

the first note of the inflection is an unaccented syllable of a word, the accented syllable of which is to be sung to the reciting note.¹

Of this class we may take the following examples:—

UNDER THE RULE

in mandatis e - jus vo - let ni - nis.
sedes su - per do - mum Da - vid.
quiesi - vi ho - na ti - bi.

UNDER THE EXCEPTION

laudabi - le no - men Do - mi - ni.
colles sic - ut a - gni o - vi - um.
ani - ma me - a Do - mi - num.

Finally attention may be directed to the case of verses which end in monosyllables or in Hebrew words. They will be found to furnish especially useful exercises in the observance of the golden rule of Guidetti, *Cantabis syllabas sicut pronuntiaeris*:—

ante lucif - rum ge - nu - i - te.
escam dedit ti - men - ti - bus sc.
et profe - tor e - o - rum est.
secundum ordi - nem Mel - chi - se - dech.
in medio tu - i Je - ru - sa - lem.

I reserve for the December number of the RECORD the explanation of Fr. Haber's method as applied to the remaining Tones.

✠ W. J. W.

¹ See the September number of the RECORD, pages 783, 784; and the present number, pages 879, 882, 885, and 887.

ON THE CATHOLIC PRINCIPLE OF A LITURGICAL LANGUAGE.

AMONGST the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Establishment agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces, and published by the authority of the King, as Supreme Head of the Church of England in 1562, we find this statement (Art. xxiv):—"It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have publick Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people." This sentence may be fairly said to formulate the anti-Catholic principle concerning the use of the vernacular in the official and public prayer of the Church. There can be little doubt as to the fact that the carrying into practice of the teaching contained in this principle contributed in a large measure to the ultimate success of the Protestant Reformation in uprooting the Catholic faith in this kingdom. The Liturgy in the vernacular has served more effectually perhaps than anything else in keeping the minds and hearts of the English people isolated and estranged from the religious ideas and sentiments of the rest of Christendom. It helped more than anything else could have done in building up and fostering that national Anglican and racial religion which, like the Jewish, is so essentially opposed to the international and world-wide character of Catholic Christianity where "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free," and where "all are one in Christ."

Before the twelfth century there does not appear to have been any large or notable movement in favour of the introduction of the use of the vernacular into the service of the Church. Up to that time men seem to have been mindful of the words of Jesus Christ in the Gospel "Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest perhaps they trample them under their feet, and turning upon you they tear you." (*Matt.* vii., 6.) The minds of the Christian men and women of those days were trained to a deep and

filial reverence for holy things by those vestiges of the ancient "disciplina arcani," which has always been preserved in the practice of the Catholic Church. Brought up in the midst of a rich and lavish symbolism, which appealed to them through all their senses, they had grown accustomed to enshrine that which was sacred and holy in the depths of their nature, and when they brought it forth in outward expression, they strove to do so in a manner commensurate with their deep-felt esteem and reverence. Hence the wealth of gold and silver and jewels decking those costly shrines of mediæval Christendom in which the relics of God's saints reposed. Hence too the elaborate and matchless symbolism of their architecture causing the very stones to speak and fill our minds with holy awe. Hence the gorgeous richness of that ritual reminding us in every word and action of the beauty of holiness, and re-echoing so eloquently the words of the Royal Psalmist, "Domine dilexisti decorem domus tue: et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ;" and of those other words, "Domum tuam decet sanctitudo, Domine, in longitudo in dierum." But towards the end of the twelfth century we can trace the beginnings of that movement which afterwards broke out with such terrible success in the sixteenth century. The Waldensian and Albigensian heresies which were the first to preach the principle of private judgment in the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, were likewise the first to protest against the use of a liturgical language other than the vernacular, and to celebrate the mysteries of religion in the vulgar tongue. Moreover they made this principle a fundamental doctrine of their sects, which together with those of Wickliffe and Huss were the true precursors of Protestantism from which has sprung the rationalism and naturalism of our time. It is the same rationalistic spirit that entered into all these movements, and applied its principles alike to the faith and practice, the doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church.

The object of this paper is to draw out and set forth in a short form the Catholic principle concerning the use of a language, other than the vernacular, in the Official and Public religious services of the Church. The treatment of the

question is taken almost entirely from the work of the late learned Abbot of Solesmes, Dom Prosper Guéranger, entitled *Institutiones Liturgicæ*, wherein over one hundred pages are devoted to its discussion. There is no need here to insist upon the weight of authority in liturgical matters that attaches to the name of Dom Guéranger. Let it suffice to recall the words of Pope Pius IX. (of blessed memory) in an Apostolic Brief addressed to the Bishop of Poitiers concerning this illustrious Benedictine monk :

"Among the ecclesiastics of our times, who have been most distinguished for their virtues, learning, zeal, and labours in the advancement of Catholic interests, we must in all justice count our beloved son, Prosper Guéranger, Abbot of St. Peter's at Solesmes, and Superior-General of the Benedictine congregation in France.

