

ble; but our tourists enjoyed it as if it had been St. Peter's; in fact it has something of the barn-like impressiveness and immensity of St. Peter's. They did not ask it to be beautiful or grand; they desired it only to recall the beloved ugliness, the fondly cherished hideousness and incongruity of the average Catholic churches of their remembrance. And it did this and more! it added an effect of its own; it offered the spectacle of a swarthy old Indian kneeling before the high altar, telling his beads, and saying with sighs and tears the prayers which it cost so much martyrdom and heroism to teach his race."

His description of the Gesù is too abominable to reproduce here. We have just had enough to prove that Mr. Howells is a mere Philistine; a very prejudiced, a very ignorant and a very unrefined creature. It is thus that the poor, dull, cold, hollow, uninspired and uninspiring Protestantism of Mr. Howells looks upon what wealth and art and genius have contributed to the glory of God. It would be a mercy to Mr. Howells if the Almighty would keep him out of heaven, for surely the perfection, the splendor and the celestial harmony of the Divine mansions would grate upon his soul for all eternity and under existence unbearable for such a strongly organized creature.

#### HON. W. E. GLADSTONE.

On last Friday the Grand Old Man celebrated his eighty-fourth birthday, and universal were the rejoicings. From the Sovereign down to the humblest peasant all honest-hearted and noble-minded people, who were aware of the event, rejoiced and thanked heaven for the rich blessings of health, happiness and long years granted to that truly great man. That the Queen, the members of the Royal family, the supporters of Mr. Gladstone's policy in the Commons and the liberty-loving associations of Europe, America and Australia should pay homage to the venerable leader of the British Administration, is not to be wondered at; less could not be expected, although the spontaneousness of affection and honor must have been most gratifying to the aged but vigorous statesman. But that Mr. Gladstone's most bitter opponent, Mr. Balfour, should rise, in his place in the House, and express the congratulations of the Opposition, lends still another beam to the effulgence of that occasion.

There is something touchingly fine in those moments when truce is called and deadly opponents join hands in bearing a well-deserved tribute to place at the shrine of a really great man; or when they unite their voices in a chorus of praise to one whose life and whose works have challenged the admiration of his age. Such scenes take place in time of war, when, under the white flag, enemy meets enemy and all divisions are forgotten in a common cause. We remember well the scene in the Canadian House of Commons when the brilliantly-oratorical leader of the Opposition delivered a glowing and pathetic eulogy of the dead statesman whose genius had swayed the destinies of our country during almost half a century. That was a mournful occasion, but none the less glorious despite the pall of sorrow that Death's Angel let drop upon the scene. On Friday last it was still a grander, and in every sense a happier event; in the British House of Commons it was not a blending of generally opposing voices in expressions of grief, rather was it the outpouring of congratulations from all sides, congratulations to the most remarkable, most venerable and most sublimely figure in the arena of modern politics.

However, it would not be natural if

there were not a discordant note from some quarter or other. Perhaps it is well that it should be so; for that one muffled note serves to accentuate the more clearly the harmony of all other voices. The London Times—the Thunderer—could not hide its disappointment for one day; while tendering Mr. Gladstone a half-hearted tribute on the occasion of his eighty-fourth birthday (it could not respectably have done otherwise than refer to the event) it conveys a broad hint that Mr. Gladstone would serve his country well, were he to now retire from public life. It is not very probable that Mr. Gladstone cares two straws for the opinion of the Times, and he is too good a classic scholar to not know the worth of that oft-quoted line: "*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*." Moreover, the Times is not the public of Great Britain; the times are changed since the Times was the all potent and almost only exponent of British thought. This is an electric age, and "thunderers" do not frighten the world, as they did before the age of invention and new-fangled printing-presses. The people of Great Britain happen to think differently from the Times on this subject. His country and the whole world would feel the irreparable loss were Mr. Gladstone to take the unkind hint of that heartless monster. Standing, to-day, in the midst of millions of admirers, friends, supporters, and well-wishers, with the snows of eighty-four winters upon his hair and the beams of eighty-four glorious summers on his face, with a record of public life, such as no living man may ever expect to see equalled or even approached, with a glorious, self-imposed mission of seeing justice done to the Irish race, before he is ready to say the adieu to public life. Gladstone is unquestionably the most glorious political pyramid in the vast expanse of this century. May God grant him many birthdays, and health and strength to enjoy them.

#### THE MASS.

It is fully time that we should come to the fifth part of the Mass. We have striven to give a history of the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist, while speaking of that fourth and all important part of the Mass called Consecration. Our shrines fail to convey a just idea of the greatness of that greatest of mysteries; it is with the writer the fault lies if we have not fully succeeded in dispelling any doubts that could possibly linger in the mind upon that question.

"The fifth part of the Mass begins at the *Pater* or *Our Father*. The *Pater* is preceded by a preface or preparatory prayer, which is said through respect for the Lord's prayer, and to aid us to say it well."

Let us pause for a moment! What is the *Our Father*? A simple question you may remark. It is the Lord's Prayer, and is the first one we are taught by our mothers. In all Christian denominations, no matter how else they differ, the Lord's Prayer is preserved, more or less exact, but always in substance the same. Yes, it is the prayer we first learn, and we know it was pronounced by Christ Himself in the garden of Olives and is the summary of all other prayers from man to God. But the question is not an idle one. Far from it.

The *Our Father* is not only the most perfect of all prayers, composed for men by the son of God; but it is more still. It is the compendium of all our wants; it is the richest piece of composition that was ever made. It is a poem glorious in its inspiration, exact in its every word, harmonic in all its parts, glowing with feeling, pregnant with celestial fire,

lofty in its aim, super-human in its aspirations.

