

ON THE PILGRIMAGE TO OUR LADY OF WILSDON.

BY JOHN GREEN WALLER, ESQ.

In the church of Willesden, which we have just visited, was formerly an image of the Virgin Mary, to which miraculous powers were ascribed, and which thence became a place of pilgrimage. It was one of some note, as it is mentioned, together with "Our Lady of Walsingham" and "Our Lady of Ipswich," in the third part of the homily "Against Peril of Idolatry," which was issued in the reign of Edward VI. It is also one of the shrines named in the interlude of the four P's, *i. e.* A satirical Dialogue between a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Poticary, and a Pedler, by Thomas Heywood, published in 1549. The palmer is enumerating his visits to various sacred places, and among them says he was :

At Crome, at *Wilsdon*, and at Muswell,
 At Seynt Rycharde and Saint Roke,
 And at Our Lady that standeth in the Oke.

Here are mentioned four places in the neighbourhood of the metropolls noted for images of the Virgin Mary of wonder-working power. Crome is Crome's Hill at Greenwich; Wilsdon our present resort; Muswell is near Highgate; and "Our Lady of the Oke" is mentioned in a proclamation of Henry VIII. touching the preservation of game,* and must have been between Islington and Highgate. So that, you see, we had three places of this description in the North of London. In point of fact, England had a very large number of these shrines; they were quite as numerous here as now upon the continent. Unfortunately, our records of them are exceedingly scanty. Even of Walsingham, the most renowned of all, which had a reputation beyond the seas, we have no complete history, though frequently mentioned in records, and often honoured by the presence of our sovereigns. But the witty colloquy of Erasmus, "The Pilgrimage for Religion's Sake,"† has made up for deficiencies, and has given us a vivid picture of the two most celebrated of our English shrines.

* Vide Prickett's History of Highgate.

† "Peregrinatio Religionis ergo," Erasmi Colloquia.

It is easy to account for the loss of all historical records of these places. When, in 1538, the images were burnt at Chelsea, such documents as they possessed, which would be vouchers of miracles performed at the shrine, with lists of offerings made by different pilgrims, &c. were doubtless destroyed, at the same time, as monuments of idolatry.

As regards those on the continent, it is a curious fact that there is no published account earlier than the beginning of the Reformation. Indeed, we must regard these histories as a counter-demonstration, for the earliest in date is only 1523, whilst Loretto itself had none until 1575. By far the greater number were written in the seventeenth century, and by members of the Society of Jesus; and now they constitute a literature, of a very curious, but perhaps not of a very valuable description. Nevertheless, they afford us the means of comprehending the nature of the worship of these shrines, as set forth by authority. We can understand their pretensions, and by a comparison of a number of these stories, and seeing how much one is repeated in another, we have no difficulty in imagining what our own might have been in times past. I think, therefore, I cannot do better, in illustrating this subject, than to give you some general information respecting the nature of these places of pilgrimage, as gathered from the works to which I have alluded, and also from my own observations made at some of the shrines themselves.

The most noted shrines of "Our Lady" in Europe, besides that of Walsingham were—Loretto, Italy; Boulogne, France; Montserrat, Spain; Hal, in Belgium; Einsiedlen, Switzerland; Altötting, Bavaria; Maria Eck, Austria; and Czenstochow, Poland. There were many others quite as well known, which makes it difficult to select; but those I have named have an historical importance. Now, some of these places are for their physical characters among the most remarkable spots in Europe; and this leads me to point out to you two features, which have in all time marked places of pilgrimage. The first is, mountains or hill tops, or "high places;" the second, the interior of woods, *i. e.* "groves." The two types present us with two conditions, one of grave solemnity, the other of grandeur or beauty. It is unnecessary for me to say any thing of "groves" and "high places" for religious worship; as profane and sacred writers both allude to them, and many present must be familiar to pages in classical authors which illustrate the question. The most remarkable places of pilgrimage in the