"The principal object to which he turned his whole solicitude and attention was that the Roman Liturgy should, as by right of recovery, be restored to France. So well did he labour in this, that to his writings, perseverance, and extraordinary activity, must be mainly attributed the adoption of the Rites of the Roman Church by all the dioceses of France, as he himself witnessed before leaving this life."

Dom Guéranger begins his treatment of the subject by citing the ninth canon of the twenty-second session of the Council of Trent, which runs thus: "Si quis dixerit lingua tantum vulgari Missam celebrari debere anathema sit." Now it is quite clear that the principle laid down in the twenty-fourth Article of the Anglican establishment, concerning the use of the vernacular in the Church services, excludes the use of any language but the vernacular, and therefore falls directly under this anathema of the Council of Trent. So that the whole discussion resolves itself into this question: What is the motive, reason, or principle upon which this authoritative decision of the Church is based? Here it may be useful to call to mind the fact that the Catholic Church has always regarded the Liturgy not only as a most important branch of ecclesiastical science, but as the principle instrument of ecclesiastical tradition, according to the famous axiom, "Legem credendi statuit lex orandi." That it has been constantly regarded by the Church as a science with fixed definite principles is certain. That most learned Pope, Benedict XIV., in a discourse delivered as the inaugural

address before the Academy of Liturgy founded by him at Rome, to be found in the eighth volume of the complete edition of his works, after enumerating five chief branches of ecclesiastical science, viz, the interpretation of Sacred Scripture, mystical, moral, and dogmatic theology, together with canon law, goes so far as to state that the Liturgy as a science holds a higher place than any of these, and is superior to all of them. Firstly, because they have all appeared and grown up in later ages, whilst the Liturgy began with the Church itself. Secondly, they have at best but a remote, indirect, and speculative relation to God: whilst the Liturgy is the direct and immediate carrying out in the actual worship of God of that which they teach. Thirdly, they point out the way to virtue and good life, whilst the Liturgy brings to us those solid fruits of religion and piety of which they treat; and lastly, they generally stop short at the bare knowledge of the Divine truths, whilst the Liturgy is so bound up and intimately connected with the Divine truths, that it cannot be separated from them. But its highest dignity comes from the fact that its first Author and Master was God himself, that it has a direct and immediate reference to Him, and that He has plainly and distinctly delivered to man those acts of religion such as prayer and sacrifice by which due and fitting worship is paid to Him.

Dom Guéranger complains of the inadequate treatment which the subject of the exclusion of the vernacular from the Liturgy has received at the hands of many Catholic writers on Ritual of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He tells us that these writers for the most part have lost sight of those high considerations which give a reason for the disciplinary laws of the Church. He especially mentions such authors as Le Brun, Dom Martene, Renaudot, Bœcquillet, and also Papebrock. He contrasts, however, with these the lofty and solid teaching of Cardinal Bellarmine, and the great theologians of the sixteenth century, especially mentioning the famous censure of the Sorbonne on the opinions of Erasmus concerning the use of the vernacular in Church services (1526). The great Cardinal Bona is also brought forward as an upholder of the true principle upon which the Church's practice in this matter is founded.

In order to obtain a clear idea of the motives of the Church in the exclusion of the vulgar tongue from the services of the Altar, we must, in the first place, recall the ancient "discipline of the secret." It is certain that the Church has modified her practice in this regard, but it is equally certain that she has never abandoned the principle upon which it rests. There are no longer any public penitents to be expelled from the church at the moment that the Sacrifice of the Mass is about to be offered. But there is always the same profound depth in the mysteries of the faith, the same weakness and the same dangers in the human heart, ever inclined to the things of earth. For us who accept the institutions of the Church as the work of a superhuman wisdom, there is no need to apologise or make excuse for her intentions in the means which she has taken to guard the prayers of her Liturgy in a sacred language. That such a sacred language exists is the constant teaching of the early Fathers and most celebrated Doctors of the Church, as well in the East as in the West. In the writings of St. Hilary of Poitiers, who lived in the fourth century, we find this passage: "His maxime tribus linguis sacramentum voluntatis Dei, et beati regni expectatio prœdicatur: ex quo illud Pilati fuit, ut in his tribus linguis regem Judæorum Dominum Jesum Christum prœscriberet" (*Prologus in librum Pœdagogum* XV.) God has then guided the hand of the Roman governor in the choice of the languages which should appear in the inscription as well as in the terms in which that inscription was couched, and His divine spirit, speaking to men in the Sacred Scriptures, has been likewise pleased to consecrate those same three languages which the Jewish people, gathered from the four winds of heaven for the Paschal feast, read in the title placed over the head of their Redeemer on the Cross. The dignity of the three languages which proclaimed on Calvary the Royalty of the Crucified has not struck only the mystic writers of the Middle Ages. In modern times Joseph de Maistre has recognised this consecration quite as much as the devout Honorius of Autun, and both repeat in their own day the teaching of the great St. Hilary.

