thus shown to attest the spirit of this age, in the close communion and charitable bond, without envy and jealousy, of different Churches, and in the humility and true modesty of its saints and sages.

But the functions and ceremonies of this period may be considered in another light, no less important and interesting; as the remains of customs once universal, or very general, but during those ages abolished, yet preserved monumentally in this particular season. In this manner, they are not institutions so much as fragments or remnants of old liturgical forms, which would have disappeared entirely but for this care. Let us illustrate this view by a few examples.

It is well known, that, for several centuries, the communion was generally administered to the faithful under both kinds. Not, indeed, that

this was at all considered necessary for the validity, or even integrity of the sacrament, for it would be easy to prove, by many passages and histories, that it was often given in only one form. Many circumstances, which it is not necessary to detail, conspired to induce the Church to adopt, in lay communion, the form of bread only. I will content myself with one circumstance, which seems to me worthy of notice, as an additional justification of the restriction, after what has been repeatedly urged with success. The Christian religion is one for all times and all places; and its sacraments should be such as to suit this universality of its destination. Now, there are numberless situations in which the faithful would be deprived of the Eucharist, could it be lawfully and validly administered only in both forms. For instance, in the interior of China and Siam, with the neighbouring countries, almost always in a state of persecution, there are at least half a million of Catholics. Not to consider the obstacles, arising from a state of persecution, to a cultivation, which would betray its object, and consequently defeat it, every attempt to rear the vine has failed in these countries; and the missionaries are obliged to depend for their sacramental wine, on the small quantities which can, with risk even of life, be clandestinely conveyed over the frontier, after it has come

from very distant lands. Nay, they are often, especially in the interior, for a long time unable to celebrate mass, on account of this difficulty. There can be no doubt that this multitude of poor afflicted faithful, standing more in need than others of spiritual nourishment, would have to live and die without the comfort of this sacrament, if the partaking of both species were absolutely necessary. But to return; with the exception of a particular privilege granted to some sovereigns at their coronation, almost the only example of the chalice being received by any except the celebrating priest, occurs in the pontifical mass on Easter Sunday, when the deacon and subdeacon partake of the cup after the Pope.

But there is another observance connected with this matter, which has been preserved only here. One of the reasons, which led to the restriction of communion to one species only, was the accidents to which the other was liable. For communion being a practice even now, and, much more anciently, of almost daily use in churches, and on many occasions frequented by thousands, it was almost impossible to prevent some portion of the consecrated wine being spilt, especially when received by the ruder sort. To remedy this inconvenience, to some extent, the practice was introduced, probably after the sixth century, of administering the chalice through a silver

tube ; so that the cup being held steadily in the priest or deacon's hand, and only the tube placed to the receiver's mouth, there would be but little comparative danger of an accident, which the Catholic belief concerning the Eucharist must render particularly distressing. This tube was called a siphon. Casalius informs us, that the Abbot of Monte Casino used to receive the chalice in this manner.* Paul Volzius first discovered this to have been a usual practice, from its being prescribed in an old book of signs *(Liber Signorum)* extant in many Benedictine houses. Among the oldest rules of the Carthusians, contemporary with St. Bernard, we have this order in the fortieth chapter : "Let no church possess any ornaments of gold or silver, except the chalice, and the tube through which the blood of our Lord is received." An old commentator on Tertullian, mentions an inventory of the church of Mainz, written nearly 800 years ago, in which are enumerated, among the gold crosses and chalices, six silver tubes used for the same purpose.† The use of this tube has been gradually abandoned everywhere, except in the pontifical mass celebrated by the Pope three times a year, of which one takes place on Easter-day. The custom of thus receiving the sacred cup, often,

* Ben. xiv. ubi supra, p. 230.

† Tert. cum notis Beati Rhenani, p. 156.

appears novel and strange to persons unaccustomed to it; but it is a matter of interest to the lover of ecclesiastical antiquity, who would not willingly allow old usages to be abolished, especially in this their last hold and proper refuge.

I will instance another point of ancient practice, once probably common to every church, but now hardly observed except in St. Peter's. The altars are everywhere formally stripped on Holy Thursday, and remain uncovered until the following Saturday. During Tenebræ on Thursday evening, each of the canons, and other functionaries of St. Peter's, receives a species of brush curiously made of chip, and, after the office, the entire chapter proceeds to the high altar, where seven flagons of wine and water have been prepared. These are poured upon the altar, and the canons, passing six at a time before it, rub it all over with their brushes, after which it is washed with sponges and dried. Saint Isidore, of Seville, in the seventh century, mentions the custom of washing the altars, and even the pavement, of the church on this day, in commemoration of that act of humility, by which our Redeemer washed his disciples' feet; and St. Eligius records, in similar terms, both the practice and the motive. The Roman *Ordo*, Abbot Rupert, and other writers, speak of this ceremony as commonly practised; and many documents of the middle ages show it to have been

observed at Sienna, Benevento, Bologna, and other Churches. It was no less practised in England; for the Sarum Missal thus describes it: "After dinner, let all the clerks meet in the church to wash the altars. First, let water be blessed out of choir and privately. Then let two of the most dignified priests be prepared, with a deacon and subdeacon, and two acolyths, all vested in albs and amices, and let two clerks bear wine and water, and let them begin with the high altar and wash it, pouring thereon wine and water." After a minute description of the prayers to be said in the course of the ceremony, the rubric proceeds: "After the gospel has been sung as at mass, the two aforesaid priests shall wash the feet of all in choir, one on one side and another on the other, and then shall do the same mutually." Many prayers are then said, and another gospel read, during which it is said, "the brethren shall drink the cup of charity, *charitatis potum*."*

In the many learned treatises, written upon the origin of this ceremony, this curious union of two practices, elsewhere divided between morning and afternoon, has been overlooked, though it is the strongest confirmation of St. Isidore's interpretation against the objections of Du Vert, Batelli, and others. In the Greek

* Missale Sarisb. fol. lxxvi.

Church the practice is still observed, as Leo Allatius has proved at length, as it is among the Dominicans and Carmelites. But almost everywhere else it has disappeared, except in the Vatican basilica, where you may see it practised on Thursday evening.

These examples will suffice to show, how the ceremonies of Holy Week, as performed in the Vatican, have preserved rites, formerly very general in the Church, but which would have been almost entirely lost in practice, had they not been here jealously observed. There is another great historical point, of which testimony has been recorded in these sacred functions, and which, therefore, must not be passed over. This is the ancient union between the Latin and Greek Churches, and the reconciliation after the latter's defection. Of the former, evidence is given in the use of Greek words and phrases in the Liturgy; one instance, the *Kyrie Eleison*, belongs to every day; you have seen, in the adoption of the Greek *Trisagion*, a testimony peculiar to the service of Holy Week. Anciently, there were other instances; as for example, one to which I before alluded, when I said, that the lessons on Holy Saturday, intended for the catechumens' instruction, used to be sung in both languages. Anastasius Bibliothecarius tells us, that Benedict III had a book written, in which were the Greek and Latin lessons, to be

sung on Holy Saturday. Mabillon has brought abundant evidence of this usage, which is mentioned by Amalarius about the year 812, and several other writers of the following centuries. Later, it would appear, that the double recitation was confined to the first of the twelve lessons, as otherwise the service would have been excessively long. We find, indeed, in the eleventh century, the clause added to this rubric "Si Dominus Papa velit," (if our Lord the Pope wishes it;) and thus probably, by its not being often required, the custom gradually disappeared. The same may be said of the practice which formerly prevailed, of singing the epistle and gospel, in Greek as well as Latin, on Good Friday. Both these observances were revived in the last century, by Pope Benedict XIII, who was most studious and tenacious of ancient rites, but relapsed into disuetude after his time.* However desirable it might be to have these old usages restored, I think these circumstances can hardly fail to strike the eye, as strongly illustrating the historical view I am taking to-day, of these offices and functions. For we see, on the one hand, that the Church has carefully kept all that she received from the Greek Church, in relation to the worship of Him who cannot change; for, whatever prayers she was used to

