

Good Shepherd closely resembles that of Hermes Kriophoros, if the delineations of the Eucharistic supper are hardly to be distinguished from those of a banquet of the Gods, if the twelve Apostles are so depicted that they might stand for the twelve *Dii Maiores*, if the same intervals of the ninth day, the month day and the anniversary, which had already been familiar among the Roman people for centuries in their celebrations for the dead, were chosen for Requiem Masses, the cause is, no doubt, to be sought in the desire of the faithful to live among their fellow-citizens without attracting attention. These and other things were not wrong in themselves, and they were Christianized by the manner of their use. It was thus that the early Christians, no doubt, adopted the habit of the funeral love-feast, or *agape*, culminating, after the model of the Last Supper, in the celebration of the Blessed Eucharist. But from the very first this combination of semi-pagan and Christian usages was found to be fertile in abuses. Already St. Paul had noted how human foibles of selfishness, greediness or ostentation, had crept in to spoil the apostolic simplicity of this common meal. "For everyone taketh before his own supper to eat. And one, indeed, is hungry, and another is drunk" (I Cor. xi. 21). The result was that as soon as the age of severer persecution had passed, the bishops began either to forbid the love-feasts altogether, or, at any rate,