world, are Adam's Peak in Ceylon, devoted to the Buddhist creed, and that of Montserrat in Spain, in connection with Christianity. The ascent of the former often costs a life; and of the latter, Thicknesse, the early patron of Gainsborough, said, that it was not "without some apprehensions that, if there was no better road down, we felt we must have become hermits."* Now the three shrines, Wilsdon, Muswell, and Our Lady of the Oke present us with three of the common features. Willesden must originally have been encircled by the dense forest of Middlesex, a secluded spot apart from the highways of traffic. On the other hand, "Our Lady of Muswell" was on the eastern ridge of the chain of hills north of London, abutting on the ancient highway to the north, overlooking the valley of the river Lea, and commanding an extensive view of almost unrivalled beauty in the neighbourhood of the metropolis. Although I cannot locate with exactness "Our Lady of the Oke," its character is determined by its name, as there is a noted shrine so called in Italy, one in Belgium, one in France, and many others in different parts of Europe. In the histories of this species the figure is always said to have been discovered in an 'oak,' and classic readers will at once remember how this type also is to be paralleled in heathen antiquity.

The next point to which I shall direct your attention is one of the greatest importance and interest in this enquiry, and demands from us more than usual care and deliberation. It is that all the ancient miraculous images of the Virgin Mary are *black*. Now, travellers and tourists have sometimes endeavoured to account for this by telling us that the colour was produced by the smoke of the numerous tapers, and of the lamps ever burning before the image. They do not tell us, however, whether the chapels have the same hue, or indeed why they have not. It is a curious fact, that precisely the same thing was said by the early Christian writers of the images of the goddess Isis. Arnobius, who lived in the fourth century, and was a convert from heathenism, wrote a treatise against the religion he had forsaken, ridiculing the worship, whose image, he asserts, was blackened by the smoke of burning lamps.† We must reject these hypotheses because facts do not bear them out. The miraculous images of the Virgin are *painted* black; there are also a number of pictures to which the same hue is given; the colour therefore is intentional, and not the result of any

* Thicknesse's Year's Journey through France and part of Spain.

† Arnobius, l. 6.

accidental circumstances. It is in fact a piece of symbolism, without doubt of the very greatest antiquity, carrying us back into very remote ages, and into oriental forms of religious worship. In the religion of India, Maya, a female divinity, is represented nursing Bouddha. In the ancient religion of Egypt, Isis is nursing Horus; both are represented *black*. This colour also distinguishes other members of their mythology. Now *black* is a natural symbol of profundity, that which is mentally as well as physically obscure. It is the colour of mourning, and we use it constantly as a metaphor when we speak of strong and hidden passion. The religious systems to which I have alluded are full of mysticism, in which ideas were veiled under various symbolic forms, and this colour must without doubt be considered in that light. I am confirmed in this view by the Very Rev. Canon Rock, who recently expressed very nearly the same thoughts, and whose knowledge of ecclesiastical symbolism is very extensive.

I now come to another part of this subject, which is in close connection with what I have just stated, viz. that numbers of these images were ascribed to St. Luke. Now this tradition is of extreme antiquity in the history of Christianity, and its examination helps our inquiry into the origin of the black colour, and its introduction into the Christian church.

Some Italian writers have endeavoured to find a solution of this question in a manner which at first sight commends itself to us as being extremely plausible; and Lanzi, in his History of Italian Painting, has accepted their reasoning. In the twelfth century there was a Florentine artist named Luca, who is known to have painted several pictures of the Virgin Mary, and among them one or two, at least, which are now referred to the Evangelist, as that at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. And this man, from the holiness of his life, received the popular title of *santo* or holy. There is also a vague tradition of a hermit of the name of Luca, who is also said to have painted pictures of this kind.* This conclusion is one that we would naturally accept as final; but, unfortunately, it must give way to the hard logic of facts, as the tradition can be carried many centuries backward into the earlier ages of the Church. Simcon Metaphrastes, a Greek legendary writer of the tenth century, in his Life of St. Luke, has a remarkable passage † in which he expresses his gratitude to the

* Lanzi, Storia Pittorica d'Italia, ii. c. 9-10.

