

With feverish excitement they enter the treadmill of Holy Week, and rush hither and thither from early morning until sundown, and even far into the dark hours of the night, on a mad hunt after services. It requires an astonishing amount of vitality and endurance. The spoilt darling of fashion pushes, struggles and pants shoulder to shoulder with contadini, Roman beggars or converted Jew. Prince and beggar, devotee and irreverent globe-trotter stand side by side yearning for excitement. The strangers, without sympathy or understanding, thrust themselves as near as possible to the sanctuary, to see what is to them nothing more or less than



THE BATHS OF CARACALLA.

a show. They press even upon the space reserved for the officiating priests. They comment upon the ritual in audible whispers, with little respect for the services of a foreign country's National Church.

It would be somewhat wearisome to give in detail the many ceremonies which follow each other in rapid succession through the long hours of Holy Week, and which are disappointing after the descriptions of Roman ceremonials thirty or forty years ago. Leo XIII., self-named "The Prisoner of the Vatican," having retired absolutely

from all public functions within the last few years, is probably the *raison d'être* for an absence of the extreme impressiveness, which one is led to expect, under the shadow of the supreme head of the Church.

At San Pietro, San Giovanni Laterano, Santa Maria Maggiore and all the principal churches temporary balconies are erected (it is almost unnecessary to mention the well-known fact that churches on the Continent have no stationary seats) containing a limited number of seats reserved by ticket, thereby considerably increasing the