* Cancelliere, Descrizione della Settimana Santa, pp. 123. 169.

recite in that language, she did not allow any feelings towards that, her rebellious daughter, and now bitter adversary, to abolish. But, such instruction as used to be recited in that tongue, for the edification of strangers who spoke it, and happened to be present, she allowed to drop, without any act of angry abrogation, into neglect, as no longer of use. When, however, the Greek Church, in the council of Florence, was reunited to her, and owned obedience to the Holy See, it was decreed that the Pope, on solemn occasions, should be served by a Greek, as well as a Latin deacon and sub-deacon, and that the gospel and epistle should be sung in both languages. This regulation has been ever since duly observed, as you will see on Easter-day; when two Greek attendants, vested in the sacred robes of their own nation, (the deacon wearing the stole, as of old, upon his left shoulder, and having embroidered on it the word ἅγιος, "holy," thrice-repeated), will sing those two portions of the Liturgy in the Greek language and chaunt. This completes the history of the connexion between the two Churches. The old prayers once common to both, and yet retained by us, give evidence of former union. The silent abolition of the instructions given in that language, attests the subsequent separation, and the rite prescribed to commemorate the reunion, not only records that event, but by its con-

tinuance, acts as a protest against the perfidy, which violated the solemn stipulations there made, and proves the readiness of the Roman Church to keep up to all her engagements.

The principle by which I have endeavoured to show, this morning, that the offices of the Holy Week, especially as performed in Rome, ought to be viewed, is the consideration of them as monumental observances sprung up in different ages, and accurately recording the condition and feeling of each. Nothing but a divine enactment can give to the external forms of worship an invariable character, such as in great measure was bestowed upon that of Israel. Of any command or direction to give a specific ritual we have no trace in the new law; and the Church, ever true to the finest principles of nature, after prescribing all that was essential and necessary for the sacraments—allowed the instinctive and rational feelings of man to have their play, watching carefully over their suggestions, that they should not lead to error or impropriety, and thus gradually formed its code of religious and ceremonial observances, as every good constitution has ever been formed, from the development of sound fundamental principles, through the experimental knowledge accumulated by ages. Was it wrong in so doing? This, indeed, is a question, which my next and last discourse will better give materials to solve, when I speak

of the influence which the offices of this week have exercised upon the social and moral world. But at present I may safely ask, does the parallel I have just intimated, suggest that it was wrong? Is not that form of rule, political and judicial, in *our* estimation most perfect, which amongst us has risen in most ancient times, and has retained upon, and within itself, the impressions and experiences of ages, different in purpose and in spirit. We love to trace our jury to the institutions of the Saxons; our forefathers for years revered and demanded the laws of good King Edward. We abolish not easily the words and phrases introduced by the Normans, though in a speech no longer our own; the Crier in our courts proclaims in French, and the king agrees to, or dissents from, parliamentary enactments in that language. Our law of treason, one of the most perfect, we owe to the third Edward; and the rights of the subject took all the time from John to William III, to be fully developed. Every different state, every change in character, every variation of feeling, which successive vicissitudes produced in the nation, is to be traced, as upon so many monuments, in our laws, usages, and public practices. The old oppression of the forest-laws no effort has been able to cancel entirely from our code; in spite of modern ridicule, baronial rights and feudal practices yet attest our former

constitution under their influence: the municipal charters of our cities form progressive monuments of the development of power, which the burghers gradually attained by industrious commerce; our guilds and companies yet record the spirit of religious confraternity, which originally suggested them; the universities have, almost in their own despite, preserved the forms, institutions, and practices, of their Catholic founders; the Presbyterian rigour of certain religious observances is yet struggling with public good sense, to deepen the morose wrinkles which it once left, so as not to be effaced upon the frank smooth brow of former generations. We have thus our history, our changes, our variable feelings throughout successive generations, recorded on our public institutions. Would any one for a moment entertain the idea, that the whole should "at one fell swoop" be abolished, and a stiff, stark "*Code-Napoleon*" system of law be introduced, duly divided into "titles," sections, and articles, upon every possible subject, social and domestic, from the sovereign's rights to the clerk's fees for a certificate; all bearing the impress of only one age's, or one man's mind? Would not this be considered sacrilegious? Would it not be abolishing our history, disowning our fathers, abrogating our former existence, blotting out our monuments, and saying like a child, whose fabric of cards

has fallen, "I will begin anew." A similar train of reflections I have wished to suggest respecting the offices and functions of next week. I have represented these to you as an aggregate of religious observances, gradually framed in the Church, not by a cold and formal enactment, but, by the fervid manifestation of the devout impressions of every age, till they had acquired a uniform, consistent, and compact form. They have retained upon them the marks of that humbled, and yet deeply mystical spirit, which the persecuted Church necessarily possessed; they have preserved the expression of triumph and glory of its more prosperous condition; they have concealed in them symptoms of the modesty and charity of the later period, and they are depositaries of many relics of venerable antiquity, by yet keeping in observance rites once general, but now elsewhere abolished.

In attending them, you may consider yourselves as led by turns to every period of religious antiquity, and in the institutions of each may commune with its peculiar spirit; they are as a museum, containing the remains of every age, not arranged chronologically, but, as the good taste that presided over the collections has suggested, their disposition mingled in a happy confusion, which shows how well they harmonize with each other, and how completely the same spirit has presided over the institution of them

all. To abolish them, to substitute a new, systematic, formal, and coldly meditated form, would be in truth a vandalism, a religious barbarism, of which the Catholic Church is quite incapable.

There yet remains another view of these offices and ceremonies, more interesting and more important than any I have yet treated of, and this shall form the subject of my concluding discourse on Saturday.

LECTURE THE FOURTH.

LECTURE THE FOURTH.

RELIGIOUS VIEW OF THESE FUNCTIONS.

The influence of Holy Week upon public morals.—On the conduct of princes.—Pardoning of injuries.—Their mildening influence during the Middle Ages.—Their action extended over the entire year.—The Truce of God.—Influence of the celebration of these functions upon the interior life.—Devotion to the Cross.—Conclusion.