The Hebrew language after the Babylonian captivity was lost in the Chaldean, which is one of the forms of the Syriac. The same body of Sacred Scriptures unites the books of Moses, of Samuel, of David, of Solomon and the Prophets, and the books of Daniel and Esdras, the first speaking pure Hebrew, the second giving one part of their utterances in Syro-Chaldaic. And when Christ, foretold by the Prophets, came into the world it was in the language then spoken by His people, that is in the Hebrew become Syro-Chaldaic, that He preached His doctrine.

But already, before the fulfilment of the prophetic utterances, a second language had been sanctified to serve as an organ of the Holy Spirit. Not only had the Greek language been raised to the rank of an interpreter of the Divine Word in the famous Septuagint version of the Scriptures, but the Holy Ghost announcing already the future outpouring of the grace of the adoption of sons to the Gentiles, dictated in Greek the book of Wisdom and the second book of Machabees. Then Christ having appeared for our redemption and His testament in our favour being opened by His death, the Holy Spirit the inspirer of the Scriptures gave to man in the three languages of the title of the Cross the books of the New Testament. St. Matthew wrote his gospel in Syriac, the vernacular Hebrew of his time, as Papias, a disciple of the apostles, St. Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine testify.

The Greek language had the honour of receiving in its idiom the gospels of St. Luke and St. John, the Acts, and the Epistles of the Apostles, except perhaps the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews which may have been written in their language. Christianity having been preached in Jerusalem and in the language of Israel, was to spread itself first of all to that portion of the Gentile world where the Greek language was used.

But since the Chair of the Prince of the Apostles was soon to be transferred to the capital of the Latin tongue it was fitting that this same Latin tongue which was the official language of the whole Roman world, should likewise become

the official language of the Church, and as such take precedence of the Hebrew and the Greek, in the same way that Rome was to take precedence of Jerusalem and Antioch in the hierarchical order and in the spiritual government of the whole of Christendom.

Eusebius and St. Jerome both state that St. Mark, who composed his gospel at Rome under the eyes of St. Peter, wrote it in Latin. But if it cannot be quite proved for certain that any of the books of the New Testament were originally composed in Latin, it is certain at least that the first Christian translation of the Sacred Scriptures was given to the world in that language, in that most venerable version called the *Itala* which was written during the lifetime of the Apostles themselves, and received the approbation of St. Peter as head of the Church, according to the testimony of some of the earliest writers upon Church history. This version may be said still to exist in the actual Vulgate, which has been declared by the Council of Trent to contain the pure Word of God for both the Old and New Testaments.

So that from the beginning of Christianity the three languages inscribed on the Cross became the organ of the Holy Ghost in proclaiming to the world the written Word of God.

But besides their use in Sacred Scripture these same three languages were destined to occupy a place in the Liturgy of the Church which no others can claim. As regards all the countries of Europe it is true to say that from the first introduction of Christianity no other language, save one of these three, was ever used, with one only exception, which was Russia, where leave was granted by the Holy See to SS. Cyril and Methodius to celebrate the Liturgy in the Slavonic language; but this leave was given at a period long after the Faith had been preached in the other nations of Europe. The use of any language save the Latin in the Liturgy was unknown in France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Poland, and the British Isles from the introduction of Christianity to any of these countries. With regard to Italy it is most probable that the Liturgy was celebrated for a short period in Greek, but

the use of the Latin became universal in that country before the end of the second century. Latin was the only language in use throughout the once most famous and flourishing Church of Africa, from whence have sprung the greatest of the Latin Fathers. So that up to the ninth century the Liturgy was exclusively celebrated in the three languages of the Cross, and the use of the Slavonic granted during that epoch is the only exception we can find of a nation where the Liturgy was celebrated in the vernacular. Thus we are forced to the conclusion that if the three sacred languages were the sole depositories of the Sacred Scriptures during the first period of Christianity, no other language was admitted to share the same privilege with them until the Christian religion had been flourishing for many centuries throughout the greater part of the known world.

With regard to the concession granted by Pope John VIII. to SS. Cyril and Methodius for the use of the Slavonic in the provinces evangelised by them, Dom Guéranger does not fail to call attention to its fatal result in estranging those provinces from the union of Latin Christendom and so facilitating and preparing the way for their ultimate fall into schism in the twelfth century. Moreover he quotes a passage from the Annals of Cardinal Baronius which shows us very plainly the light in which the character of Pope John VIII. was viewed even by the most devoted children of the Church. The passage is to be found in the *Annals ad annum 875*, No. V. In this passage the illustrious Cardinal tells us that Pope John VIII. on account of his weak-mindedness was called a woman pope "Papissa non Papa," and that it was his feebleness of character which afterwards gave rise to the too famous historical myth of Pope Joan.

