

## Looking at the Host.

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No one, probably, who has not spent some time in investigating the subject, will ever quite appreciate the extraordinary effect produced upon popular devotion to the Blessed Sacrament by the introduction, towards the end of the twelfth century, of the Elevation of the Sacred Host. Archbishop Peckman speaks of the great indulgences granted by many Bishops for venerating the Body of Christ at that moment. Bishop Quivil describes the looking upon the Host as a means of fostering devotion and increasing the merit of faith. The result of these and similar exhortations, was that the thought of seeing the Body of Christ at the moment of the *sacring*, (this was the popular term —) predominated over every thing else in the minds of the ruder populace. For them this was the essence of the hearing of Mass, and of course on a week-day it was an excellent thing if the hard-working peasantry could be prevailed upon to make the effort necessary to secure this one act of reverence. All sorts of popular rhymes set out at length the marvelous effect produced by this sight of the Host. It was believed that who had seen the Body of his Maker was specially protected that day against untoward accidents, that his work would prosper and be blessed, etc; and that even the food which he took would nourish his body more perfectly. From the Statutes of Eton College we learn that the scholars did not attend the collegiate Mass each day, but that when the bell gave warning of the "Elevation of the Body of Christ" all the scholars "were to enter the church, and there devoutly falling on their knees, to adore the Blessed Sacrament."—but for this purpose of warning there was no object of tolling the big bell, which could be heard a mile or more away. For the Sanctus a signal was used which could be heard just in the immediate neighbourhood; while at the Elevation itself, the big bell in the tower was rung, and those who heard