WERE I to let my subject remain where last we left it, justly might I be charged with having deceived fair expectation. For, till now, I have

spoken of the functions which to-morrow will begin, as of things beautiful and venerable; while of their holiness, I have not as yet spoken. But, greatly would your conception of them fall below their worth, and sadly should I have failed in discharging my duty, were you, on departing hence, for the last time, to consider them only as objects wherewith the painter's eye may be entranced, or the musician's ear bewitched, or the poet's and antiquarian's mind pleased and instructed; and not rather as sacred institutions by which the Christian's soul may be improved and perfected. For, after all, it is not to a mere display of outward ceremonial, framed never so artfully, or conceived never so sublimely, that you are summoned, but to assist at a solemn commemoration of your Redeemer's most sorrowful passion and death. Whatever of beauty there may be in the exterior forms of this commemoration, whatever pathos in its sounds, whatever poetry in its words, whatever feeling in its action, is but owing to the ruling thought, the spirit of devotion and piety which forms its soul, and has breathed its own influence through these its manifestations. Vain, indeed, and foolish, and ministering unto evil, are all such things, unless a high destination consecrate or at least ennoble them; but where shall they find a higher sphere, or an occasion worthier of

their heavenly power, than in the scenes which commemorate the grandest and most pathetic of all Christian mysteries? When our blessed Saviour expired, it would seem as though divine power were exerted to bring into harmony with the moment the appearances of nature. The sky was darkened, and the earth trembled, and rocks were rent, and sepulchres opened, that whatever was seen or heard might sympathize with the main action of the awful tragedy. It would have been painfully unnatural, and discordant, had the catastrophe taken place, wherein nature's Author suffered, amidst the liquid splendours of a spring day's noon, while flowers were opening at the foot, and birds chirping their connubial songs round the head, of his Cross. And it is in a similar spirit that the Church, his spouse, observes annually the representation of this heart-rending sight, seeking to attune the accessories and circumstances thereof to the melancholy and solemn depth of sentiment which it must inevitably infuse. Therefore are these days of fasting and humiliation; for who would feast and riot when his Lord is refreshed only with vinegar and gall? They are days bare of all costly apparel and religious splendour; for who would be gaily vested when his Saviour's seamless garment is cast for with lots? They are days of lamentation and lugubrious strains;

for who would bear to hear joyful melodies in commemoration of sighs and groans uttered over sin?

It is then no more than natural feeling, purified by religious principle, which guided the Church through succeeding ages, in gradually framing that commemorative service which will occupy next week. Art received its lessons from her under this influence; and hence all the circumstances have been made to accord with the greater and solemner event which they surround.

And after having employed three Discourses upon the less important considerations, it may seem but little proportioned to the relative value of things, that, into one, I should endeavour to compress whatever regards the main purpose of them all. For you have not forgot, I trust, that I reserved to this my last Discourse, to treat of the offices and ceremonies of Holy Week in a religious point of view; or, as I explained myself, to consider them "as intended to excite virtuous and devout impressions."* This portion of my task is attended with many difficulties. For, at first sight, it would appear rather to belong to a more sacred place than this: it partakes of emotions which a sermon, rather than an essay, should aim at exciting; and the impropriety of assuming a tone unbecoming the

* P. 13.

place and circumstances of our here assembling, must act as a curb upon that bolder and more appealing form of address which would better suit the theme. I feel, too, at present, as though whatever I have said, till now, should in some sort prejudice me in what remains. For, if my former Discourses have made any impression, they will have prepared your minds for watching the beautiful combination of art and feeling which I have striven to shew you in these ceremonials; and it is hard for the eye to be keen in examination, and the heart, at the same time, tender to emotion. I fear me, therefore, that the two appearing incompatible, the one may be preferred, to the prejudice of the better. And, in fact, it is not once or twice attending such functions, that can allow the mind simultaneously to act through the various organs of perception here called into play, so as to admit a general result from their combination. It is only when, after a time, it hath been familiarized with the outward appearance, till novelty being worn out, it seems to our minds the most obvious and natural form it can assume, that leisure is left for meditation, amidst the paintings, the music, and the ceremonial of these offices. And meditation is the only means through which the religious feelings to them belonging, can be properly reached.

I shall, therefore, perhaps, require a greater share of your indulgence this morning, when I appear to come up even less than in any preceding Discourses to the greatness of my subject. I have already expressed my view, when I proposed to treat of our coming solemnities, as intended to convey virtuous and devout impressions.

These two epithets must not be considered as inadvertently placed; for they represent two divisions of my subject, and consequently of my Discourse. I consider the one as expressive of the external, and the other of the internal, influence of these institutions. Virtue is, indeed, an inward principle, but strongly regulates our relations with others; devotion is a feeling of whose extent and intenseness God and our own souls can alone be conscious. Virtuous conduct may be noticed in communities or masses of men; while devotion is properly an individual possession. I will endeavour to show how both have been, and may be, nourished by the solemn and detailed commemoration of next week.

Who shall gainsay, that men are powerfully acted on by formal and external acts that represent inward feelings, although even the latter be not excited? In times of bloody, and often causeless, strife, who knows not, that homage and fealty, solemnly given, bound men

often to loyalty and liege bearing, more almost than principle? It was not perhaps, sometimes, that the proud baron, or the monarch, who held a fief, felt much the religious obligation of an oath; it was not that they feared punishment for its violation, but there was a solemn force in the very act of homage, in the placing of hand within hand, and plighting faith upon the bended knee, and with the attendance of a court.

Far more worth than all this circumstance, would have been a stronger inward conviction of obligation; but such is man, that the determinations of his fickle heart require some outward steadying by formal declarations. Who knows not, how much the coronation ceremony has done for fastening the crown upon the heads of kings; how the pretender to a nation hath fought bloody battles to have it done on him in the proper place; and how maidens have fought with knightly prowess, that the rightful owner should, in his turn, receive it? And has not the wavering fidelity of subjects been secured by the fear of raising a hand against God's anointed? And in all this, which is not of divine or scriptural institution, who sees anything less than wholesome, as conducing to the strengthening of sentiments in themselves virtuous and publicly useful?

In some respects similar is the institution of

a season set apart for outwardly exhibiting those feelings, which should ever animate the Christian soul towards his crucified Redeemer. It must be greatly conducive to public virtue, to appoint a time when all men, even the wicked, must humble themselves, and act virtue. It is a homage to the moral power, an acknowledgment, at least, of its right to rule; a recognition of a public voice in virtue, which can stand on the highway, and command even her enemies to obey her laws. It is, moreover, a compulsion to thought: many a virtuous life hath been led in earnest, whose beginning had been in mockery and scorn. You have always gained much upon the soul, when you have brought the behaviour to what becomes it. Now, all this hath the setting aside one week to the commemoration of Christ's passion effected; because being not merely proposed to the mind, but represented in such a way as to oblige men to attend, with certain proprieties of deportment, and acting moreover on the public feelings of society, it produces a restraint and a tone of conduct which must prove beneficial. But examples will illustrate this better than words.

St. Bernard clearly intimates, that the most abandoned, and even those who had no idea of an effectual reform, were yet compelled, by public decency, to abstain from vice during the

entire Lent, and more especially during the concluding season. "The lovers of the world," he exclaims, in his second sermon on the Resurrection, "the enemies of the Cross of Christ, through this time of Lent, long after Easter, that they, alas! may indulge in pleasure .... Wretches! thus honour ye Christ whom ye have received? Ye have prepared a dwelling for him at his coming, confessing your sins with groans, chastening your bodies and giving alms, and, behold, ye traitorously betray him, or force him to go out by readmitting your former wickedness.—Now, should Easter require less reverence than Passion-tide? But it is plain that ye honour neither. For if ye suffered with him, ye could reign with him; if with him ye died, with him ye would rise again. But now, only, from the custom of this time, and from a certain similation, hath that humiliation proceeded, which spiritual exultation followeth not."* He then exhorts all to perseverance in the course of virtue which they had assumed. But it is evident, from these words, that the scandal of vice was arrested by the public solemnization of this time.

It has been the custom, too, during these days, consecrated by the remembrance of Christ's passion, for sovereigns to lay aside their state,

* De Resurr. Dei, Ser. ii. p. 168: Par. 1602.

and proclaim, before their subjects, the equality of all men when viewed upon Mount Calvary. When the Emperor Heraclius recovered from king Chosroes the relics of Golgotha, and bore them himself in triumph to the Holy City, old historians tell us how, arrived at the gate, he found himself, of a sudden, unable to proceed. Then the patriarch, Zachary, who was beside him, spoke to him saying, "You are bearing the Cross shod and crowned, and clad in costly robes; but He who bore it here before you, was barefoot, crowned with thorns, and meanly attired." Upon hearing which words, the emperor cast aside his shoes and crown, and all other regal state, and entered the city to the church.