As an instance of the way in which the Holy See has, with the sole exception above referred to, constantly refrained from authorising the use of the vernacular in the Liturgy it will be well to recall the attitude it assumed with regard to the petitions presented by the Jesuit missionaries in China during the seventeenth century for the use of the Chinese

language in the services of the Altar. This petition was first made in 1615 by Father Ricci to Pope Paul V., who is reported to have ordered that a Brief should be drawn up to grant the request, but Pope Benedict XIV. tells us that this Brief remained at Rome and was never sent to China. However this may have been, the superiors of the mission did not judge it expedient to carry their design into execution at that time. In 1657 a second petition composed by Father Rougemont was submitted to the judgment of the Holy See. A special congregation composed of cardinals, prelates, and distinguished theologians, was formed to examine the demand of the missionaries, and in spite of the grave reasons that were brought forward by them for the use of the Chinese language the Holy See refused to grant their request. A third petition was made for the concession in 1678 to Pope Innocent XI, and with a like result. The last effort in this direction of the Jesuit missionaries in China was made in 1697 when they laid a memorial before Pope Innocent XII., but the concession was never granted.

The community, then, of a liturgical language which has triumphed over national and racial separation has been the chief exterior means of union of the Christian peoples. By its means the idea of a centre of union and of a common origin has penetrated into their minds and hearts, breaking down the natural frontiers that divide the dwelling-place of men, so that the Christian finds himself at home in the most distant land and amongst a people whose manners and traditions may be most unlike his own. This reason alone would be sufficient to prove the wisdom of the Church in confining herself as far as possible to those three sacred languages which represent by their wide extent the chosen portion of the human race.

But it still remains to be shown that the Church has constantly attached an intrinsic value to those languages as having been made sacred and set apart for the Divine Service.

The objection that is commonly brought against their being looked upon as more sacred than any other languages is the fact that they were once the common speech of the

respective peoples to which they belonged. But the same objection would hold good against almost everything that is looked upon as sacred in the world. From the beginning of history amongst all the peoples of the earth certain actions and particular things have been regarded as sacred, and set apart from common use. For instance, where is the nation of antiquity that had not its sacred vestments or sacrificial garb for its priests? Or when was there a time in which there did not exist certain sacred ceremonies? Indeed, if we were to push this objection to its extreme logical conclusion, we should have to cease to look upon the Cross itself as sacred because it was once the common instrument of execution for ordinary malefactors who were punished with death. But in reality it is impossible for man, constituted as he is, to rid himself entirely of the notion of sacred things and of the distinction of sacred and profane, because it has its root in his nature, which is surrounded on all sides with that which is mysterious, and which he is unable to penetrate or understand with his limited intelligence. Therefore it is that the notion of sacred things is universal. The teaching of God to men has been from the beginning through the means of mysteries. The prophets of the Old Testament, guided by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, clothed the divine oracles in enigmatical and oftentimes very obscure language, and when the Word Incarnate was seen on earth, and conversed with men, He conveyed to them His chief teaching in parables, and the whole Bible is so full of figurative allusions as to necessitate its always remaining a book of mystery, and the most profound knowledge of the Holy Scriptures can never remove the necessity for the exercise of faith. In the twilight of this present life, the human intelligence must always bow down before and worship mysteries, and can never make them submit to the searchings of human thought. If this, then, be true of the Sacred Scriptures, which simply announce the mysteries of salvation to men, surely it ought to be at least equally true of the Liturgy, through means of which the fruit of those mysteries is applied to our lives. Dom Guéranger quotes a passage from the writings of Origen

which bears directly upon the principle now under consideration:—

“There are things, seemingly obscure, which nevertheless, by the very fact of their appealing to our sense of hearing, carry with them great profit to our soul. If the Gentiles believed that certain verses of poetry, which they called charms; that certain names, not understood even by those who invoked them, were able to draw forth serpens from their caves or put them to sleep; if it can be said that such words as these were able to disperse fevers and to cure diseases of the human body; that they could even sometimes send the soul into a kind of ecstasy, how much more ought we not to believe that the words of Holy Scripture should be far more powerful in their effects.” (Origen's *In Librum Jesu Nave Hom.* xx.)

St. Basil, in his book on the Holy Ghost, sets before us the same principle. In chapter xxvii. we find these words:

“Moses, in his wisdom, knew that things which were made common and familiar were by that very fact liable to contempt, and that those which are rare and scarce, and somewhat withdrawn from the common gaze, excite naturally a certain admiration and laudable curiosity. Following his example, the Apostles and the Fathers have established from the beginning certain rites in the Church, and have thus guarded the dignity of the mysteries by the discipline of silence and the secret; for that is no longer a mystery which is offered without reserve to the ears of the multitude.”

This passage from St. Basil might almost be taken for a commentary on the words of Our Lord to His Apostles, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.”