† The passage is too interesting not to be given entire, as translated into Latin

Evangelist in having transmitted to us the portraits of Jesus and of Mary his mother. And the passage is yet further curious, as he even speaks of the mode of painting employed, that is with wax, and consequently it is an allusion to the ancient encaustic process at that time generally used. It therefore proves, that in the tenth century there were pictures assigned to St. Luke. But we do not even rest here, for Theodorus, a Greek writer of the sixth century, a reader of Constantinople, says that "Eudocia sent to Pulcheria, from Jerusalem, the picture of the mother of Christ which St. Luke the Evangelist had painted."*

Eudocia was empress of Theodosius II., and Pulcheria, her sister-in-law, had been regent in the minority of the emperor, and was virtually the ruler of the empire. I cannot here dwell upon the character of these remarkable ladies, but their zeal for relics at least brings us to a fair presumption of the origin of this tradition. The Nestorian controversy had just been determined in the condemnation of the Bishop of Constantinople, in the Council of Ephesus, 431; and in the triumph of Cyril of Alexandria; and an immediate consequence was, that a picture of the Virgin nursing the infant Jesus, not an historical representation, but a symbolic or hieratic type, was, for the first time, elevated above the altar for the veneration of the Christian world. Pulcheria erected a magnificent church in the suburbs of Constantinople, dedicated it to the mother of Christ, and here placed the picture sent to her by Eudocia, the history of which was afterwards very remarkable. Thus we get evidence of this tradition arising in the fifth century, exactly where we might have expected to have found it, taking the circumstances of ecclesiastical history into consideration. Then, considering the character of Cyril, the ruling spirit of that time, an Egyptian bishop; and of Eudocia, a convert from heathenism; she and Pulcheria diligent hunters after sacred relics; the practice acknowledged in the Church of adopting types from the heathen, but altering in Lippomano Sanctorum Historia, Vita S. Lucae. "Hoc autem inter cætera gratissimum est, quod ipsum quoque typum assumptæ humanitatis Christi mei, ac signum eius quæ illum pepererat, et assumptam humanitatem dederat, primus hic cerâ ac lineamenti tingens, ut ad hæc usque tempora in imagine honorarentur, tradidit, tanquam non satis esse existimans, nisi etiam per imaginem ac typum versaretur cum his quos desiderabat, quod ferventissimi amoris signum est."

* Molanus, De Historia, S. S. Imaginum, &c. lib. ii. cap. ix. p. 47. Lovanii, 1771.

the application; the fact of pictures and images ascribed to St. Luke being *black*,—and can we doubt of the origin? The colour might be justified by an appeal to Solomon's Song, "I am black but comely," and weaker minds might yield to the innovation, when told that St. Luke had been the painter. Thus then, as the *nimbus* became adopted from heathen art, so might an ancient hieratic type, long honoured in the religion of Egypt, be accepted for popular veneration.

Let us now see how far this hypothesis is favoured by the historical narratives of some of the most celebrated images, to many of which an Eastern origin is ascribed. "Our Lady of Loretto" is said to have been brought with the holy house itself from Nazareth, by the ministry of angels. "Our Lady of Atocha," near Madrid, of which we have often heard in connexion with the Ex-Queen of Spain, is said to have been brought from Antioch; Atocha is indeed a corruption of the name. "Our Lady of Liesse," a noted example in France, was brought from Egypt itself, so also was that of "Our Lady of Puy." This latter is so remarkable that it is worth describing, as it strongly corroborates the fact I am here adducing. It is considered to be the most ancient of these images in France, and is a seated figure carved out of cedar, covered all over from the head to the feet with bands of very fine linen, very carefully and closely wound upon the wood after the manner of Egyptian mummies. It is also of a deep black, polished, the face and features extremely long, the eyes small and formed of glass, giving the whole a haggard wild look. I will not weary you by further instances, as these are sufficient to show an existing tradition ascribing many of them to an oriental source.

