

THE MOST HOLY CORPORAL of ORVIETO

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IN the year 1263, when the Papal states were harassed by the Guelph and Ghibelline factions, Pope Urban IV., whose reign was only four years, lived with his court at Orvieto. Here, in this strongly fortified city, perched on a lofty mountain, he carried on the government of the Church in safety. As God in His mercy often comforts His Church at that moment when her troubles seem severest, so at this time there occurred a miracle in connection with the Holy Eucharist which has never perhaps been equalled before or since.

The following is an account of the prodigy, partly gathered by the writer during a recent visit to Orvieto, and partly from a valuable work in Italian by Canon Pennazzi. He has reason to believe that this is the first description of the Holy Corporal and its shrine that has appeared in the English language, and it is hoped that the perusal of the account [though meagre] here given will foster a love for so great a Sacrament.

THE VIRGIN MARTYR OF BOLSENA.

It happened in the year 1263 that a German priest, whose name is not recorded, passing through Italy, made a stay at the small town of Bolsena, near the beautiful lake of that name, about six miles from Orvieto. Bolsena is an Italianized form of Volsinii, which ancient town, situated higher up in the country, was famous as one of the twelve capital cities of the Etruscan League, the spoil of which when conquered by the Romans, B. C. 280, included 2,000 statues. This priest, called in some accounts Peter, and styled a Bohemian from Prague, was a devout pilgrim, who had travelled to Rome, with much labor and fatigue, to satisfy his piety "ad limina Apostolorum." His special object in paying a visit to Bolsena was doubtless to honor the memory of a famous virgin-martyr, called Christina, whose name has for many centuries been there held in benediction. In the church of this town is an altar over the saint's tomb in the crypt, and in the up-