There is another passage in the writings of Origen in which the same thought is still further unfolded. It is in his fifth homily on the *Book of Numbers*, and runs thus:—

“When the time had come for the children of Israel to move their camp, the tabernacle was taken down. Aaron and the priests, his sons, entering into the Holy of Holies, covered each object with the veil belonging to it, and, leaving them thus veiled in the place where they stood, they brought in the sons of Caath, who were set apart for this ministry, and placed upon their shoulders that which had been already veiled by the hands of the priests. If you under-

stand the historical meaning, strive to rise to the splendour of the mystery it signifies : and if the eye of your soul be pure, contemplate the light of the spiritual law that shines from it. Let him know to whom the mysteries are entrusted ; that it is not good to unfold them before those who are not fit to see them unveiled ; but that he ought to veil them, and, thus veiled, to place them on the shoulders of those who have not the capacity of appreciating them, and whose duty is simply to receive them. Therefore, it is that there are many things in the observances of the Church which it is proper to do, but the reason of which is not manifested to all. These covered and veiled rites we bear upon our shoulder, having received them from the Supreme Pontiff and his priests. For as they remain hidden, except we have in our midst Aaron or the Sons of Aaron, to whom alone it is given to contemplate them openly and unveiled." (*Origen's In Namb. Hom. v.*)

These few extracts from the writings of some of the early Fathers will suffice to show how the principle of a language "not understood of the people," in the services of the altar, was recognised during the first ages of Christianity. As a proof of the constant existence of the same principle in the subsequent history of the Church, we have the explicit testimony and most weighty evidence of Pope St. Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), in the eleventh century ; of the Faculty of the Sorbonne, in the sixteenth ; and that of the Papal Constitution, *Unigenitus*, in the seventeenth century.

Vratislaus, Duke of Bohemia, had petitioned Pope St. Gregory VII. for the extension to his dominions of the dispensation granted by John VIII. for Moravia, on the ground that his subjects belonged to the Slavonic race. St. Gregory, in refusing to grant the request, sets before the Duke very clearly the Catholic principle of a liturgical language. Here are his words, in a letter written to Vratislaus in 1080 :—

"As regards your request of obtaining our consent to the celebration of the Divine Office in the Slavonic language, be it known to you that we can in no way accede to your wishes. For those who have seriously reflected upon this question, it is evident that it is not without reason that it has pleased Almighty God to allow the Holy Scriptures to remain hidden in certain places, from the fear lest if they were made accessible to the eyes of all, they might be exposed to that kind of familiarity which breeds contempt, or being badly understood

by shallow minds, they should become to them an occasion of error. It is no excuse to say that certain religious men (St. Cyril and Methodius) have condescended to the wishes of a people full of simplicity, or that they have not judged it fitting to apply the remedy for it, for in primitive times the Church herself has suffered many things to be done which the holy Fathers, after mature consideration, have abrogated or corrected when Christianity had taken firm root and religion had increased. It is for this reason, that by the authority of the blessed Peter, We forbid that to be done which you, with impudence, have asked for ; and for the honour of Almighty God, We command you to oppose yourself with all your power to this vanity."—(*Labb. Conc. Tom. x., p. 234.*)

The testimony of the faculty of the Sorbonne in the sixteenth century is of immense value as representing the mind of Catholic Christendom on one of the chief points then being attacked by the innovators and heretics of the time. It is contained in the famous censure on the writings of Erasmus, put forth in the year 1526. Erasmus, in his preface to the Gospel of St. Matthew, had expressed himself thus : "It is unbecoming and ridiculous to see uneducated people and women repeating like parrots the words of psalms and prayers which they do not understand." The Faculty of the Sorbonne condemned this proposition in the following terms :—

"This proposition, which is calculated to prevent the simple and uneducated and women from joining in the Vocal Prayers prescribed by the rites and custom of the Church, as if this Prayer ceased to be of use to them because they did not understand it, is impious, erroneous, and open to the reproach of the Bohemians, who have wished to celebrate the Ecclesiastical Office in the vulgar tongue. Otherwise it would have to be confessed that under the Old Law it was unbecoming and ridiculous for the simple folk to observe the ceremonies of the Law which God had established because these people could not understand the text that prescribed them, an opinion which would be blasphemy against the Law and against God who gave it, and what is more—heretical. In effect the intention of the Church in her prayers is not only to instruct us by the collocation of words, but principally to bring it about that we, conforming ourselves to her end and object as her members, should declare the praises of God, render to Him the thanksgivings which are due to Him, and implore the necessary graces for ourselves. God, seeing this intention in those who recite these prayers, deigns to inflame their wills, to enlighten their minds, to strengthen their human weaknesses, and to dispense to them the fruits of His grace and of His

glory. This is also the intention of those who recite these prayers without understanding the meaning of the words. They resemble an ambassador who is ignorant of the words of the dispatches with which he has been entrusted by his sovereign to bear to a foreign court, but which nevertheless he delivers according to the orders he has received, and so fulfils his office both to his sovereign and to him to whom he has been sent. Besides, a great many passages from the Prophets are chanted in the Church, which, although they may not be understood by the greater part of those who sing them, are nevertheless useful and profitable to those who chant them, because in chanting them a duty is discharged to God who has revealed them. Whence it follows that the practice of prayer does not consist only in the understanding of the words, and that it is a dangerous error to suppose that vocal prayer has no other end than the understanding of the Faith, since this kind of prayer is intended chiefly to inflame the affections of the will, to the end that the soul in raising itself to God by piety and devotion in the manner aforesaid, might bear in mind that its efforts are not in vain, but that it obtains that which its intention demands, and its intelligence merits, the light and the other graces which are necessary for it.