I have thus endeavoured to give you a brief account of the character and origin of these images, which became so universally adopted in the Christian world; to which "pilgrimages for religion's sake" were made by all ranks of society, accompanied by gifts of such value, that an enumeration of the riches of Mouserrat or Loretto, reads like a page from the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. Kings and princes vied with each other; and it was no uncommon thing for a hero fresh from the field of his glory to come and prostrate himself before one of these shrines,* and to dedicate to it banners torn from the enemy, with a good tithe of the spoils of battle. And, amongst them, even his name is found, who was the first to proclaim them relics of idolatry, his

* Don John of Austria, victor of Lepanto, visited Montserrat.

appetite, doubtless, not a little whetted by the riches which awaited his treasury.

The images themselves are always carved out of wood, and are generally about 3 ft. 6 in. in height, sometimes smaller, but rarely larger. Some are said to have been sent down from heaven; some made by angels; some made by St. Luke, as before stated; some dug out of the earth, and some found in oaks, &c. However, there are others which make no such pretension of miraculous origin. That of "Our Lady of Hal," by Brussels, was presented to the town by Sophia, daughter of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, in 1267, and the style of its execution warrants the date assigned to it. But it is not often easy to give these figures a close examination, as they are always covered up with some rich clothing, which obscures all but the face.

But it is time I told you something of the image and shrine of "Our Lady of Wilsdon." No researches, however, have availed to discover at what time it first became a place of pilgrimage, and but for a few notices of it by our Reformers, and the abjurations some individuals were obliged to make for a disrespectful allusion to it, we should know nothing about it. It was evidently a popular one with the Londoners, as one Father Donald, a Scotch friar, preaching, said, "Ye men of London, gang on yourself with your wives to Wyllesdon, in the devil's name, or else keep them at home with you in with sorrow." Such hints of the evils of such resorts are however common. In England, as early as the fifteenth century, the followers of Wickliffe appear as calling in question the efficacy of pilgrimages,* and examinations before Archbishop Arundel show us the spirit then alive amongst these sectaries on this subject. From that time, they were pointed out as the weak place in the economy of the Church of Rome, and consequently were first assaulted. Fitzjames, Bishop of London, a man of narrow mind and of virulent disposition, was extremely active in repressing all indications of revolt. Even Dean Colet, the friend of Erasmus, and the companion alluded to in his Colloquy under the name of Gratian, the illustrious founder of St. Paul's School, was in danger from his zeal, and was saved only by the prudence of Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury. But smaller fry felt the burden of his wrath. One Elizabeth Sampson, the wife of John Sampson, of the parish of Aldermanbury, in the City of London, a few months before the decease of Henry

* "Lolardi sequaces Johannis Wiclif prædicaverunt peregrinationes non debere fieri, et præcipuè apud Walsingham." Thomas Walsingham, p. 340.

VII. was brought under ecclesiastical correction in the Bishop's court, and out of 21 Articles objected against her, on the charge of "heretical pravity," was one of disrespect of pilgrimage in the person of "Our Lady of Wilsdon." The lady certainly used strong language; indeed made use of words to express her thoughts that might have been merely forcible when they were uttered, but now-a-days are not considered fitted for ears polite; I must therefore be excused in leaving out one little word used as an expletive.

"Art. III. *Tu dixisti* that our Lady of Wilsdon was a brent a—elfe, and a brent a—stocke, and yf she myght have holpen men e women which goe to hyr of pylgrymage, she wolde not have suffered her tayle to have ben brent &c."

We find by this, that a fire must have taken place in the church, possibly from lamps or tapers, and the image had been partly injured. The lady had to abjure in the following terms.

"In the name of God, Amen, Before Almighty God, the Fader, the Son, and the Holy Ghoste, the Blessed Virgyn our Ladye, &c., I Elizabeth Sampson doe voluntarily, and hereto not constreyned, knowledge, graunt, recognise, and openly confesse, &c.*"

The date of this abjuration is March 31, 1509, two years before Erasmus is supposed to have visited Canterbury and Walsingham, and is interesting as showing that opposition to the practice of going on pilgrimages to so-called miraculous images must have been working amongst the mass of the people.

