

and the use of explosive bullets in war. To such controversial tactics we will show no quarter. Dr. Creighton said in one of his public addresses that some people learn 'only at the point of the bayonet.' Perhaps even 'Civis' may be at last drubbed into learning the lesson that misrepresentation of an opponent is but a poor substitute for fair discussion, and that a man is not released from the obligations of journalistic respectability merely because he happens to write with a mask upon his face.

It is a pleasure to turn from 'Civis' and his A COURTEOUS ways to the courteous English resident of OBJECTOR. Canterbury who, in a letter marked by much quiet dignity, objects to the strictures passed by us on the short-ration policy adopted against the Boer women whose husbands are on commando. But (1) our esteemed correspondent has missed the point of our distinction between the term 'reduced rations' used absolutely and the same term used in reference to a military punishment. (2) While not denying that 'short-rations are a punishment' to the Boer women, he sees no reason for inferring that the penalty is so severe as is represented in our note of March 7. Our remarks upon this subject will be found in the course of our two replies to 'Civis.' (3) Our Canterbury friend retorts upon us that our inference as to the degree of severity of the short-ration penalty would hold equally good if applied in the same way to the law of fasting as prescribed by the Catholic Church. But he bases this *argumentum ad hominem* on the confusion of terms referred to above (1). Again: There is an essential difference between the ecclesiastical discipline of fasting and any secular system of short rations, whether these are imposed by the pressure of scarcity, famine, circumstances of travel, etc., or by way of civilian or military penalty. (a) They differ in their object—fasting being a discipline undertaken in *voluntary* obedience to the Church's law, as a means of grace commended by God Himself. (b) They differ in their method and incidence; fasting being binding on very few, and the following being exempt from it: all persons under 21 years of age; all persons over 60; the sick and those in delicate health; women nursing, etc.; the poor who have difficulty in procuring food; soldiers and sailors, etc.; all engaged in much bodily and mental labor; and generally all whom fasting would unfit for the proper discharge of their ordinary duties in life.

(4) Our correspondent also twits us smartly on applying the term 'problematical' to the Boer lady who is reported to have referred in terms of high encomium to the humanity of the British soldier. (5) In referring to the probable intensification of racial hate in South Africa by the present method of campaigning, we instanced the feeling which endures to this hour in thousands of homes in Leinster and Ulster for the cruelties perpetrated on Irishwomen in 1797-9. 'I can only say,' adds our correspondent in reply to our remarks upon this subject, 'that all decent-minded English people are heartily ashamed of their ancestors' behaviour to Irish people in those times. But we who live now are not responsible for the atrocities which have been committed by our nation in the past, and I think it would be worthier of the noble traditions of Irish Catholicism and of Irishmen, to extend us their forgiveness instead of taunting us with our cruelties in the past.' But (a) our remarks upon this subject were not in the nature of a taunt. They were submitted merely as evidence that the method of 'reduction' followed in South Africa is, from the national standpoint, distinctly bad policy. (b) It is a matter of common history that of all the troops who were concerned in the suppression of the Irish insurrection of 1798, the English regulars were the only ones against whom no charge of wanton cruelty has been laid. Pitt's most savage instruments in goading the unhappy people into insurrection were the Irish Orange yeomanry, sundry regiments of Irish Orange militia, the 'mostly Orange' Ancient Britons (Welsh), and two regiments of brutalised German mercenaries from Hesse. Three men of British birth—General Sir Ralph Abercromby, General Sir John Moore (the hero of Coruna), and Lord Cornwallis—exerted themselves to the utmost—in the face of fierce opposition from the then ascendant Orange faction—to put a check to the atrocities of the Irish, Welsh, and German troops. And it was Sir John Moore who exclaimed: 'If I were an Irishman I would be a rebel!'

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HOLY WEEK.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE CEREMONIES.

THE ceremonies of the Church during the last week of the Holy Season remind us of Christ's solemn entry into Jerusalem, the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, His betrayal, trial, scourging, crucifixion, death, and burial, and all are significant and profound. Although the exact date of the institution of the observance of Holy Week, as a time of special religious ceremony, is not known, it is generally believed to have dated from apostolic times. Strictly speaking, Holy Week is not confined to the celebration of Christ's most sorrowful events, as on Palm Sunday, the first day of the week, the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem is chiefly contemplated. As a matter of fact Holy Week begins with the Monday, not with the Sunday.

