

but mitred abbots and others, the palm and the right foot. Palms were then more freely distributed among the clergy by sacristans, till at length they reached the lay nobility who were desirous to procure them. Then followed prayers, chanting, singing, and low mass by one of the bishops, after which His Holiness entrusted his sacred person once more to his Chair of State, and was carried

With the Same Pomp.

back to the Chapel whence he came, and which communicates with the Vatican. The ceremonial lasted for three hours, and many thousands endured standing for five, in order to witness the spectacle. Ladies only were provided with seats, but were compelled to be in dark dresses, and wear black veils instead of bonnets.

The ceremony which attracted most attention on

WEDNESDAY

was the

Singing of the first Miserere.

in the Sistine Chapel, which took place at half-past four in the afternoon. The music was of the most highly finished and artistic description, the choir being composed of the first voices in the world. The service was known as the Tenebrae, from the darkness of the night in which it was originally celebrated. A triangular candlestick, upon which were fifteen candles, was placed upon the altar. Fifteen Psalms were sung, and after each, a candle was extinguished. Benedictus being then sung, the candle on the top, being the only one left lighted, was removed and concealed behind the altar, to represent the death of Christ. At the singing of the last Psalm the candles on the altar, as well as those above the rails, were extinguished, to signify, it is supposed, the Prophets who were successively put to death at the time of our Lord.

The spirit of Holy Thursday was humility in its most emphatic form. In imitation of the example of our blessed Lord when He washed the feet of His disciples on the eve of His Passion, high and low, ecclesiastic and layman, prince and peasant, set aside their personal dignity and condescended to voluntary and assumed acts of meniality, in shapes varying with the disposition or opportunity of the devotee.

CARDINAL WOLSEY

in 1530, washed and kissed the feet of fifty-nine poor men, one for every year of his life; and sent them away rejoicing with "twelve pence in money, three ells of good canvas to make shirts, a pair of new shoes, a cast of red herrings, and three white herrings."

Queen Elizabeth

in her thirty-ninth year, attended by thirty-nine ladies and gentlewomen, had thirty-nine poor persons assenti-

bled in her Palace at Greenwich, where their feet were washed by the yeomen of the laundry with warm water and sweet herbs, afterwards by her sub-almoner, and finally by herself. Each foot was marked with the sign of the Cross and kissed, and clothes, food, and money were distributed. Down to the reign of George II. this custom was maintained, at least by deputy, and distributions of all sorts were made. Since our own good Queen's day, money and food have taken the place of the washing of feet.

HOLY THURSDAY IN ROME.

This day was celebrated for six important and imposing ceremonies which, with one exception, took place in St. Peter's:—Blessing the Oils; Silencing the Bells; Feet Washing; the Pope Serving Supper; the Grand Penitentiary; and Washing the Feet of Pilgrims.

The ceremony of

Blessing the Oils

took place during Mass. Three varieties had to be blessed:—The Oil of Catechumens, used in blessing baptism, in consecrating churches and altars, in ordaining priests, and in blessing and crowning sovereigns; The Oil used in administering Extreme Unction to the dying; and The Sacred Chrism, composed of oil and balm of Gilead, used in confirmation, in the consecration of bishops, paters, and chalices, and in the blessing of bells. The ceremonies are long and imposing, and the officiating cardinal, or bishop, is assisted by a large body of priests, deacons, and sub-deacons, dressed in white.



are mute from half-past eleven on Thursday morning to the same hour on Saturday. Even school-bells, and domestic hand-bells are silent, and a wooden clapper is used, in the form of a box with an interior mechanism which makes a great clatter.

Feet-Washing.

For this significant observance, the Pope is dressed plainly, in white, with a red cope, and a small white skull-cap. To be in accordance with the spirit of the letter, instead of being carried, he walks. After Mass at