

BENEDICTION

There were many facts to be told about Our Lord's Flight into Egypt, and those of the Apostles' lives, weighing fifty pounds each. On the opposite side of the altar, on the open, Our Lord was again represented enthroned, but surrounded by four Angels with persons, and either of the appearance of the Angels may be had from a model of the same subject in the church of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna. The interior of the Lateran Gildery was covered with gold, and from the centre hung a chandelier made of purest gold, with fifty dolphins of cast gold weighing fifty pounds, with chains weighing only five pounds. From articles extending to a page, by Rev. L. J. Schulte, Rev. Andrew J. Shryock, Dr. Charles H. Soddy, and Rev. Maurice H. Hooper.

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

the *Blessed Sacrament*. Under the influence of this idea, the *Blessed Sacrament* in the processions which became common after the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi in 1246, came by degrees to be carried in transparent vessels, resembling our present monstrances. Moreover, a custom grew up, especially in Germany, of keeping the *Blessed Sacrament* continually exposed to view in churches. It was forbidden by many synods, but a sort of compromise was arrived at through the construction of the *Salvamentshauslein*, of which so many examples still exist in central Europe. These tabernacles, of great height and imposing appearance, were erected in the most conspicuous part of the church, and there the *Blessed Sacrament* was reserved in a room screened behind a metal door of lattice work which allowed a more or less free view of the interior. It was thus that the practice developed, though partly kept in check by synodal decrees, of adding solemnity to any function, even the Mass itself, by exposing the *Blessed Sacrament* during its celebration.

Turning now to our second element, we find that from the beginning of the thirteenth century, a custom prevailed among the confraternities and guilds which were established at that period in great numbers of singing canticles in the evening before a statue of Our Lady. These canticles were called *Lauda* and were often composed in the vulgar tongue, becoming in the hands of such poets as the Franciscan Jacopone da Todi, one of the great popular influences which helped to develop a native Italian literature. Confraternities were formed for the express purpose of singing these canticles and their members were called *Laudesi*. It was such a company of *Laudesi* that brought together the seven holy founders who, in the first half of the thirteenth century, established the Order of Servites, or Servants of Mary. Although the *lauda* hardly flourished outside Italy, where both the language and the character of the people lent themselves readily to the composition of innumerable canticles, the idea of an evening service of a popular character, sung before the statue of Our Lady, spread throughout Europe. In particular, the "Salve Reginam", a special devotion of the Servites, Dominicans, Carmelites, and other orders, was consecrated by usage to this rite, and we find traces everywhere of its being sung, often by choirs of boys, for whom a special endowment was provided, as a separate evening service. In France, this service was commonly known as the *Salut*, in the Low Countries as the *Tot*, in England and Germany simply as the *Salve*.

Now it seems certain that our present Benediction service has resulted from the general adoption of this evening singing of canticles before the statue of our lady, enhanced as it often came to be in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the exhibition of the Blessed Sacrament which

BREAD

employed at the Synagogue to denote a bare sedentary The last part of the sentence may have been added simply because the custom of going to the Synagogue was prevalent over the people whenever there was a service reported in the Talmud after a prayer being recited to the sick or any kind of position. But in the course of the seventeenth century, we find innumerable bequests for *Salut* in French wills, the item to be sung, often of a most miscellaneous character, being minutely specified, and among these the condition is frequently appended that the Blessed Sacrament should be exposed during the whole time of the *Salut*. From the article by Rev. Herbert Thurston.)

Bread, Liturgical Use of

HOW ALTAR BREADS WERE FURNISHED IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

In the primitive Church the bread and wine for the sacrifice were brought to the altar by the faithful, each contributing his share. A relic of this practice may now be seen in the rite of consecration of a bishop, for at the Offertory the newly consecrated Bishop presents to the consecrator, among other gifts, two loaves of bread, one of which is gilded, the other silvered, and both ornamented with the coat of arms of the consecrator and of the bishop elect. A similar usage is found in the ceremony of the solemn canonization of saints, where at the Offertory, one of the cardinal priests makes an offering to the pope of two loaves of bread, one gilded and the other silvered. Although in the beginning bread which served for common use was offered at the altar, still, growing reverence for the Holy Eucharist soon effected a change, so that the altar breads were specially prepared, assuming a round form of moderate thickness, and were stamped with a cross or some other significant religious emblem having special reference to Our Lord in the Eucharist. These hosts became smaller and thinner in the Western Church until they assumed the light, wafer-like form, now so common.

In the Holy Eucharist, bread thus serves for the offering of the sacrifice, and after the Consecration for the Communion of the celebrant, the clergy, and the laity, as well as for reservation in order that Communion may be brought to the absent, or that the Blessed Sacrament may be adored in the tabernacle or in the monstrance. In Rome at one time it was the custom of the pope to send a part of the consecrated bread to the priests in the titular churches that all might be united in offering the same sacrifice, so that this *fermentum*, as it was called, might in a spiritual sense leaven the whole mass of the faithful, and make them one with the pope in faith and worship. Bishops also were once accustomed to send the Eucharistic Bread to their priests for the same purpose, and also to each other to signify that they admitted one another into ecclesiastical communion. To prevent abuses and prostration to the Sacrament, this custom was early prohibited and soon disappeared. The usage then began of sending blessed bread instead of the Holy Eucharist to those who did not communicate at the Mass, and to those who might wish to receive this gift as a pledge of communion of faith. Those who did not communicate received bread offered at the Offertory of the Mass but not consecrated. It appears to have received no other blessing than that of the Offertory prayer, and was considered blessed because it formed part of the oblation. This bread is called *culatio*, because it is blessed and because a blessing accompanies its use; it is also called *antidoron*, because it is a substitute for the *doron*, the real gift, which is the Holy Eucharist. The *culatio* is prescribed in the liturgies of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom, but now it is distributed to all both communions and non-communions.