PALM SUNDAY.

On Palm Sunday the Church commemorates Our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, a few days before His Passion, when many of the Jews 'cut down boughs from the trees and strewed them in the way.' The peculiarity of the ceremonies of Palm Sunday consists in the blessing of the palms, the procession (wherever a procession can be conveniently conducted), and the reading of the Passion, at Mass. The blessing of the palms takes place before Mass. The blessing consists of several prayers, a lesson from the Book of Exodus, a Gospel, a Preface, and various Antiphons. The blessed branches remind us not only of the triumphant entry of our King into Jerusalem, but also of His crown, His sceptre, and His throne—the crown of thorns, the reed, and the cross. After the blessing of the palms the procession takes place. The procession is an act of homage paid to the divinity of Jesus Christ. Imitating the first adorers of Christ, the faithful carry palms in their hands, and, marching in procession, sing the praises of Christ, their Saviour and their King. By taking in our hands a branch of the blessed palm we proclaim our faith in Christ, our allegiance to Him as our King, our readiness to follow His example, to carry His cross, to share His sufferings, and to fight with Him against the powers of death and hell. In churches where High Mass is celebrated, during the High Mass the history of Christ's Passion is sung by three deacons—one singing the words of Christ, another the words of the other persons who took part in the events of the Passion, and the third the text of the Evangelist. This custom of reading or singing the Passion during Holy Week goes back to the early ages of the Church.

SPY WEDNESDAY.

Wednesday in Holy Week is properly called 'Spy Wednesday.' It is so called from the spying and seeking of the Jews to find Our Divine Lord, and arrest him. Already the Chief Priests and Pharisees had resolved in council to put him to death, and had issued orders that if anyone knew where He was he should tell them, that they might have Him apprehended.

TENEBRÆ.

In the Tenebræ Office we are reminded by the gradual darkening of the church, of the more than natural darkness that overshadowed the world at the death of Jesus Christ. On Wednesday evening the Tenebræ of Thursday is sung in preparation for the Mass and Office of Thursday; on Thursday evening is sung by anticipation the Office of Good Friday; on Friday evening is sung the preparation for the Office and Mass of Easter Eve. A triangular candlestick is in front of the altar having one white and fourteen yellow candles. At the end of each psalm of Matins and Lauds, one of the yellow candles is extinguished to symbolise the treachery of Judas and the flight and disappearance of the other apostles. During the singing of the 'Benedictus' the six candles on the altar are also extinguished, to signify the complete abandonment of Christ as the hour of His death approaches. After the 'Benedictus' the white candle is removed from the triangle, concealed behind the altar during the chanting of the 'Miserere' and then brought out, to signify the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

HOLY THURSDAY.

On this day one Mass only can be said in the same church, and that Mass must be a public one. The Mass is celebrated in white vestments, because the institution of the Eucharist is joyfully commemorated, but at the same time there are certain signs of the mourning proper to Holy Week. The bells, which ring at the 'Gloria,' do not sound again till the 'Gloria' in the Mass of Holy Saturday, and the Church returns to her ancient use of summoning the faithful or arousing their attention by a wooden clapper. Nor is the embrace of peace given. The celebrant consecrates an additional Host, which is placed in a chalice and borne in procession after the Mass to a place prepared for it, at another Altar, called the 'Altar of Repose.'

After Vespers the altar is stripped, in memory of Christ being stripped of His garments before being crucified. On this day, also, the Church blesses by her Bishops the various oils used in the consecration of churches, altars, and chalices, in the unctions of baptism and confirmation, in the consecration of her bishops, and ordination of her priests, and in the administration of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

GOOD FRIDAY.

Good Friday is the anniversary of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and is always observed by a strict fast, profound ceremonies and a great spirit of recollection and prayer. The entire ceremonial of Good Friday is peculiar. The celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon, in black vestments, approach the altar, and prostrating themselves before it, meditate for awhile in silence on the death of Christ. No candles are lighted on the altar; no incense is used. After a short time a white cloth is spread on the altar by the attendant, and the