The spirit of this reproof was fully felt in later times through every Christian country. In many, no one is allowed to go in a carriage during the last days of Holy Week; at Naples this is yet observed, and the king and royal family, for that time, are reduced, as to outward pomp, to the level of their subjects. "Now," says a modern German author, speaking of Lent, "the songs of joy gave place to the seven penitential psalms; the plentiful board was exchanged for strict temperance, and the superfluity given to the poor. Instead of the music of the bower and hall, the chaunt of 'Miserere' was heard, with the eloquent warnings of the preacher.

Forty days' fast overcame the people's lust: kings, princes, and lords were humbled with their domestics, and dressed in black instead of their gorgeous habits. In Holy Week, the mourning was still more strongly expressed; the church became more solemn; the fast stricter; no altar was decorated; no bell sounded, and no pompous equipage rolled in the streets. Princes and vassals, rich and poor, went on foot, in habits of deep mourning. On Palm Sunday, after reading out of the history of Christ, every one bore his palm, and nothing else was heard but the sufferings of the Messiah. After receiving the blessed sacrament on Maundy Thursday, bishops, priests, kings, and princes, proceeded to wash the feet of the poor, and to serve them at table."*

In the life of that most amiable and holy princess, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, we have the following account of her practices during these days: "Nothing can express the fervour, love, and pious veneration, with which she celebrated those holy days, on which the Church, by ceremonies so touching, and so expressive, recalls to the mind of the faithful, the sorrowful and unspeakable mystery of our redemption. On Holy Thursday, imitating the King of Kings, who, on this day, rising from table, laid aside his gar-

* "Vogt, Rhenische Geschichte," ap. Digby Morus, p. 170.

ments, the daughter of the king of Hungary, putting off whatever could remind her of worldly pomps, dressed herself in poor clothes, and, with only sandals on her feet, went to visit different churches. On this day, she washed the feet of twelve poor men, sometimes lepers, and gave to each twelve pieces, a white dress, and a loaf.

"All the next night she passed in prayer and meditation upon our Lord's passion. In the morning, it being the day on which the divine sacrifice was accomplished, she said to her attendants: 'This day is a day of humiliation for all; I desire that none of you do show me any mark of respect.' Then she would put on the same dress as before, and go barefoot to the churches, taking with her certain little packets of linen, incense, and small tapers; and, kneeling before one altar, would place thereon of these; and, prostrating herself, would pray awhile most devoutly, and so pass to another altar, till she had visited all. At the door of the church she gave large alms, but was pushed about by the crowd, who did not know her. Some courtiers reproached her for the meanness of her gifts, as unworthy of a sovereign. But though, at other times, her alms-deeds were most abundant, so that few ever were more splendidly liberal to the poor, yet a certain divine instinct in her heart taught her, how, in such days, she should not

play the queen, but the poor sinner for whom Christ died."*

Every one will feel what an influence such annual seasons of humiliation in sovereigns must have exercised on the formation of their own hearts, and, through them, on the happiness of their subjects. But no one either, I believe, will fail to notice the connexion established, by the biographer, between the touching ceremonies of these days and the conduct of this princess, as of many others. Had there been no special commemoration, day by day, and almost hour by hour, of our Saviour's actions and sufferings; had there not been services, which especially separated them from all other days, for this solemn occupation; and had they not been such as bring the feelings of men into harmony with the occasion, certes such instances of royal abasement never would have been witnessed. Nor is this thought and practice far from your own age and place; if, on the evenings of Wednesday and Thursday, you will visit the hospital of the pilgrims, you will see the noblest of Rome, cardinals, bishops, and princes, performing the lowliest works of hospitable charity on the poor strangers who have arrived from afar. Washing and medicating their galled feet, and serving them at table; while dames, of highest degree,

* Count Montalembert, p. 67.

are similarly ministering to the poor of their own sex. And here you will see, I promise you, no coldness, or precise formality, as though it were an unwilling duty; but, on the contrary, an alacrity and cheerfulness, a familiarity and kindness, which proves it to be a deed of charity done for Christ's sake, and in example of the humble and suffering state to which he reduced himself for us. And the relation between this uninterrupted continuation of old charitable hospitality, and the similar action of our Saviour, commemorated in the Church ceremonial, will sufficiently prove the influence which this has in keeping up an exercise so accordant with his precept.

But the effects of these solemnities were more conspicuously useful, inasmuch as they suggested an imitation not only of our Saviour's abasement, but still more of his charity. I will not detain you to quote the authorities of eminent writers, to show how this week was ever distinguished by more abundant alms and works of charitable actions. I will content myself with instances of the influence it had in one rarer and more sovereign exercise of this virtue. There is a well-known anecdote of a young prince, who, being yet in tutelage, besought in vain of his council the liberation of a prisoner; wherefore, going into his room, he, with an amiable peevish-

ness, opened wide the cage of certain singing birds, which he kept for his pastime, saying, "If I cannot free any other prisoner, no one can prevent my freeing you." With a better spirit, but with an innocence of thought no less amiable, it seemed a rule to expiate the crime of Pilate and the Jews, in unjustly condemning our Lord, by freeing captives on these days from their bonds; and in this manner did it rightly seem to Christian souls, that the liberation of man from eternal captivity was most suitably commemorated.

This practice began with the earliest emperors. "Not only we," says St. Chrysostom, in his excellent homily on Good Friday, "not only we honour this great week, but the emperor, likewise, of the entire world. Nor do they do it slightly and formally, but they grant vacation to all magistrates, that, free from cares, they may employ these days in spiritual worship;—let all strife and contention, they say, now cease;—as the goods which the Lord purchased belong to all, let us, his servants, strive to do some good also. Nor by this only do they honour the time, but in another way also; and that no less excellent. Imperial letters are sent forth, enacting that the prisoners' chains be loosed; that, as our Lord, descending into hell, freed all there detained from death, so his servants, imitating

as much as may be their master's clemency, may free men from sensible bands, whom they cannot free from spiritual."*

The imperial law encouraged, likewise, private individuals to imitate, as far as possible, this practice of sovereign clemency. For Theodosius prescribed that, while every other judicial act should cease during Holy and Easter Week, an exception should be made in favour of all such acts as were necessary for the emancipation of slaves.† St. Gregory of Nyssa mentions this practice of manumission to have been a frequent manner of honouring the season commemorative of our Lord's death and resurrection.‡ At a late period, St. Eligius, the friend of Dagobert, says in a homily on Maundy Thursday, "Malefactors are pardoned, and the prison gates are thrown open throughout the world." Later, the kings of France used to pardon, on Good Friday, one prisoner convicted of some crime otherwise unpardonable; and the clergy of Notre Dame, on Palm Sunday, used to liberate another from the prison of the Petit-Châtelet. Howard informs us, that "in Navarre, the viceroy and magistrates used to repair twice a-year to the prisons, at Christmas and eight days before Easter, and

* De Cruce, tom. 5, p. 540: ed. Savill.

† Cod. Justin. lib. iii. tit. 12 de Feriis.

‡ Hom. iii. De Resurrect. Christi.

released as many prisoners as they pleased. In 1783, they released thirteen at Easter; and some years before they released all."* This shows that the indulgence was not injudiciously granted, but after a proper investigation.

