

leaving scarce standing room for the officiating clergymen and the representatives of the city authorities. The chaplain presents the reliquary to the view of all. Two *ampullae* or vials of glass, contained in this reliquary, and distinctly visible through its glass faces, are held to be the identical glass vials into which a portion of the blood of St. Januarius was poured at the time of his martyrdom. They are of the old Roman pattern and material. One of them is long and narrow like a modern vial, yet not so even and symmetrical.

The other *ampulla* or vial is of a different pattern. This *ampulla* contains a substance ordinarily hard and dark, with a reddish or purple hue and filling ordinarily three-fourths of the space within the vial. The substance is held to be a portion of the blood of St. Januarius, still retained in this vial in which it was originally placed on the 19th of September, A.D. 305.

The chaplain again turns towards the altar, recites some prayers and hymns. Now he wipes the glass faces of the reliquary, and examines the vials more closely. Now he presents the reliquary for the closer scrutiny of those immediately about him, or advances into the body of the Cathedral that the less fortunate persons without the Sanctuary may also have an opportunity of examining the reliquary and the enclosed vials; then, again he ascends the altar and prays. Thus continue alternately the presentation of the reliquary to the scrutiny of those present and the recitation of prayers and psalms and hymns, until the joyous cry of *Miracolo!* *Miracolo!* announces that once more the blood of St. Januarius, hardened and discolored by the lapse of fifteen centuries, has resumed its crimson hue and flows again as though fresh from the veins of the martyr. Simultaneously, the grand organ thunders forth, ten thousand voices catch up the strain and swell the sound, ten thousand throats give vent to one mighty outburst of praise and thanksgiving: *Te Demn laudamus, te Dominum Confitemur*. The Cathedral bells peal forth, and soon all the church bells of Naples blend their silvery voices to bear the glad tidings to the expectant peasantry of the surrounding hills and valleys.

When the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius first manifested itself is difficult to determine, but the most probable opinion points to the eleventh century. Previous to the year 1000, St. Januarius was ranked among the minor patrons of Naples, shortly afterwards we find him raised to the most elevated rank and considered as the chief patron of the city. Such change would not likely have taken place, had not some special cause arisen, and this cause, we may safely conclude in the light of later events, was no other than the fact that during this period the liquefaction became known. Writers of the 14th century, mention the liquefaction as an occurrence of already ancient origin. During the 15th century, notices of the miracle became more frequent until finally, after the invention of printing, a perfect flood of books and pamphlets treating of the liquefaction has been poured forth from the press in every language of Europe. Since 1659, an official diary, recording even to the minutest details, the varying phenomena of the liquefaction, has been kept in the Tesoro Chapel, while another of yet older date is to be found in the Archiepiscopal archives.

Of course so great an occurrence has not failed to provoke adverse criticism and ridicule, nay even the charge of fraud on the part of the clergy. Space does not permit us to enumerate, much less to examine the many "exposures and explanations," which have been committed to paper. Suffice it here to glance briefly at this side of the question: How is it done? Three solutions only are possible: Either it is the effect of some natural law or combination of laws, or the result of trickery on the part of the officiating clergyman, or finally it is a miracle.

Is it the effect of some natural law? Certainly not, since the liquefaction presents phenomena that defy all attempts to reconcile them with this theory. It is not a deliquescence, *i.e.*, an absorption of moisture from the surrounding atmosphere, for the process of deliquescence is a gradual one and invariably begins from the outside, while on the contrary, this liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, is frequently instantaneous, and even when gradual, is accompanied by phenomena entirely foreign to deliques-