

Holy Water was used for still other purposes. "Salt is blessed, and water, for various uses of the faithful, for those who are sick, against the delusions of the enemy, for the health or curing of cattle, for the banishment of diseases, &c." — *Benedicitur sal et aqua* in diversos usus fidelium, ad homines infirmos, contra phantasiam inimici, ad pecorum sanitatem, ad morbos auferendos, &c." He alludes to the institution of this rite by Pope St. Alexander, and to the divine authority by which salt and water are mixed together, and blessed.* In the same place this ancient writer goes on to describe the natural properties of salt and water, the close similarity of their nature, as being of the same element, and having the same office and signification; their powers of cleansing, purifying and preserving from corruption. He adds, that water signifies the drink of wisdom, and salt indicates the savour of prudence. He attributes the consequences of the blessing to the wonderful effects of the Divine operation, because God himself blesses them by the mouth of the Priest, and mercifully bestows the favours that are sought for in the sacerdotal prayers.†

We fear we are exceeding the limits prescribed by the Publishers of these TRACTS, if not, tiring the patience of the reader, by prolonging our extracts in proof of the uninterrupted custom of Blessing and using Holy Water. However, as we have been speaking of St. Malachy and the Church of Ireland we will adduce another testimony from Gillebert, Bishop of Limerick,‡ who, about

* See *Maurus* in *Notis ad Librum Sacram S. Gregorii*, who shows that the exorcisms, blessings and prayers, in the ancient *Sacramentary of St. Gregory*, are precisely similar to those now employed by the Church in this sacred rite.

† The whole of this interesting chapter may be seen in the magnificent liturgical collection of *HITTOIR*, page 619, folio edition of Paris, 1621. Rabanus Maurus died in the year 855, after he had been nine years Archbishop of Mentz. He was one of the most profound scholars of his day, deeply versed in scriptural and profane learning, and enjoying the reputation of being a philosopher, a rhetorician, an astronomer, and an exquisite poet. His book *de Institutione Clericorum* was composed upwards of forty years before his death, when he was Abbot of Fulda, or at least a Monk in that monastery, for Usher says he was made Abbot in 820. It was dedicated to one of his predecessors in the See of Mentz, Archbishop Heistolphus, who died in 815.

‡ Some say Louth, as there is a doubt about the Latin term *Lunensis* *Lundensis* or *Lunnicensis*. In old Irish, Limerick was called *Lumneuch*.