But still more useful was the influence of mercy, in accordance with the lessons of this time, and the example of our Saviour, when it served to temper personal and deadly hatred, such as feudal strife was too apt to engender. When Roger de Breteuil had been condemned to perpetual imprisonment, for conspiracy against William the Conqueror, the historian tells us, that when the people of God were preparing to celebrate the festival of Easter, William sent to him in prison a costly suit with precious furs. And, again, when Duke Robert was besieging closely a castle wherein his enemy, Balalard, had taken refuge, it happened that Balalard's clothes were much worn; whereupon he besought the duke's son to supply him with all that was necessary becomingly to celebrate Easter; so the young nobleman spoke to his father, who ordered him to be provided with new and fair apparel.†

When an ancient writer, speaking of the enormous crimes of Gilles Baignart, tells us, that he could not have obtained pardon "not even on

* Digby, "Mores Cath." b. iii. p. 87. † Ibid.

Good Friday," methinks such an expression speaks more powerfully than a volume of instances, on the pleading for mercy, which the solemnity of that day was supposed to make. It seems to say, that a man's evil deeds must have been almost fiendish, for pardon to have been refused when asked on that day. What a beautiful commentary on the expression does the history of St. John Gualbert make. His only brother, Hugo, had been slain by one whom the laws could not reach. John was young and passionate, and his father urged him to avenge the murder, and wipe off the disgrace of his family. It was in the eleventh century, when such feuds between noble families were not easily quenched; and he determined to do the work of vengeance to the utmost. It so happened that, on Good Friday, he was riding home to Florence, accompanied by an esquire, when, in a narrow part of the road, he met his adversary alone, so that escape was impossible. John drew his sword, and was about to despatch his unprepared foe, when he, casting himself on his knees, bad him remember that, on that day, Jesus Christ died for sinners, and besought him to save his life for His dear sake. This plea was irresistible. To have spilt bood on such a day, or to have refused forgiveness, would have been a sacrilege; and the young nobleman not only

pardoned his bitter enemy, but, after the example of Christ, who received a kiss from Judas, raised him from the ground, and embraced him. And from that happy day began his saintly life.

All this was in conformity with what the Church, in the office of that day, inculcates by example. For, whereas it is not usual publicly to pray, in her exercises, for those who live not visibly in her pale (although she encourages her children at all times to make instant supplication for them), on that day she separately and distinctly prays for them, not excluding any order, even of such as treat her like an enemy; but striving to make her zeal and love as boundless as her Master's charity. Nothing, surely, but the inculcation of this feeling, or rather the making it the very spirit of that day's solemnity, could have given it such a might in gaining mercy. Hear, again, how wonderfully the precept of receiving the holy communion, at this same season, worked effects of charity. When the good king, Robert of France, was about to celebrate Easter at Compiegne, twelve noblemen were attached of treason, for designing to assassinate him. Having interrogated them, he ordered them to be confined in a house, and royally fed; and, on the holiday of the resurrection, strengthened with the holy sacrament. Next day, being tried, they were condemned;

but the pious king dismissed them, as his historian says, on account of the benign Jesus.*

Surely, when such effects as these were produced, by the observance of a holy season thus set aside for the commemoration of Christ's sacred passion and resurrection, no one will deny that this must be a most wise institution, as a cause and instrument of great public virtue. And the power, which it had and hath, must not be disjoined from the exact forms which it then, as now, observed. For, manifestly, these days would never have received consecration in the minds of men, nor have been thought endowed with a peculiar grace, if nothing had been acted on them that distinguished them from other times. In countries, where no mark seals them with a blessed application, they slip over like other days. Good Friday, alone, detains, for a brief hour, the attention of men to the recital of our Redeemer's dolorous passion; but how faint must be the impression thus produced, compared with that of a sorrowful ceremonial, which, step by step, leads you through the history of this painful event, pausing, as if to look upon each distinct act of graciousness, and to commemorate each expression of love, and to study every lesson of virtue! And, indeed, how powerful this influence was, the effects I have described must show.

* Helgaldus Epit. Vitæ Rob. p. 64, Hist. Franc.

Nor must it be thought for a moment, that they resulted rather from custom than from feeling; as though kings and princes were not likely to assist with much earnestness at these ceremonies, but rather left them to be performed by priests in their churches or chantries. On the contrary, they would have greatly shocked their subjects had they neglected due and respectful attention to these ecclesiastical offices. When the pious emperor, Henry II, was returning from Rome, where he had been crowned, he staid his journey at Pavia, that he might celebrate Easter; and so our own and foreign chronicles often record the place where the holydays were passed. Rymer has preserved a writ of Edward III, commanding the ornaments of his chapel to be sent to Calais, where he meant to keep the festival.* Abbot Suger has given us a minute account of the magnificent way in which the kings of France used to observe the sacred time in the Roman style, as he expresses it. On Wednesday, the king proceeded to St. Denis, met by a solemn procession. There he spent Thursday, (on which the ceremonies were performed with great magnificence), and all Friday. The night of Easter-eve he passed in church; and, after privately communicating in

* Tom. iii. part 2, p. 7.

the morning, went in splendid state to celebrate the Easter festivity.*

It may be, perhaps, objected, that the impression thus made by a few days of devotion and recollection, must have been very transient, and can have produced no permanent effects. This, however, was far from being the case. For the Church, with a holy ingenuity, was able to prolong the sacred character of these days throughout the year; and to make the lessons we have seen taught by them enduring and continued. Every one, I presume, is aware, that Sunday is but a weekly repetition, through the year, of Easter-day; for the Apostles transferred the sabbatical rest from the last to the first day of the week, to commemorate our Lord's resurrection. Now, a similar spirit consecrated, from the beginning of the Church, the sixth day of every week as a day of humiliation, in continued remembrance of the day whereon he was crucified.

From the beginning, Friday was kept as a fast, and that of so strict observance, that the blessed martyr, Fructuosus, bishop of Tarracona, in Spain, when led to execution, in 259, though standing much in need of refreshment, refused to drink, it being Friday, and about ten of the

* De vitâ Ludovici Grossi: Hist. Franc. p. 132.

clock.* The motive for this fast, as well as of that on Saturdays, the remains of which yet exist in the observance of these two days as days of abstinence, is clearly stated to be what I have described it, by Pope Innocent I, about the year 402. For, writing to Decentius, he says: "On Friday we fast on account of our Lord's passion. Saturday ought not to be passed over, because it is included between the sorrow and the joy of that season. This form of fasting must be observed every week, because the commemoration of that day is ever to be observed."† Julius Pollux, in his chronicle, says of Constantine: "He ordered Friday and Sunday to be honoured; that on account of the Cross (or crucifixion) of Christ, and this for his resurrection."

In after ages, this custom was rigidly observed, as a learned and pious living author has proved by examples. In an old French poem upon the Order of Chivalry, Hue de Tabarie informs Saladin of the four things which a true knight should observe; one is abstinence or temperance. He then says: "And to tell you the truth, he should, on every Friday, fast, in holy remembrance, that, on that day, Jesus Christ, with a lance, for our redemption was pierced; throughout his life on that day he must fast for our Lord." It is recorded, in old memoirs, of the

* Prudent. hymn vi. † Cap 4.

