

REVEREND FATHER BURKE'S SERMON ON THE "Groupings of Calvary."

ST. JOHN, THE EVANGELIST.

(From the N. Y. Irish American.)

Annexed we give a full report of the sermon of the Very Rev. Father Burke, on "St. John, The Evangelist," delivered on Sunday, March 24th, in the Dominican Church in the city of New York.

The Rev. preacher said: I told you this morning, my brethren, that we should confine our attention, during the next few days, to the groupings that surrounded our Blessed Lord upon the Hill of Calvary. I then intended, this evening, to put before you the various characters and classes of men who were there as the enemies of God. I must however, alter somewhat this programme. To-morrow will be the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin—one of the greatest festivals of the Christian year—commemorating a mystery from which all the mysteries of our redemption have flown. It will be held, as you are aware, of obligation, and therefore, I shall be obliged so far to depart from my original design, as to let in, to-morrow evening, a sermon on the great festival of the day the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. Thus far I must interfere with the plan I have laid down, and this will oblige me, this evening, simply to notice briefly the different groups and classes by which the enemies of our Divine Lord were represented upon Calvary. We shall pass, at once, to the consideration of the man who stood there as the friend of his dying Lord and Saviour.

There were many classes of men surrounding our Blessed Lord on that fearful and terrible journey, where, starting from the house of the High Priest, Annas, He turned his face towards Calvary, and set out upon the dolorous "Way of the Cross." The men who condemned Him, sitting in that tribunal, were not satisfied with that sentence; but, in the eagerness of their revenge, they would fain witness His execution—following out the expressed word of the Evangelist, that the Scribes and Pharisees followed our Lord, and fed their revenging eyes upon the contemplation of His three hours of agony on the Cross. The immediate agents of this terrible act of execution were the Roman soldiers of the cohort who had scourged Him, who had crowned Him with thorns and who had accompanied Him with stolid indifference to the place of His execution. They were the pagans. They were the men who had never heard of the name of God. They were the men who, had they heard of it, must have heard of it, if at all, in a language which they scarcely understood, and which was the medium of the common record of what were called "the wonders,"—that is, of the miracles of Christ. But it scarcely stirred up in them even a natural curiosity; and, therefore, they brought Him to execution, as they would have dragged any other criminal, with this one exception, that, by a strange, diabolical possession, they looked upon this man of whom they knew nothing—upon this man who had never injured them in word or in deed,—with intense abhorrence, and hated Him with an inexplicable hatred. They thus typified the nations which, in the old law, knew not the Lord of Truth. In paganism, in the darkness of the wickedness of their infidelity, they knew not the name of God. When that name is pronounced in their presence, it falls upon their ears rather as the name of an enemy than that of a friend. They cannot explain why they hate Him. No more can we explain the hatred of the Roman soldiers. The missionary goes forth to-day in all the power of the priesthood of Christ. He stands in the presence of the people of China, or of Japan. As long as he speaks to them of the civilization, of the immense military power, of the riches and of the glory of the country from which he came, they hear him willingly and with interested ears. As long as he reveals to them any secret of human science, they make use of him, they are glad to receive him. Thus it is we know that some of the Jesuit missionaries held the very highest places at the court of the Emperor of China. But as soon as ever the missionary mentions the name of Christ, they not only refuse to hear him, but they are stirred up on the instant, with diabolical rage, hate and anger flash from their eyes; and they lay hold of the messenger who brings them the message of peace, and love, and of eternal life, and they imagine they have not fulfilled their duty until they have shed his blood upon the spot. Oh, how vast the crowd of those who, for centuries, have thus greeted the Son of God and every man who speaks in His name! Think of the outlying millions, to whom, for eighteen hundred years and more, the Church—the messenger of God—has preached and appealed, but in vain! Behold the class that was represented round the Cross lifting up indifferent, stolid, or, if anything, scowling faces, amid the woe of Him who, in that hour of His agony and of His humiliation, mingled His prayers for forgiveness with the last drop of blood that flowed through His wounds from His dying heart!