Some years later, when the days of these shrines were fast drawing to a close, we find "Our Lady of Wilsdon" again alluded to. In 1530, one Dr. Crome, being questioned by the bishops of heretical opinions, said, "I wyll saye ageyne, doo your dewtye, and then your devocion. First, I saye, doe those thynges the whyche God hath commaundyd to be doon, the whyche are the dedys of pytye: for those shalbe requyred of thy hande agayne. When thou comyst at the days of judgement, He wyll not say unto thee, 'Why wentest thou not to Wilsdon a pylgrymage?' but he wyl saye unto thee, 'I was an hungred and thou gavest me no meat, I was nakyd and thou gavyst me no clothys,' and soche lyke."

In the following year, 1531, one John Hervis, a draper of London, was made to abjure for saying that he heard the Vicar of Croydon thus preach openly: "There is as much bawdry kept by going in

* Regist. Fitz James, Epi. Lond.

pilgrimage to Wilsdon or Muswell, as in the Stew-side." But indeed the morality of pilgrims had always been a theme for the satirist. Piers Ploughman, who bitterly upbraids those that went to Walsingham,* only repeats an often told tale of the evil of indiscriminate assemblages even "for religion's sake."

Seven years later the end had come, and is thus related by Holinshed. "In September, by the special motion of the Lord Cromwell, all the notable images unto the which were made anie especial pilgrimage and offerings were utterlie taken awaie, as the images of Walsingham, Ipswich, Worcester, the Ladie of Wilsdon, with many other, and likewise the shrines of counterfeit saints as that of Thomas a Becket, and others, &c. The images of our Lady of Walsingham and Ipswich were brought up to London with all the jewels that hung about them, and divers other images both in England and Wales, whereunto anie common pilgrimage was used, for avoiding of idolatry; all which were burnt at Chelsea by the Lord Privie Seal."

The position of this image in the church is indicated in the will of Master William Lychefeld, whose brass yet remains in the chancel, for he directs his body to be buried in the chancel of the parish church of Wilsdon before the image of the most Blessed Virgin Mary.† It must then have been above the altar, probably resting upon a beam made for the purpose, which likewise would be used for the suspension of rich offerings.

Of pilgrims it may be as well to say a few words, as they have been classed by different terms, which have remained in different languages, but whose origin is forgotten in the daily use of them. We cannot quote a better authority than that of Dante in his "Vita Nuova," where, having seen a procession of pilgrims passing through the streets of Florence, whilst his beloved Beatrice was lying dead, says "They call those 'Palmer's' inasmuch as they go beyond the sea, whence they have many times obtained the palm. They call those 'Pilgrims,'

"Heremytes on an heep,
With hoked staves,
Wenten to Walsingham,
And hire wenches after."

Vision of Piers Ploughman.

There is also a French proverb, "Je connais le pélerin," spoken of a crafty fellow.

† "In cancello ecclesie parochie de Wilsdon, coram imagine beatissime Virginis Marie." Test. Mag'ri Will'i Lychefeld cle'ci Novemb. 2, 1517.

inasmuch as they go to the house of Galicia, because the sepulchre of S. James was further off from his country than that of any other apostle. Those are called 'Romers' * in so much as they go to Rome, where these that I have called 'pilgrims' were going."

A pilgrim was one to whom considerable reverence was attached. Before setting out upon his journey, he made his will, † confessed himself, and his bourdon or staff, and his scrip received a solemn benediction from the priest. ‡ His person was held sacred and had many immunities. If, in passing through an enemy's country, he was taken prisoner, he was liberated if his true character was proved. Thus it was, that Richard Cœur de Lion, making an attempt to pass through the territories of the Duke of Austria, assumed the guise of a pilgrim. Some shrines especially were efficacious in affording protection to one who could show, by his sign, that he had worshipped there. Such was that of "Our Lady of Roc-Amadour," and there were strict ordinances made as to the manufacture of the "signs," in order to preserve the monopoly to the authorities of the shrine. § So that, they had not only the use of a pious remembrance, but tended to identify the pilgrim, and he

* Chiamansi *Palmiери*, in quanto vanno oltramare, laonde, molte volte recano la palma. Chiamansi *Pellegrini* in quanto vanno alla casa di Galizia, però che la sepoltura di San Jacopo fu piu lontana dalla sua patria che di alcuno altro Apostolo. Chiamansi *Romei* in quanto vanno à Roma la ove questi che io chiamo pellegrini andavano." Vita Nuova. Fir. 1576. p. 69.

