

of our most bitter opponents. Previously to the invention of printing, the Catholic Church for fifteen centuries was the faithful guardian of this sacred Deposit. Copies of the Scriptures were multiplied in every direction by the patient labours of her priests and monks, and the cloistered scriptorium was hallowed by the perpetual transcription of the words of Life. In that most useful department of every Religious House, the faithful children of the Catholic Church toiled day after day with unwearied assiduity; and the "pen of the scribe, writing swiftly" the words of the Holy Ghost, was never idle. And, amongst all the books, both sacred and profane, which they copied and preserved for the ungrateful sneerers of modern times, the Holy Scriptures engrossed their principal care, and most diligent attention. Upon the Bible they exerted all their skill, and exhausted all their elaborate ingenuity. Not only was the sacred page within most tastefully illuminated with gold and colours, but it was enshrined in a covering of the most costly materials, and adorned with gold and silver, with jewels and precious stones. If we examine the lives of the Saints, the Doctors and Fathers of the Catholic Church we will find how thoroughly they were versed in the Holy Scriptures. The inspired words were sweeter to them "than honey or the honeycomb," they meditated upon the Divine Law both day and night. They lived as it were in an atmosphere of the Bible; its precious words were to them familiar as household words; they spoke in scriptural language, their thoughts and ideas and illustrations were moulded in scriptural forms, and