It proclaims that God, the Father of all, is in Heaven and that His name is to be blessed by his creatures on earth and in the mansions of His love. It calls for the kingdom of that Father to come, that He may reign in all His ineffable splendor over the objects that His Almighty Will has called, from nothingness, into being. And it demands that the Will of that mighty and loving Father be done on earth by His dependent children. Yes, that it be done here even as the countless hosts of heaven unceasingly perform it. And that Will being done and the glory of the Father being established, it begs then of the Lord of all true Bounty to give to His creatures their daily bread to confer upon them the means of sustaining life that they may be enabled to glorify Him. And then, considering the weakness of man, his numberless faults, follies and misfortunes, it begs of the omnipotent judge—the judge of mercy—to forgive our sins and to mete out to us forgiveness in proportion to that which we have for those who injure us. It proclaims the feebleness of man and his incapacity to support himself, for it calls upon God the Father to save us from temptations. We are all frail and without that aid from above we cannot expect to ever be able to resist these temptations. Finally does not that prayer beg that we be delivered from all evil, that is from sin, moral death, eternal sorrow?

What is there that man can add to such a prayer? This then is embodied in the Mass. What a wonderful study is that of the Mass! Volumes upon volumes might be written upon each particular part of that great sacrifice. Man can never conceive the depths of mystery, the awfulness of miracle, the perfection of composition that the Mass displays. There is nothing superfluous, there is nothing wanting, there is everything exact, there is everything perfect in its parts and in its whole. A single low Mass is not only a repetition of the great sacrifice of Calvary, but it is a union of all the most eloquent prayers, a mighty and divine inspired epic, beside which all the glorious achievements of ages grow dim as the stars that disappear before the sun. An epic did we say? Yes, an epic lofty beyond the eagle flight of human thought, deep beyond the grasp of human philosophy, in the presence of which we can but be silent and adore.

After the *Pater* the priest breaks the sacred host over the chalice; puts a small part of it in the precious blood to mark the intimate union we are going to contract with our Lord by the Communion, and places the other parts on the patena for his own communion. At this moment the first Christians gave each other the kiss of peace, to show that they loved one another as brethren. The kiss of peace which, at the present day, the deacon gives to the clergy during High Mass, is a precious memorial of this holy custom.

The *Agnus Dei* is then said. The priest strikes his breast each time as he repeats these words, calling on the Lamb of God to have mercy upon us and to give us peace. It is a prayer in which the priest asks of our Lord to give us that peace so necessary for both this world and the next. After the *Agnus Dei* the priest recites those most beautiful prayers, the more immediately to dispose him to receive the Lord of Hosts. To recite them is an excellent means of preparing for holy communion. As soon as these prayers are said, the priest makes a genuflection and, taking the host in his left hand, and striking his

breast with his right hand, he says those words of the centurion: "Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, but only say the word and my servant shall be healed." The word servant is replaced by the word soul, thus proclaiming that the word of Christ will suffice to heal the soul, that is truly sorrowful. The servant of the centurion was dying and Jesus went past. The centurion called upon Him to save his servant, Jesus asked to be led to the place where that sick man was. "No," cried out that man of great faith, "I am not worthy O Lord, that thou shouldst enter under my roof, thy word will suffice and my servant shall be healed." How very few, in our day, repeat those words with their full meaning. We say them with our lips, but too often we do not think ourselves unworthy of the presence of Christ. In fact our conduct would lead the world to think that we considered it a very small honor to have the Lord of Heaven and of Earth united with us. Our faith may be great but it is not the burning faith of the centurion. It is a faith arising more from habit than anything else.

The *Confiteor* is said in order to excite us to compunction and humility because the *Confiteor* is a signal and public accusation of our sins. After it is said the priest communicates in both forms and administers to those requiring it the sacrament in the form of bread alone.

After the communion come the ablutions. They are used to purify the mouth and fingers of the priest so that no portion of the sacred species may remain adhering to them. Whilst taking the ablutions, he says prayers of thanksgiving for his communion. This is the end of the fifth part of the Mass. There is yet the sixth part to be examined, but we must keep it for the next number. Behold now the communion is over and the great mystery has been performed. It is meet that for a moment we look back at the completeness of this great sacrifice and study its beauties and perfections. There is nothing amiss. The gradual ascent from the foot of the altar, through epistles, gospels, prefaces, offertories, until we reach the great moment of consecration. All the prayers and ceremonies converge towards that point. And once that dread action is accomplished, the prayers and ceremonies are indicative of the important change which has taken place in the bread and wine. The meditations, the genuflections, the multifarious signs of the cross, the humble tone of the prayers that at once bespeak a thanksgiving and a supplication. The thanksgiving is for the mighty and mysterious favor accorded man by God in the transubstantiation: the supplication is to beg for graces with the approaching communion.

But the other day we heard a person remark that the Mass must be a mystic and unmeaning ceremony invented by priest-craft to deceive the people. Such is a pretty wide-spread opinion. But who are they that speak thus? They are the ignorant, illiterate and vulgar. No refinement, no education, still less instruction have they to boast of. Speak only of that which you have studied and know. There is not a movement or word in the Mass but, like the inner wheels of a watch, belongs to the whole system, and without which all the other parts would not move smoothly.

One of our Protestant readers has sent us a number of questions regarding different dogmas of our Faith and the Bible. In our next issue we will reply to one or two of these questions and to the others in succeeding numbers. We are very glad of the opportunity of setting our friend right on these different points and giving him all the information that we possess.