Romeo therefore signifies a pilgrim to Rome, and in Shakespeare's play he appears at the masque as a pilgrim, Act i. Sc. v. Hence the verb "Romear," to go to Rome, or wander about, in English "to roam." One who visited Mont St. Michel, in Normandy, a celebrated place of pilgrimage, was called "a Michelot;" and "Saunterer," corrupted from "Sainte Terre," is said to have been another term.

† "He made his testament als did other Pilgrimes." Langtoft's Chronicle.

‡ Vide Le Grand Fabliaux, &c. 12mo. Paris, 1781, Vol. i. p. 310. "Les Croisés et les *Pèlerins* ne manquait pas, avant leur départ, d'aller faire bénir à l'Eglise leur *escarcelle* avec leur *bourdon*, et Saint Louis fit cette cérémonie à S. Denis."

§ Vide Collectanea Antiqua, C. R. Smith, vol. iv. p. 167, who gives in full an ordinance of Louis or Joan of Provence, 1354, to restrain the making or vending of the signs of the shrine of St. Mary Magdalene to other than ecclesiastical authorities. At p. 170 are also some similar facts relating to Roc-Amadour and its privileges. For much curious matter relating to "signs," see also vol. i. 81, vol. ii. 43, of the work above referred to. Also an article in the Journal of the British Archaeological Association, vol. i. by the same author, who was the first to enter fully into this interesting subject.

who could show the greatest number would be held naturally in the greatest reverence. No one would deny him hospitality; a seat in the chimney corner or a place at board would be well repaid by his tales of other lands, or of other scenes; for he was the great traveller of the middle ages.

A large number of these "signs" have been discovered in London, and now form part of C. R. Smith's collection in the British Museum. Some are also preserved in the Guildhall Museum. They belong to various shrines; those of Becket are perhaps the most numerous. Many are engraved in the "Collectanea Antiqua." They are made mostly of lead, and usually as brooches to be attached to clothes or hat as convenience dictated. Some are in form of rings, and others are *ampulles*, or little bags, for the purpose of holding some sacred dust, oil, or other like substances received at the shrine. At continental shrines some such memorials are still sold. A silver pendent ornament from "Our Lady of Loretto" is in my possession. Annexed (fig. 1) is a medal of the last-named place of the seventeenth century, having on its reverse the head of Christ, the "Veron-icon:" the letters



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

N. D. L. beneath signify "Nostra Donna Loreto." Fig. 2 is a later example, with heads of St. Peter and St. Paul on the reverse. Fig. 3 is an ampulla of Our Lady of Boulogne. The Virgin is represented crowned, holding a sceptre, seated in a chair, with the infant Jesus in her arms. The inscription is ✠ SIGNV : SCE : MARIE : DE BOLONIA. It may be as early as the fourteenth century. Many signs of this shrine have been found in London, which may be accounted for, as it is the nearest to England of those beyond sea, and moreover was of great celebrity, and held in the greatest reverence by the maritime neighbours. Fig. 4 is one of copper, of "Our Lady of Hal," belonging to the fifteenth century: it has holes for the purpose



Fig. 4.

of securing it to the dress. The Virgin crowned with the infant Jesus is seated beneath a canopy, on each side of which is an angel kneeling and holding a scroll. Beneath the figure 'v'hal. Of English shrines of the Virgin Mary there are but few signs that can be identified. Walsingham, naturally, being the most celebrated among



Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.

them, furnishes the largest number. One is here given (fig. 5.) It represents the "Annunciation" and beneath is inscribed "*Walsynham.*" We may infer from this that this subject indicated this special shrine. It is of the fifteenth century. Figure 6 belongs probably to the same place, on account of having the same subject. It is early in the fourteenth century, and of more elegant design. The inscription on the margin above the figure of the Virgin is "*abe Maria gratia plena d'ns* This has a reverse, which is unusual at this date, having the figure of a bishop or abbot; on the verge are remains of an inscription "*s... an mus..... monastero... co.*" Nothing satisfactory can be made out of it.