There is another class there. It is made up of those who knew Him well, or who ought to have known Him. They had seen His miracles; they had witnessed His sanctity; they had disputed with Him upon the Law, until He had convinced them that His was the wisdom that could not belong to man, but to God. He had silenced them. He had answered, every argument that fool-hardy and audacious men made to Him. He had reduced them to such shame that no man ever wanted to question Him again. But He interfered with their interests and their pride. That pride revolted against submitting to Him. That self-love and self-interest prompted the thought that if He lived His light would outshine theirs, and their influence with the people would be gone. These were the Scribes and the Pharisees. They were the leaders of the people. They were the magistrates of Jerusalem. They were the men whose loud voice and authoritative tones were heard in the Temple. They were the men who walked into that house as if it was not the house of God, but their house. They were the men who walked fearlessly up to the altar, to speak words of blasphemous pride, and call them prayers. They were the men who tried to despise the humble Publican making his act of contrition. They were the men who lifted their virtuous hands and hypocritical eyes to Heaven to lament over the weakness of human nature. They were the men who hated Christ, because they could not argue with Him—because they could not uphold their errors against His truth—because they could not hold their own, but were struck dumb at the sight of His sanctity and the sound of His peaceful voice. What did they do? They began to tell lies to the people. They began to tell the people how He was an impostor and a blasphemer. They began to mislead the people,—to warp the estimate that people might make of Jesus Christ. They endeavored to find false witnesses to bring them to swear away first His character and then His life. Ah! need I say whom they represent? Need I tell a people in whose memories is fresh to-day the ever-recurring lie that is flung in the face of the Catholic Church,—the ever-recurring false testimony that is brought against her,—the burning of her churches, the defiling of her altars, the outrages on her priests,—the insults heaped upon her holy nuns, the people inflamed against the very name of Catholicity itself, so that the word might be fulfilled of Him who said, "They shall cast out your very name as evil for my sake;"—the men who made the very name of a monk, or a friar, or a Jesuit mean something awfully gross, or sensual, or material? These men were naturally worldly and deceitful. I need not point out to you that, in the midst of you, and every day, from their

pulpits, from their conventicles, through their daily press,—every day we are made familiar with the old lie, shifted and changed, tortured, distorted and twisted, and the false testimony brought out in a thousand forms of falsehood. And there were others there who believed in Christ—who knew Him—who had enjoyed His conversation and His friendship, and who were afraid to be seen in His company in that dark hour, and upon that hill of shame. Where were the Apostles? Where were the Disciples? They had fled from their Master because it was dangerous to be seen with Him. Judas, the representative of the man who sells his religion and his God for this world; who sells his conscience in order to fill his purse; who sells everything that is most sacred when that demand is made upon him for temporal profit and pelf; who seals his iniquity by a bad communion in order to save appearances; and, whilst with one hand he was taking money from the Pharisees, with the other hand he was taking Christ to his breast;—the man who played a double part—the man who did not wish to break utterly with his Lord, nor to sacrifice the good opinion of his fellow-apostles; and, therefore, he received damnation to himself in a bad communion,—he does not dare to climb the rugged steep of Calvary; but he stands afar off; and the vision that he sees, of so much sorrow, so much suffering,—the vision that he sees passing before his eyes; his Lord, his Master in whom he still believes, though he has betrayed Him; his Lord, his Master, torn with scourges from head to foot; crowned with thorns; disguised in His own blood; blinded with the blood that was flowing down over every wound in His sacred brow;—his Lord and his Master, who had so often spoken to him words of friendship and of love;—passed before the eyes of the renegade and traitor. As he looked, and his eyes caught, for an instant, the countenance of that figure, tottering along in weakness and in pain,—the sight brought back remembrance of the days that were gone, with no glimmering of hope, no light of consolation to his soul, but only the feeling that he had betrayed his God, and that he held then, in his infamous purse the money for which he had sold his soul and his conscience. He stood aghast and pale. He tore his hair and swung his hands. He found that he could not live to see the consummation of his iniquity; and before the Saviour had sent forth the last cry for a redeemed world, the soul of the suicide Judas had gone down to hell! "It were better for him had he never been born!" Does he represent any class? Are there not in this world men who are almost glad to have something to barter with the world, when they give up their holy faith and religion in order to clutch this world's possessions? Have we not read in the history of the nations—in the history of the land from which most of us sprang—have we never read of men selling their faith for this world's riches and this world's honor? Have we never read, in the history of the world of men who, in order to save appearances, approached the holy altar and received the holy communion? Of monarchs who, in order to stand well with their Catholic subjects, made a show of going to Holy Communion? And of sycophants and courtiers who, in order to please a king, in a fit of piety or a fit of repentance, went to Holy Communion? But time will not permit me to linger in the contemplation of the many classes of the worldly-minded; the false friend, the bitter, though conscious, enemy; the heartless executioners, the exact representatives of those who crowded round the Cross in that terrible hour.

