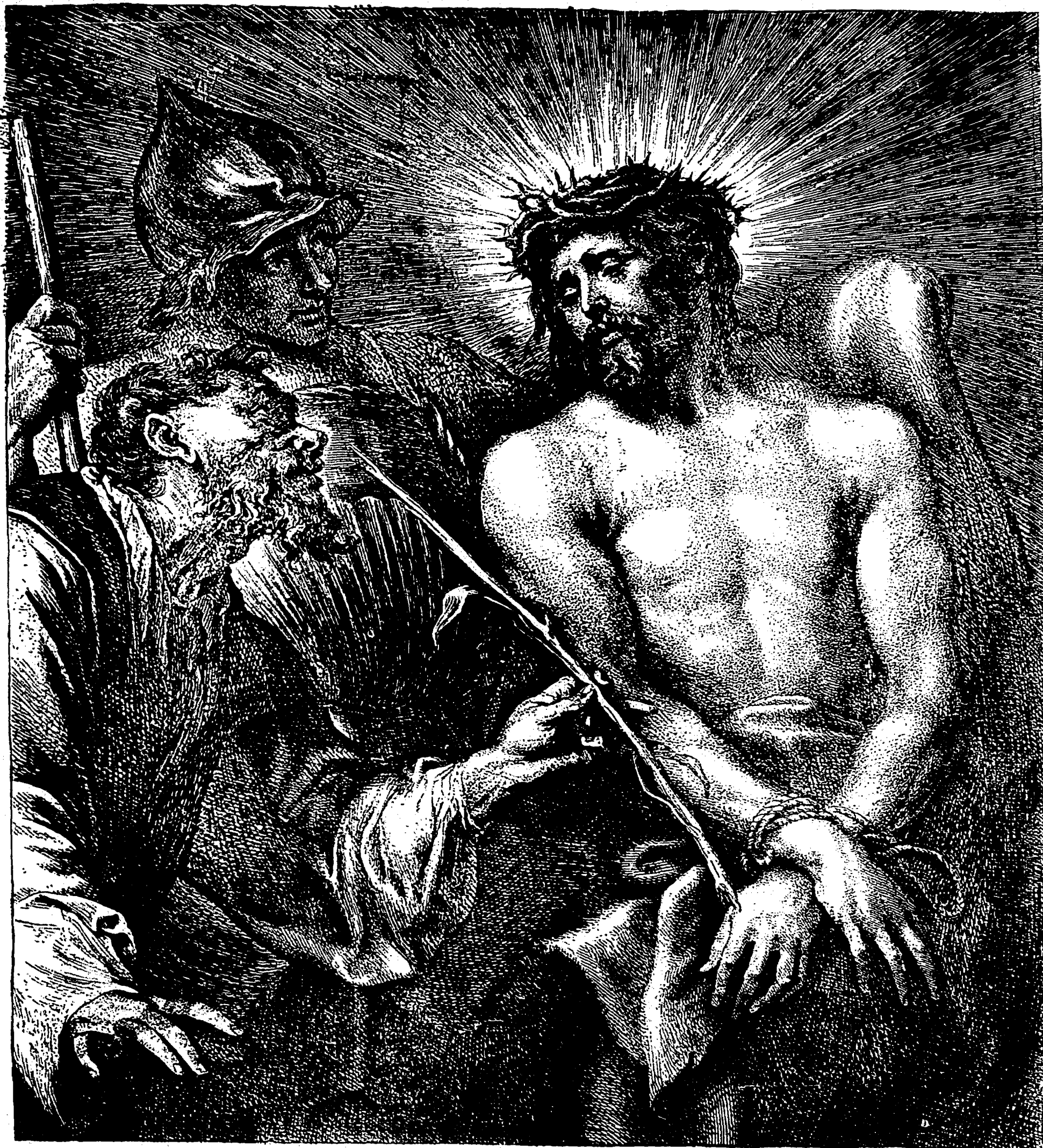


"ECCE HOMO."



*Ecce stat innocuus spiritus redemptus acutis,
Amula sunt cuius bella labella rosis:*

Anton. van Dyck invenit et fecit æque fecit.

*Et vero Iudæe illudis arundine Regi.
Impe sed nescis te mala quanta mœrent.*

"ECCE HOMO."

The scenes and incidents in the life of Christ have always been a favourite subject with painters and poets in the exercise of their arts. The events of thrilling interest connected with his birth, his labours and his death have all been portrayed again and again by the master hands of every country. But the tragical drama of the Passion, the betrayal, the agony, the mockings and scourgings, and the final consummation on Calvary have been more especially the study of the old masters, the perfection of whose works the moderns strive so hard to emulate. Nor is it to be wondered at that the doings and sufferings of the "Saviour of the World" should offer such powerful attractions to the painter. And while

poetry has confessedly failed—as witness Milton's "Paradise Regained," in comparison with his "Paradise Lost,"—in satisfying the human conception of that sublime and mysterious drama which is the foundation of Christianity, painting has found in its incidents the sources of its highest inspirations, and the subjects of its sublimest creations. The revival of art under the civilizing influences of religion led the genius of the mediæval age to seek in the Scripture narrative and in the events connected with the progress and development of Christianity that inspiration which the masters of antiquity had found in their old mythologies. Religion was not only the fountain of the artist's inspiration, it was, through the Church, the munificent patron of his works, so that by a double tie he was bound to that peculiar line of study in which the

old masters of the modern world have achieved unsurpassed distinction. The magnificent old church edifices throughout Europe testify to the encouragement given by religion to the painter's art. Perugino, Raffaele, Michael Angelo, Correggio, and Rembrandt have all given us paintings of sacred subjects. Rubens, who has left some 1,300 works, drew very largely from sacred history, and his example was followed by his favourite pupil, Anton Van Dyck. We give this week a picture appropriate to the coming season of Passiontide—an "Ecce Homo" by the last mentioned painter. Our illustration, as will be seen on referring to the inscription at the foot, is copied from the original etching by Van Dyck, of which it is a faithful reproduction.