

Our ambition, suggestive of tribute, was to produce a picture of an epoch, about which Lord Macaulay wrote :

"The Church has many times been compared by divines to the ark of which we read in the Book of Genesis ; but never was the resemblance more perfect than during that evil time when she alone rode, amidst darkness and tempest, on the deluge beneath which all the great works of ancient power and wisdom lay entombed, bearing within her that feeble germ from which a second and more glorious civilization was to spring."

For those who find Scene 2, Act III, out of harmony with preconceived ideas,—For those who cannot allow that any difference might exist in the customs of the Vatican of the eleventh century and that of the twentieth,—For those who concede nothing to the claims of dramatic license and have no toleration for the limitations of dramatic construction,—For those who cannot conceive a pope, offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, without a red-robed retinue of assistants and servers,—we appropriate the following, an extract from an article published in an English magazine, descriptive of the private life of the present sovereign pontiff—whose name we write with filial reverence and veneration—Leo XIII.

"At six o'clock in the morning no matter what time of the year, the Chevalier Pio Centra, the Pope's valet, wakens his master, who, after offering his first prayer, gives himself into the hands of his servant, is washed, and shaved, and dressed. Then he repairs into the little private chapel adjoining his bed chamber and says mass, the good Chevalier acting as acolyte. The Chevalier, by the way, was, once upon a time, in the hat trade in Rome. He became a member of the Papal household, and served his master so carefully and with such devotion that he received as a reward the title, Chevalier of the Order of St. Gregory, and better still, the Pope's absolute confidence."

Against the animadversions our defects court, and lack of skill and exposed ignorance invite, and, of certainty, will receive, there is cherished the conceit that we have labored—imperfectly, it may be, but not altogether ineffectually—to give form, color and motion to an age, when all Christendom