But there was no one there,—and it is to that one that my thoughts and my heart turn this night. There was one there who was destined to be, through all ages, and unto all nations, a type of what the true Christian man—the friend of Christ, must be; a true representative of the part that he must play in the sacrifice that from time to time, he must make, to test the strength and the tenderness of his love. There was one there, young and beautiful, who did not flinch from his Master and Lord in that hour; who walked by His side; who shared in the reproaches that were showered upon the head of the Son of God, and took his share of the grief and the shame of that terrible morning of Good Friday. There was one there whom the Master permitted to be there, that he might, as it were, lean upon the strength of his manhood and the fearlessness of his love. That one was John the Evangelist. Behold him, as, with the virginial eyes, he looks up as a man to his fellow-man on the Cross! Behold him as he seems to say: "Oh, Master! Oh, Lover of my soul and heart! can I relieve you of a single sorrow by taking it up and making it my own?" This was John. Consider who he was, and what. Three graces surrounded him as he stood at the foot of the Cross. Three divine gifts from a halo of heavenly light around his head. They were the grace of Christian purity, the grace of divine love, and the manliness of the bravery that despises the world, when it is a question of giving testimony of love and of fidelity to his God and his Saviour—three noble gifts, with which the world is so ill-supplied to-day! Oh, my brethren, need I tell you that all the evils in this our day, there is one which has arrived at such enormous proportions that it has received the name of "The Social Evil"—the evil which finds its way into every rank and every grade of society; the evil which, raising its miscreant head now and again frightens us, and terrifies the very world by the evidence of its wide-spread pestilence;—the evil that, to-day, pollutes the heart, destroys the soul of the young, and strikes our nature and our manliness to its very foundations, and brings down the indignant and the sweeping curse of God upon whole nations! Need I tell you that that evil is the terrible evil of impurity—the unrestrained passion, the foul imagination, the debased and degraded cravings of this material flesh and blood of ours, rising up in rebellion, and declaring in its inflamed desires, that nothing of God's law, nothing of God's redemption shall move it; that all, all may perish, but it must be satiated and gorged with that food of lust, of which, says the holy Apostle, "the taste is death." Of this I have already spoken to you, and also of the opposite virtue, the "index" virtue, as it is called—the virtue of virtues; of that I have also spoken to you, that by which lost man is raised up to the very perfection of his spiritual nature; by which the Divine effluence of the highest resemblance to Christ is impressed upon the soul; by which the brightness of the Virgin's Son seems to pass forth, even from His body, and sink into the soul's tissues, until it becomes divine. Such virtue of angelic purity did Christ, our Lord, come to establish upon earth. Such virtue did He lay as the foundation of His Church, in a class and a virginal priesthood; in the foundations of society, in a class and pure manhood; preserving the integrity of the soul in the purity of the body. Such virtue belonged to John, "the disciple of love" and it belonged to him in its highest phase; for, as the Holy Fathers,—and the interpreters of the Church's traditions from the very beginning, and notably, St. Peter of Damascus,—tell us,—John the Evangelist, was a virgin from the cradle to the grave. No thought of human love ever flashed through his mind. No angry uprising of human passion ever disturbed the equable nature of his heavenly tempered soul and body. He was the youngest of all the Apostles; and he was little more than a youth when the virgin-creating eyes of Christ fell upon him. Christ looked upon him and saw a virginal body, fair and beautiful in its translucent purity of innocence. He the Creator and Redeemer, saw a soul pure, and bright, and unstained, a soul just opened into manhood, and in the full possession of all its powers, and a tender, yet a most pure heart, unfolding itself even as the lily bursts forth and unfolds its white leaves to gather in its calyx the dews of Heaven, like diamond drops, in its heart of glorious innocence. So did our Lord behold it un-