"Now, all these effects are far richer and more precious than the simple understanding of the words, which brings with it but a slight profit when the love of God is not excited within them. Even when the psalms are translated into the vulgar tongue, it is by no means certain that the ignorant and simple people understand them with any more real appreciation than when left in the Latin."—(D'Argentine, *Collectio Judæorum*, Tom. ii. f. 61.)

The seventeenth century offers its testimony in the Papal Constitution *Unigenitus*, which condemned the errors of the Jansenist heresy. In that document, which bears altogether upon things which are of faith and errors against the faith, we find the following condemned proposition, taken from the writings of Quesnel:—

"To take away from the simple people the consolation of joining their voices to the voice of the whole Church, is a practice contrary to the Apostolic custom and the intention of God."—(Prop. 86.)

Now, a greater testimony than this in favour of the principle of a Liturgical language we could not have, for it condemns the contrary principle, not merely as dangerous or rash and temerarious, but as heretical, and this with all the authority that attaches to a Pontifical Constitution condemning errors against Catholic teaching.

This error of the Jansenist heretics had been anticipated a century before by the Council of Trent, for we read in the Acts of the Council (Sess. xxii. cap. viii.):—

"Although the Mass contains a vast store of instruction for the faithful, still it has not seemed fitting to the Fathers that it should be celebrated in the vulgar tongue. Therefore, each church shall retain its ancient rites which are approved by the Holy Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all the churches, but to the end that the sheep of Christ should not suffer from hunger, and that the little children should not ask for bread and find no one to break it for them, this Holy Council orders pastors and all those who have care of souls, to explain often during the celebration of Mass, either themselves or through the ministry of others, some portion of those things which are read in the Mass, and amongst other things to explain some details of the mysteries of this most Holy Sacrifice, especially on Sundays and Festivals."

It is not then without the greatest reasons that Dom Guéranger speaks of the existence of an anti-liturgical heresy which he has traced from the time of St. Jerome, when its principles were represented by the heretic Vigilantius, down to our own day when its principles are supported by all the heretical sects that have been the principal offspring of Protestantism. Efforts in the same direction as those of the Jansenists in the seventeenth century were made in the reign of Joseph II. in Austria, in the eighteenth century, and it was the strange zeal of that emperor for ecclesiastical innovation that caused Frederick to speak of him as "my brother the Sacristan."

But perhaps the wildest outburst during the eighteenth century of this dangerous error, condemned so often by the Church, is to be studied in the abortive schismatical Synod of Pistoja, held under the protection of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and presided over by Scipio Ricci, Bishop of Pistoja and Prato, in which it was determined amongst other innovations contrary to the practices of the Church, to celebrate the Liturgy in the vulgar tongue, and to read all the prayers of the Mass in a loud voice, suppressing entirely this particular application of the discipline of the *Secret* which has come down to us from the earliest times, and the principle of which is so manifestly maintained in the prayers and ceremonies of

the Holy Sacrifice. It is needless to add that the doings of this synod were condemned by Pope Pius VI., in the Bull *Auctorem Fidei* published in 1794. Ricci, after considerable delay and hesitancy finally retracted his errors, and died in communion with the Church.

In 1797 there was held in Notre Dame, at Paris, that strange assembly composed of twenty-nine bishops of the so-called "Constitutional Church of France." Some of its decrees are very similar in character to those of the *concilium* held at Pistoja in 1786. One result of its labours was the publication of a Ritual in French, and the expression of a wish that the national language should be used in the services of the Church. However, after a short session, the meeting broke up in disorder, and the Constitutional Church of France was too short-lived and too weak to be able to carry its designs into execution, although we read that a certain priest, named Duplan, Curé of Gentilly, near Paris, distinguished himself by having Vespers sung in French in his church, at which one of the Constitutional bishops assisted.

Dom Guérouger takes notice of a custom that has prevailed for a long time in many parts of Germany, which consists in the singing of the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and other parts of the Mass by the people in the German language, and which he censures as a custom quite contrary to the spirit of the Church, adding "that a practice further removed from the intention of the Universal Church could not be imagined." He recalls to our minds the words of the Decree of Cardinal Otho, Bishop of Augsburg, in 1548 :

"The Latin language, which, as a divine instrument, was dedicated to sacred usages upon the altar of the Cross itself, and to which the Western Church is indebted for the Christian religion, shall be preserved in the administration of the Sacraments, and in the other offices of the Church, throughout the whole of our diocese, and shall be re-established in those places where it may have fallen into disuse."