Mareschal de Boucicaut, that he held Friday in great reverence, would eat nothing on it which had possessed life, and dressed in black to commemorate our Saviour's passion. And hence, on the other hand, the people of his time held it for one of Robert le Diable's worst characteristics, that he neglected that day's fast.*

This powerful association of one day in the week, with the lessons of meekness and forgiveness which we have seen its prototype inculcate, and this one day observed with humble devotion, in honour of man's redemption, must have kept alive a truly Christian spirit, or at least have acted as a check, salutary and powerful, upon the course, otherwise unrestrained, of passion. The feeling which inspired this dedication is not yet extinct. Here, in particular, all public amusements are prohibited on the Friday, as inconsistent with the mystery which it still commemorates. In England, it has lingered in the form of a popular superstition, deeply rooted and widely extended, that no new undertaking should be commenced on that day.

But this perpetuation, throughout the year, of the feelings which the last days of Holy Week are intended to inspire, is much better and more effectually to be acknowledged in another institution of past ages. The feudal system, how-

* "Broad Stone of Honour," Tancredus, p. 252.

ever beautiful in many of its principles, was a constant seed-bed of animosities and wars. Each petty chief arrogated to himself the rights of sovereignty; and all those passions which disturb great monarchs, revenge, ambition, jealousy, and restlessness, were multiplied in innumerable smaller spheres, which occasioned more real suffering to those exposed to their influence than the commotions of larger governments could have caused. The Church, the only authority which, unarmed, could throw itself between two foes, and act as a mediating power, essayed in every possible way to bring a love of peace home to men's hearts. But they were men ever cased in steel, on whom lessons of general principles had but little power. Unable to cut up the evil by the roots, it turned its care to the rendering it less hurtful, and devised expedients for lessening the horrors, and abridging the calamities, of feudal war. For this purpose, it seized upon those religious feelings which I have already shown to have resulted from the celebration of Christ's passion during Holy Week; and the success was so marked, that the pious age in which the experiment was made, hesitated not to attribute it to the interposition of Heaven.

About the middle of the eleventh century, as a contemporary writer informs us, a covenant, founded upon the love, as well as the fear,

of God, was established in Aquitaine, and thence gradually spread over all France. It was of this tenor; that, from the vespers of Wednesday until Monday at day-break, no one shall presume to take aught from any man by violence, or to avenge himself of his adversary, or to come down upon a surety for his engagements. Whosoever should infringe this public decree must either compound for his life, or, being excommunicate, be banished the country. In this also did all agree, that this compact should bear the name of the "Truce of God." There could be no doubt regarding the principle of this important regulation, if its original founders had left us in the dark. The time pronounced sacred, and during which war could not be carried on, is precisely that which the Church occupies in Holy Week in the celebration of Christ's passion. That the ground of this consecration was this passion has been clearly recorded; but it is plain, that the limits thus assigned were not drawn from the actual time during which our Saviour suffered, seeing that he began his pains on Olivet only in the evening of Thursday, but rather from the ecclesiastical period of celebration, which is from the Wednesday afternoon at Tenebræ till Monday following. Not aware of this, several modern authors have fallen into the mistake of shortening by one day this Truce of

God, asserting it to have begun on Thursday evening.

See, then, how the Church extended to the whole year the virtuous effects produced, for the welfare of men, by the offices of Holy Week; and turned the reverence which they excited to good and durable account in promoting public happiness. What a beneficial influence too! For all men could now reckon, in each week, upon four days' security and peace. They could travel abroad, or attend to their domestic affairs, without danger of molestation, shielded by the religious sanction of this sacred convention. The ravages of war were restrained to three days; there was leisure for passion to cool, and for the mind to sicken at a languishing warfare, and long for home.

Nor must it be thought that this law remained a dead letter. The author to whom I have referred proceeds to say, that many who refused to observe it were soon punished either by divine judgments, or by the sword of man; "And this," he adds, "most justly; for as Sunday is considered venerable on account of our Lord's resurrection, so ought Thursday, Friday and Saturday, through reverence of his Last Supper and Passion, to be kept free of all wicked actions." Then he proceeds to detail one or two striking instances, as they were considered, of

Divine vengeance upon transgressors.* William the Conqueror acceded to this holy truce, approved by a council of his bishops and barons held at Lillebonne, in 1080. Count Raymond published it at Barcelona; and successive popes, as Urban II, in the celebrated synod of Clermont, Paschal II, in that of Rome, and particularly Innocent II and Alexander III, in the first and second Lateran councils, sanctioned and enforced it.†

This is a strong and incontrovertible example of the happy influence which the celebration of these coming solemnities has exerted upon the general happiness, and the share they have had in humanizing men, and rendering their actions conformable to the feelings and precepts of the gospel. For let me remark to you, that in none of the examples I have brought can it be said, that the vulgar solution of such phenomena will hold good; that a superstitious awe, or fanatical reverence of outward forms, was the active cause. In not one case will it be possible to show, that the conduct has been devoid of a feeling which all must pronounce virtuous and holy; or rather that it has not sprung, as a natural result, from the inward sentiment which these sacred observances had inspired. Nay, I have

* Glabri Rodulphi Historiæ, lib. v. c. 1. Hist. Franc. p. 55.
† Nat. Alex. tom. vi. p. 783.

passed over what, perhaps, would have been a proof, stronger than any other, of their influence, because I feared, that opinion concerning its value might be divided, or the motives of many, among those who gave it, might be more easily suspected. I allude to the crusades, those gigantic quests of ancient chivalry, when knighthood, of its own nature a lover of solitary adventure and individual glory, became, so to speak, gregarious, and poured its blood in streams to regain the sepulchre of Christ. Could such a spirit of religious enterprise have anywhere existed, if the thoughts of men had not been taught to solemnize his passion, by the contemplation of scenes which led them yearly in spirit to Jerusalem, and inflamed their minds with warm devotion towards the place of their redemption? Would pilgrims have flocked to Palestine, in spite of paynim oppression and stripes, and even of death, if Passion-tide, in their own country, had ever passed over, like any other week, without offices, without mourning, without deep expressions of sympathy for the sufferings of Christ? Was it not the thought, how much more feeling will all these functions be, upon the very spot whereon what they commemorate occurred, that necessarily formed the first link in the reasoning which led them from their homes? Could they have been induced to

undertake so long, so wearisome, and so perilous a journey, with no other prospect, during the season commemorative of the passion, than a solitary every-day service on one morning of the week? And we know, that to secure these pious palmers from the vexatious tyranny of the infidels, was one of the great motives of these expeditions.

But on this subject I do not wish to dwell. Without entering on such contested ground, I flatter myself that enough has been said to show what an important influence, upon public virtue, the solemn yearly celebration of Christ's passion, through its affecting ceremonial, has exerted. It has brought men, even unwillingly, to the observance of propriety; it has taught kings humility and charity; it has softened the harshness of feudal enmities, and produced meekness in forgiving wrongs. But we have also seen this week become, in some sort, the very heart of the entire year (as its mystery is of Christianity) sending forth a living stream of holy and solemn feeling, which circulated through the whole twelve months, beating powerfully at short intervals through its frame, and renewing at each stroke the healthy and quickening action of its first impulse.

The effects thus produced upon society must have depended, in a great measure, upon the

operation which this solemnization had in each individual; and we cannot doubt that these were, as they now are, excellently beneficial. For, if the death of Christ be the sinner's only refuge, and the just man's only hope, according as the Catholic Church hath ever taught, it cannot be without good and wholesome effects, to turn the mind of each, for a certain space, entirely towards this subject, excluding, as much as possible, at the same time, all other distracting thoughts. To understand, however, the power of this most wise disposition, it is fair to consider this season with all its attendant circumstances.