It is very possible that this given in the annexed cut (fig. 7), consisting

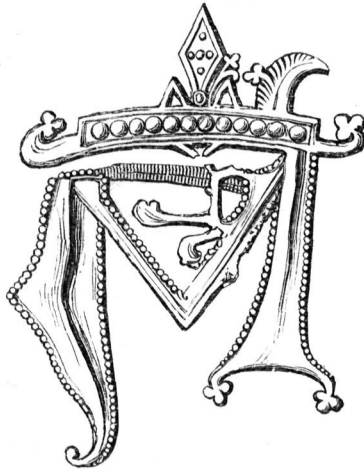


Fig. 7.

only of the letter M crowned, apparently intended as a monogram, may be referred to Muswell, as the letter is the initial of both Mary and the name of the place. It is a type of which others have been found in London, as there is one in the Guildhall Museum. None have been found that can be identified as belonging to Wilsdon, and unless we had the name inscribed, we should not know them, because we have lost the distinguishing type which without doubt all signs possessed. Fig. 8 is a remarkable one, inasmuch as it shows the Virgin and Child within a tabernacle borne upon a bird; whether a dove or an eagle is intended cannot be inferred. This, certainly, is a special distinction belonging

to a particular shrine, but which, we have no means of telling. Fig. 9 represents the Virgin and Child within a crescent (moon.) This also



Fig. 8



Fig. 9.

without doubt indicates a particular type, but which is not certain. It has been given to "Our Lady of Boulogne," but with the interpretation of the "crescent as a boat." The annexed cut (fig. 10) represents a *crouch* or pilgrim's staff of rock crystal, mounted with silver, from Loretto. It was doubtless the memorial of pilgrimage to that shrine made by a person of high rank. The *form* is very similar to one a pilgrim to Montserrat is using, whose figure forms the frontispiece to Thicknesse's Tour.

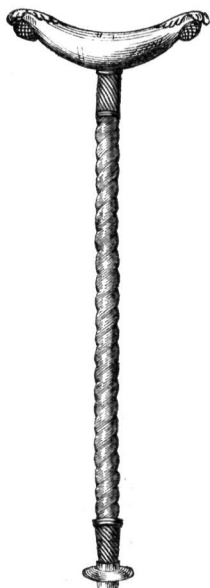


Fig. 9.

I may perhaps, in conclusion, be permitted to give you some idea of what the scene might have been at Wilsdon on a great festival, by offering you a picture drawn from one yet to be seen within twelve hours' journey hence.* Let us suppose, then, the accessories of a country fair, with booths of all kinds; and, leading to the church, many vendors of memorials of the shrine in tokens of various descriptions. Crowds, moving towards the church, are paying their devotions at the several appointed.

* Hal near Brussels, on the first Sunday of September; *vide* Gent. Mag. 1852 for an account by the author.

stations. You enter it by the western door, and high over the altar is the miraculous image with its black face, richly attired in silk and lace. Upon its head is a crown of fine gold, further enriched by jewels of price, and chains of gold hang about the figure, suspending medallions of various sizes. Near to it are the votive offerings of gold and silver, or of wax, according to the wealth of the donor, evidences of miracles performed. But the service of the altar is done, and now, issuing from the church, is a procession of clergy and acolytes with crosses and banners, preceding a dignitary under a canopy, bearing the consecrated Host. Then follow a long train of men and women, members of guilds and confraternities, in honour of "Our Lady of Wilsdon;" and, lastly, the sacred image borne upon a highly enriched bier, and all about it a furious struggle of men and women for the honour of having, for one moment, a participation in its support. And thus, with minstrelsy attending, it goes through the parish until again replaced above its altar. Let the day end in gambling with dice and roulette; some drunkenness and noisy mirth; and you have a picture, of what is common enough now, and *must have been common enough* in times past, of a "pilgrimage for religion's sake."