It was at the beginning of this century, in 1802, that the last effort in the direction of a national Liturgy was made in France by order of those "*articles organiques*," which were drawn up to serve as a limitation to the powers granted to

the Holy See by the Concordat, and which became the law of the land upon the 5th July of that year. A commission was then formed to draw up and appoint the new liturgical books of the Church of France; but the result of its labours was never made known, and it failed utterly to produce any real effect in the practice and discipline of the Church in France.

Thus we are able to look back through the records of more than fifteen centuries, and to recognise in each the same principle regarding the use of a liturgical language in the service of the Church. We can see how this principle has been maintained in the face of heretics and innovators by the repeated decisions of the Holy See, and how it has even been proclaimed by the canons of an Ecumenical Council.

From all this it is evident that the reasons on which this principle is based must be very deeply imbedded in the foundations of Catholic Christianity. And in truth a liturgical language is one of those visible signs of that "Sacrament of Unity" which is shown to the world in the Catholic Church. It is one of the chief means for securing that universality of discipline and practice which is a constituent part of the Church's catholicity. It is the bond that connects together and unites in one common prayer, not the people of one nation, but all the nations of the earth, in the unity of truth. It is the chain of Peter thrown around the earth, and keeping it firmly bound to the centre of unity established by Jesus Christ in the Roman See. It constitutes one of the chief reasons why the Liturgy of the Church has always been regarded by Catholic theologians as the first instrument of ecclesiastical tradition. It is, moreover, perhaps, the chief exterior means for the conservation of Catholic dogma in all its integrity, and it was this that gave rise to that world-famous axiom first formulated by Pope St. Celestine I., "*Legem credendi statuit lex orandi.*" It is the one means, too, by which, in the Catholic sense of the word, popular religious services are possible, for by it there is offered to all the peoples of the earth a common channel for the united expression of their faith and of their prayer. But a yet more

weighty argument, if possible, in favour of the use of a liturgical language can be gathered from the fact that it has served in a wonderfully efficacious manner in guarding and fostering that Catholic instinct of reverence which has been so well styled by Goethe, "The soul of all religion that ever has been among men, or ever will be."

In concluding his treatment of the subject of the use of a liturgical language, Dom Guéranger laments the frequent substitution in France of so-called "cantiques" in the French language for the Latin hymns of the Church in certain occasional devotional services—such as those commonly held during the month of May, to which he especially alludes: and he asks how much better would it not be on these occasions to make use of such well-known and venerable hymns as the *Ave Maris Stella*, the *Inviolata*, the *Regina Celi*, or the *Magnificat*, than to join in singing those couplets of such inferior merit, the melodies of which are too often suggestive of the concert hall, and which only serve to attract to our churches a crowd of "*illâés amateurs*," who come periodically only to satisfy their eyes and their ears.

"Dignity," he writes, "in all that concerns the Divine service is a necessity with which nothing can ever dispense, and the Church has placed the secret of this dignity in the liturgical language and in the severe melodies of the Gregorian chants. Is there not a real danger of exposing the faithful to the loss of all taste for the Latin tongue in the Church service if they are allowed to become unaccustomed to the sound of those masculine chants which were one of the principal sources of the simple and robust faith of our forefathers? For us, far from resigning ourselves to see the liturgical language share a divided allegiance with the vernacular in our churches, we desire very soon to see the knowledge of Latin spread itself beyond the limits within which it has been confined by modern custom. If Fenelon said, a hundred and fifty years ago, in speaking of the education of girls, that 'the study of Latin would be much more reasonable for them than that of Italian and Spanish, because it is the language of the Church, and there is an inestimable fruit and consolation in understanding the sense of the words of the Divine Office, at which one assists so often,' it would seem that in this age, when the education of children has been so fully developed, the moment had come to enlarge the circle in this direction. Piety would gain by it, and the knowledge of religion, so necessary to the

mothers of families, would assume a degree of authority and of gravity, the happy influences of which we would not be slow to recognise."

May it not be allowed to English-speaking Catholics to unite in the lament and in the desire of the learned Abbot of Solesmes, in his lament upon the too frequent substitution of services in the vernacular, for the liturgical services of the Church, especially on the afternoons and in the evenings of Sundays and holidays of obligation, more particularly in those churches where a liturgical service is feasible, and where nevertheless the preference is given to private forms of devotion, and in his desire of seeing a more widespread knowledge of the Latin language amongst the faithful, in order that they may more easily unite their minds and hearts as well as their voices, not in the mother tongue of one nation but in the universal mother tongue of Catholic Christendom? That so there may ever grow up and increase in our midst that appreciation and love for the prayer of the Church which St. Ignatius of Loyola has laid down in his *Book of Spiritual Exercises* as one of the signs of a mind in harmony with the spirit of the Catholic Church. These are his words: "To esteem the ecclesiastical chant, as also the psalms, and long prayers that are accustomed to be recited either within or outside churches; also to think well of the times appointed for the Hours of the Divine Office, and every prayer whatsoever of the Canonical Hours." (*Regulæ aliquot servandæ ut cum Orthodoxa Ecclesia sentiantur*). Perhaps no better words can be placed as a seal to this paper than those of the late Cardinal Wiseman, to be found in his charming essay on "Prayer and Prayer Books," contributed to the *Dublin Review* in 1842:—

