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## THE HOLY WEEK.

**W**HEN the "old masters" painted scenes from the Life of Christ in the manner and fashion of their own times, the anachronism was a parable of profound truth. The Christ of history is a present Christ in every age and to every generation;—not only present; but with a cumulative force as the generations of men successively affix their seal to the Gospel of the Son of God. In no respect is this more true than of the Christ of Gethsemane and Calvary, who, having made Himself of no reputation to take on Him the form of a servant, yet further humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. As truly as that sacrifice has, ever since, pleaded itself before the Father in heaven, through the priesthood of the glorified Son of Man, has it pleaded itself with men, through the administration of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The actual spectators of Christ's Passion were few, and they paralyzed with grief and fear, or blinded by anger and prejudice. In either case, they were "slow of heart to believe." But already, while the eye-witnesses of the tragedy were living, an apostle could expostulate with Gentile converts on their disobedience to the truth—"before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you." To the Galatians the Passion was as entirely a tradition, however recent, as it is to them that are now living on the verge of the twentieth century after Christ. But to those children of heathendom the lesson of the Cross was strange and unfamiliar, a story without analogy or similitude in their myths and legends and without correspondences in their personal experience. For them, it must first create its own mental habitat, before it could effect permanent lodgment, and exert controlling sway. But to the heirs of Christendom it comes with the full force of heredity, coloring thought and language as with threads of scarlet interwoven in their texture; affecting motive and conduct as a climate, uplifting manhood by a strong attraction, that makes all human progress an ascension, if by a long

diagonal, yet with a steady increment. Never was it truer than to-day, which Christ said—"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." For Christendom the example of Christ's great humility, culminating in the Cross and Passion, has yet the ideal before which false principles fall from their pedestals like Dagon before the Ark of God. And who can tell how deeply and widely the same ideal has affected heathendom, whether preached for a witness by apostolic men, its echo lingering on in the darkness that closed in again through long centuries; or absorbed, in some imperfect way, by contact with Christendom, or published by returning Queens of Sheba and Ethiopian treasurers after their own manner, as reformers of their ancestral systems of religion and morals. Spanish chroniclers of the conquest of Mexico and Peru tell of native faiths and practices so closely resembling Christianity that they can only ascribe them to Satanic wiles, foisting a spurious imitation of Christ's religion upon defenceless peoples. Buddhism unquestionably owes its chief strength to some infusion of Christian truth and light into its heritage of natural religion. A recent writer traces very distinctly the "Messiah craze" of the American Indian tribes, and their cult of the Great Spirit, to the preaching of the Jesuit missionaries of the seventeenth century and later, in the Mississippi valley. The Holy Ghost has been Christ's apostle to "tell it out among the heathen that the Lord reigneth from the tree," and wherever the evangel in any form has gone, it has left its mark in lofty motive and righteous action which the Day of Judgment shall reveal to the glory of God and the honor and praise of His dear Son. Well, then, does the Church rehearse with careful iteration this week of weeks, the fourfold story of the holy evangelists. As Dr. Liddon has said, "The agony of the Divine Victim reveals the price and yields the measure of the life of the human soul"—immortality. Let the children of the kingdom remember the warning, "Many shall come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God; and, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."