And, first, we should not forget that Holy Week appears not suddenly in the midst of the year, to be entered upon abruptly and without preparation. It has a solemn vestibule, in the previous humiliation of Lent, which, by fasting and retirement from the usual dissipations of the remaining year, brings the mind to a proper tone for feeling what is to come. This is like a solitude round a temple, such as girded the Egyptian Oasis; and prevents the intrusion of thoughts and impressions too fresh from the world and its vanities. As the more important moment of initiation approaches, the gloom becomes more dense, and during Passion Week, in which now we are, we feel ourselves surrounded

by sad preparations, inasmuch as every part of our liturgy speaks of Christ's passion, and the outward signs of mourning have already appeared in our churches. During this Lenten season there are daily sermons in the principal churches, wherein eloquent men unfold all the truths of religion with unction and zeal. In the week just passed, you may have noticed how, during certain hours of the afternoons, every place of ordinary refreshment was empty and closed. But instead of them the churches were all open and full; for, during those days, other learned priests, in familiar discourse, expounded to the people the duty of returning to God by repentance, through the sacrament of penance. They taught them, in the strongest terms, the necessity of changing their lives, and effectually turning from sin; and then dwelt on the purity of heart and burning love, with which at Easter they should comply with the Church's precept of receiving the sacred communion. These were the themes prescribed to them during the week just elapsed.

The work of preparation has not ended here. For almost every order of men there have been opened courses of spiritual exercises or retreats, that is, perfect retirement, from all other occupation, to prayer and pious reflection. The noblemen have held their's in the chapel at the Gesù;

ladies at the oratory of the Caravita; and the numerous houses set aside for this purpose have been crowded; and not a few, whom infirmity prevents from joining them, have observed these pious practices at home. This evening, the university, and every establishment of education, commences a similar course of retirements and devotions, which will close on Wednesday morning. During these days, the time is divided between hearing the word of God, chiefly in regard to its most saving truths, and meditating thereon in solitude.

It is thus prepared, that the Catholic approaches, or is desired to approach, the closing days of the next week, and to assist at those beautiful services, which lead us through the history of Our Dear Redeemer's passion. The conscience has been purged from sin, and the pledge of salvation probably received, the ordinary distinctions of life have been gradually excluded, and the temper of the soul brought into harmony with the feeling they inspire. They are not intended, therefore, to produce a sudden and magical effect, but only to come upon the soul with a natural sympathetic power, resulting as much from the disposition of our minds as from their own intrinsic worth.

This view of the last days, or rather of the entire of Holy Week, as a time of individual

sanctification, is by no means peculiar to Rome, or to this age. It is inculcated in every Catholic country. In Paris, there are always such public exercises preparatory to it; and in Spain, as well as every part of Italy, the same course is pursued. In former times it was so in our own country. In the book of ecclesiastical laws, written originally by Theodulph, bishop of Orleans, in the eighth century, and adopted in England, in 994, we find it enacted, that all the faithful partake of the holy communion every Sunday in Lent, and on the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week, and Easter Sunday; and likewise, that all the days of Easter Week be kept with equal devotion.*

That the observance of this time, in such a manner, must be to many most blessed, no one will, I think, deny. For opportunities are thus certainly given, on occasion of it, to ponder well upon the great duties of the Christian state, and the means of accomplishing them; and all this, most surely, would not have been devised nor executed but for the veneration with which the celebration of our Saviour's death is regarded, and the holiness and purity with which it seems to us, that so sacred a commemoration and so awful a representation should be attended.

And if these can indirectly perform so much,

* Wilkins, Conc. Ang. tom. i. p. 280

through the preparation they require, what shall we say of themselves? Combining, in justest proportions, all that can reach the soul,—beauty, solemnity, dignity, and pathos, performed under circumstances calculated to soothe the feelings of the sternest mind, and dedicated to the most Christian of all possible objects, must they not have a devotional influence on all that court it with a pious disposition? Go to the Sixtine chapel, with the impression that you are not about to witness a ceremony, but to assist at an annual remembrance of His death, whom you should love,—a remembrance, too, wherein you have a part, as you had in the reality—in which your compassion, not your curiosity, your heart and not your captiousness, ought to be engaged; unlock all the nerves of the soul, that emotion may enter in through every sense; follow the words which are recited, join in the prayers that are poured forth, listen to the pathetic strains in which the Church utters her wail, drinking in their feeling rather than admiring their art,—and I will promise you, that, when the evening shade has closed over the last cadences of the plaintive music, you will arise and go home, as you would from the house of mourning, "a sadder but a better man."

And is not this truly the house of mourning into which you will enter? Is it not to the perpetual anniversary of One most dear to us that

we are summoned? When our nearest of kin depart, we put on mourning weeds, and we sorrow for a time. And when the year comes round, so long as the dark suit upon our bodies reminds us, we recal the day. The Church, unfailing in her ordinances as in her existence, willeth not that we so quickly forget. She sets no limits to the religious remembrance of the departed, in our supplications to God; she perpetuates their memory, if they live among the saints, to the end of time. How, then, can she ever forget that awful stroke which robbed earth of its glory, and brought all nature into sorrow? Surely, to allow its anniversary to pass over, without a celebration worthy of the event, would be an unnatural indifference in her, not even to be suspected.

Who knoweth not, how closely allied are the tender emotions of piety unto sorrow? Who hath not felt, how moments of distress are moments of fervour for the soul that seeketh God? I believe, that hardly a religion, true or false, will be found, without a festival of sorrow, wherein men bewail the past loss of some worshipped or honoured being. The ancient mysteries of Egypt had certainly such; and the maidens of Judah annually retired into the hills to mourn over the virginity of Jephtha's daughter. The Persians annually celebrate their Aaschoor, or mourning feast, for Hussein's death. The

squares are covered with black, and stages are erected on which the Mullahs relate the sorrowful story, while the audience are in tears. For ten days, processions, alms-deeds, and scenes of extravagant sorrow, occupy the city, and ceremonies are performed which graphically and dramatically represent the fate of the young Caliph.* These are all various expressions of the same want, felt in every religion, of dedicating the tenderer emotions to the service of God, as those which best can harmonize with affectionate devotion. And shall the Christian worship alone, which presents a just, a moving, a sublime occasion of sorrow, in the death of an incarnate God for our sin, dry up, by stern decree, the fountain of such pure emotion, or afford no room for outwardly exercising such true and holy feelings?

Nay, rather, was she not bound to scoop out a channel through which they might flow undisturbed by the troubled waters of worldly solicitude? Could we have expected from her less, than that she should have digged a cistern, deep and wide, for such pure sentiments, and thence sluiced it off, as we have seen her do, over the barrenness of the remaining seasons, to refresh them with a living stream?

It is difficult to say from what principle of

* Thevenot, vol. ii. p. 383

self-knowledge the notion sprung in modern religions, that outward forms destroy or disturb the inward spirit. It should seem, that the very knowledge of man's two-fold constitution would expose the idea to scorn. It must be that daily experience proves, how soon and how easily men forget their inward duty, unless outwardly reminded, through the senses, of its obligation. Wherefore it should have been decided in later times, that the ear alone is the channel of admonition and encouragement, and that the eye, —that noblest and quickest of senses, which seizes by impulse what the other receives by succession,—is not worthily to be employed for religion, I own the reason is hidden from me. One hand fashioned both; and why should not both be rendered back in homage to Him? If the splendour of religious ceremony may bewitch, and fix the eye upon the instrument instead of the object, as surely may the orator's skill, or the ornaments of his speech.