"There can be no doubt that while the ancient Christians had their thoughts constantly turned towards God, in private prayer, the Church took care to provide for all the regular and necessary discharge of this duty by her public offices. These were not meant to be holiday services, or mere clerical duties; but the ordinary, daily, and sufficient discharge of an obligation belonging to every state and class in the Church. It never was understood that *besides* the public offices there should be certain long, family or private prayers, as necessary to discharge the duties of morning and evening spiritual

sacrifice. For all that was right on this score she took care to provide, and where she has done this we may be sure of its being done beyond hope of rivalry. Unfortunately, those offices have, for the most part, been reduced to a duty discharged by the clergy in private, and have thus come to be considered by us as a purely ecclesiastical obligation superadded to, not comprehending, the discharge of ordinary Christian duty. One is apt to forget that Prime is the Church's morning prayer, and Complin her evening devotions. Yet so the two manifestly are. But what greatly helps to make us overlook this fact is that we have been accustomed to consider morning and evening prayers as necessarily of a specific form, composed of certain definite acts of devotion, arranged in formal order; and have lost sight of that model which characterizes all the offices of the Church; and which is and must be far the most perfect. . . . There is a fragrance, a true incense, in those ancient prayers, which seems to rise from the lips, and to wind upwards in soft balmy clouds, upon which angels may recline, and thence look down upon us, as we utter them. They seem worthy to be caught up in a higher sphere, and to be heaped upon the altar above at which an angel ministers. In them we look in vain for that formal arrangement, that systematic distribution of parts which distinguishes our modern prayers. We never have petitions regularly labelled and cut to measure, and yet nothing can we want that is not there asked for. What seems at first sight almost disorder, is found, on examination, to be a most pleasing variety, produced by a most artless, yet most refined, arrangement. They lack the symmetry of the parterre; there seems to have been no line and compass used in laying them out; the flowers are not; laced according to a rigid classification; but they have the grandeur, and the boldness, and without the freshness of a landscape; their very irregularities give them beauties, their sudden transitions effect; and their colours are blended in a luxurious richness with which no modern art can vie. They partake of all the solemnity and all the stateliness of the places in which they were first recited. They retain the echoes of the gloomy catacomb, they still resound with the jubilee of gilded basilicas, they keep the harmonious reverberations of lofty groined vaults. The Church's sorrows and her joys, martyrs' oblation, and confessors' thanksgiving; anchorites' sighs, and virgins' breathing of love—all are registered there. He that would muse over a skull hath his *Dies Irae*; she that would stand at the foot of the Holy Rood, her *Stabat Mater*; and they that would adore in concert before the altar, their *Lauda Sicut*. Nor had the Church at any time lost her power of prayer, her mastery over the harp of David: but silent and unstrung as it may for a long space appear, she hath only to attune it when she lists, and strike it, and it brings forth the same sweet, soothing notes as at the beginning. Every new service or prayer which she has added to the Pontifical or Ritual dissolves into the mass of more ancient compositions, so as to be undistinguishable, and blends with them, as

a new ingredient in 'the sweet confections of the apothecary' (*Eccles.* xxxviii., 7) equal to the rest in savour as in virtue. . . . In the Church offices everything is prayed for that ought to enter into the exercises for which they are intended; but they being composed of psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles, most beautifully selected, the various petitions run blended through the entire offices, according as the various portions of the chosen parts express them. This prevents weariness; it is like a variety of modulations in music, full of passages through various keys, with occasional apparent and momentary dissonances that only give zest to surrounding harmonies. On the other side, our modern devotions have each petition, and each act of virtue, accurately distinct; no room is left for a varied play of feeling; there are no contrasts, no light and shade. The former is the language of nature, the latter that of art.⁷

Then after a brief analysis of the offices of Prime and Complin as the morning and evening prayer of the Church, the Cardinal asks:

"Why should not this use be restored? Why should they not become the standard devotions of all Catholics, whether alone or in their families? Why may we not hope to have them more solemnly performed, chanted even, every day in all religious communities; or where there is a sufficient number of persons, even in family chapels? Thus would be more truly exemplified that resemblance to the Church in the Christian family, which St. Paul intimates when he speaks of the Church that was in the house of an individual. (*Coloss.* iv., 15). Surely, if in other respects the resemblance will hold, it should not be despised in this, that the family united in prayer, should speak the very language of the Church; should observe the forms of devotion which she has herself drawn up and approved; and, as in good discipline, in spiritual affection, in communion of good works, in mutual encouragement to virtue, so likewise in the regularity and in the order of prayer, assimilate itself to those religious communities which, in every part of the Christian world, praise God in her name, and under her especial sanction. We strongly suspect that many who will join the Church will hail with joy every such return, however imperfect, to the discipline and practice of the ancient Church; they will warm to us the more in proportion to our zeal for the restoration of its discipline."

W. H. KIRWAN.