And applying these ideas to our present subject; if the meditation upon Christ's Passion be the worthiest employment of any true Christian, what shall prevent our endeavouring to engage every good feeling, and every channel of inward communication, in assisting us to the exercise? Or, who shall fear that we shall thereby fail? When the unfortunate Mary Stuart was upon the scaffold, having prayed for her implacable

persecutor, Elizabeth, she held up the crucifix which she bore, exclaiming, "As thy arms, O God, were stretched out upon the Cross, so receive me into the arms of thy mercy, and forgive me my sins." Whereupon the Earl of Kent unfeelingly said: "Madam, you had better leave such popish trumperies, and bear Him in your heart." Now, note her meek and just reply: "I cannot hold in my hand the representation of His sufferings, but I must, at the same time, bear Him in my heart."* Who of those two spake here the language of nature? Whom would any one wish most to resemble in sentiment,—the fanatic who presided, or the humble queen who suffered at the execution? Sir Thomas Brown is not ashamed to own, that the sight of a Catholic procession has sometimes moved him to tears. Who will say that these were not salutary?

But the best proof that the attention paid to the commemoration of Christ's Passion, during the ensuing days, does not rest outside the heart, but penetrates to its very core, saturating it with a rich and lasting unction of true devotion, would be drawn from the writings of our Catholic authors. It would be impossible even to enumerate the works which we possess upon the Passion, filled with a fervour of eloquence, a depth of feeling, and a penetrating power, which

* Lingard, vol. v. p. 467; 4th edit.

no other writings possess. Whoever can read St. Bernard's sermons on Palm-Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday, and not feel the tears in his eyes, will not easily be moved by words; and he must be absolutely without a heart, who should pronounce, that the mysteries of those days produced only a sensible and ineffectual devotion.

But there is another writer upon this inexhaustible subject, who more than any other will justify all that I have said; and, moreover, prove the influence which these festivals of the Passion may exercise upon the habitual feelings of a Christian. I speak of the exquisite meditations of St. Bonaventure upon the life of Christ, a work in which it is difficult what most to admire, the richness of imagination, surpassed by no poet, or the tenderness of sentiment, or the variety of adaptation. After having led us through the affecting incidents of Our Saviour's infancy and life, and brought us to the last moving scenes, his steps become slower, from the variety of his beautiful but melancholy fancies: he now proceeds, not from year to year, or from month to month, or from day to day, but each hour has its meditations, and every act of the last tragedy affords him matter for pathetic imagination. But when, at the conclusion, he comes to propose to us the method of practising his holy contemplations, he so distributes them, that

from Monday to Wednesday shall embrace the whole of our Saviour's life; but from Thursday to Sunday inclusive, each day shall be entirely taken up with that mystery which the Church in Holy Week has allotted to it.* In this manner did he, with many others, extend throughout the whole year the solemn commemorations of next week, for the promotion of individual devotion and sanctification, even as the Church had done for the public welfare.

These are but a few examples. What shall I say of the tender and continual devotion of so many holy persons to the Passion of Christ? Of St. John of the Cross? Of the blessed Teresa, who, from childhood, never slept till she had meditated on it? Above all, of that sublime saint, the seraphic Francis, "The Troubadour of love" as Görres has justly called him, whose poems, the earliest ascertainable in the Italian language, breathe nothing but a devotion towards Christ and Him crucified, which proves how deeply he bore Him in his heart. But this topic would lead me far astray. Before, however, taking leave of it, I would remark, that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and *that* not only in individuals but in their communities. It is this St. Bernard observes of his constant repetition of his Saviour's name. "It is in my heart," he says, "and thence it

* Cap. 101, p. 581, tom. ii. Oper.

leaps to my mouth." It is difficult to imagine a religion whose inward and vital principles are not expressed in its public offices, and recorded, as on monuments, in its religious enactments: and yet it would not be impossible to find an example of such a phenomenon. When the separation of religion took place in England, one of the great charges against the Church was, that it had abandoned Christ and the sole trust in his blood, and had rather sought favour from saints and angels; and these things were called abominations and foul corruption. Now, if posterity had to judge on this matter, how astonished would it be to read the Act of 5 and 6 Edward VI, for the regulating of feasts, and find every saint's day enjoined to be kept holy, which the Catholics now keep, and many more; but every day omitted which in the leastwise alludes to the death and Passion of our Lord!* But amongst us no such inconsistency will be discovered. We profess to honour Christ and his blessed Passion by inward and devout affection, and we carefully lay aside days and circumstances in which to testify our feelings.

It is time, however, that I bring you to some conclusion. I have proposed to you separate views of the functions and offices of Holy Week, not as distinct and divisible prospects, whereof each may choose one for himself, but rather as

* Statutes, vol. iv. P. i. p. 133.

an aggregate of harmonizing sentiments, all uniting for the loftiest and holiest of purposes. The Christian feeling that Christ is to be unboundedly honoured by the best of such gifts as he hath bestowed upon man, the deeper sentiment, that in no state doth he more deserve our honour and affection than when abased and afflicted for our sakes; the religious enthusiasm which such a contemplation of him must excite; these have guided the Church, from age to age, in the formation of a ceremonial the most beautiful and poetical; these have inspired the musician with his plaintive strains; these have directed the artist's mind and hand to conceive with grandeur and adorn with solemnity a theatre befitting so holy, so great a celebration. Thus considered, the subject of these Discourses, disjointed as it may have appeared, receives an unity; for we have been only considering the various emanations of one and the same ruling influence. Who would wish that these things were not so? Who would hail with delight a reforming power that should remodel all that he should witness upon the type of later institutions, and work those changes which such an alteration would require? Away with the towering canopy of St. Peter's basilica, with its angels and cross; extinguish for ever the lights that have there burnt for ages; fill up the venerable confession where the apostles' bones have rested,

and hew down the marble altar; then throw a screen from side to side, to be locked up save for one short hour; place an ordinary table at the upper end, exalt the organ beneath the dome, and fill up the intermediate space with pews and stalls. Banish Palestrina's magnificent song to the concert-room; shut up the Sixtine for a museum, to be seen by permission; abolish the entire service, and make the days which solemnize the anniversary of Christ's torments and death, undistinguishable from those which precede and follow them. What would religion have gained? Would a purer love for Him have been thus shown to have descended among men? Would it seem to you that thus He was more truly honoured? Could you desire for a moment to see such changes?

If any one's heart here answer, Yes! I entreat, I implore him not to attend the offices of the next week. He certainly will not enjoy them; he certainly will suffer pain, and moreover find himself distracted by them in that more spiritual and peculiar way in which *he* intends to commemorate his Saviour's Passion. He will be doing even worse, for he will necessarily inspire by his conduct the feelings of his neighbours. But whoever shall go with a mind duly prepared, and with a heart unprejudiced, and with a soul alive to religious impressions, will not surely return disappointed.

With these remarks I take my leave, conscious that I have but glanced over the surface of my undertaking, and that I have but done little justice to its beauties. To do this would require a treatise rather than a few short essays. I shall be satisfied, however, if I have fulfilled the moderate promise which I made at the outset, of presenting such general views as might be preparatory to appreciating the beauties, and imbibing the feeling, of these simple yet magnificent ceremonials.

INDEX.

GENERAL INFORMATION.

ARCHITECTURE.

MUSIC.

PAINTING.

POETRY.

TENEBRÆ.

MISCELLANEOUS.

OFFICES OF PARTICULAR DAYS.

Palm Sunday.

Wednesday.

Maundy Thursday.

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