fold in the fair soul of John. In his earliest youth, dropped in that virgin ear the words of invitation; and in that virgin soul those graces of Apostleship and of love, and of tenderness, and of strength, that lay there amongst those petals of glory, brought forth in the soul of the young man all that was radiant with the most Christ-like virtue. A virgin,—that is to say, one who never let a thought of his mind, nor an affection of his heart stray from the highest form of Divine love; thus was he before he had beheld the face of his Redeemer. But, when, to that virginal purity, which naturally seeks the love of God in its highest form, when that God made Himself visible to it in the shape of the sacred humanity of our Lord; when the Virgin's King, the Prince, and the leader of the Virgin's choir in Heaven, presented Himself to the eyes of the young Apostle, oh, then, with the instinct of purity, his heart seemed to go forth from him and to seek the heart of Christ. And so it was for three years, under the purifying eyes of our Lord. He lived for three years in the most intimate communion of love with his Master; distinguished from all the other Apostles, of whom we do not know that ever one of them was a virgin but only John; distinguished from them by being admitted, through his privileged virginal purity, into the inner chambers of the heart of Christ. Thus, when our Lord appeared to the Apostles upon the waters, all the others shrank from Him, terrified; and they said to each other, "It is a ghost! It is an appearance!" John looked, and instantly recognized his Master, and said to Peter: "Don't be afraid! It is the Lord!" Whereupon, St. Jerome says:—"What eyes were those of John, that could see that which others could not see? Oh, it was the eye of a virgin recognizing a virgin!" So it was that a certain tacit privilege was granted to John, as is seen in the conduct of the Apostles themselves. Peter, certainly was honored above all the others by getting precedence and supremacy; by being appointed the Vicar and representative of his Master; in other words, "the Head of the Apostles." But, this was followed up. He was privileged, may more, the heart of Peter was sounded to the very depths of its capacity, and of its love, before Christ, our Lord appointed him as His representative. Three times did he ask him, "Lovest thou Me?" Again, in the presence of John, "Lovest thou Me, Peter, more than these?" More than these; more than the men who are present before Me, and of whom I speak to you. And Peter was confirmed in that hour, and rose, by Divine grace, to a height in the sight of his Divine Master, greater than any ever attained by man. It is not the heart of the man loving the Lord, but it is the heart of the Lord loving the man. So Peter was called upon to love his Lord more than the others. The tenderest love of his Divine Master was the privilege of John. He was the disciple "whom Jesus loved." And well did his fellow-Apostles know it. Therefore, on the morning of resurrection, when the Magdalen announced to the world "The Lord is risen!" Peter and John ran at once to the tomb where they had laid Him. Peter ran first, but he did not enter. John came and entered. Who can tell what he saw? What a privilege was not that which was given to John at the Last Supper because of his virginal purity? There was the Master and there were the disciples around Him. There was the man whom He had destined to be the first Pope—the representative of His power and head of His followers. Did Peter get the first place? The first place—the place next to the left side—nearest the dear heart side was the privilege of John. And, oh! ineffable dignity vouchsafed by our Saviour to His virgin friend—the head of the disciple was laid upon the breast of the Master, and the human ear of John heard the pulsations of the virginal heart of Christ, the Lord of earth and Heaven! Between those two, in life, you may easily see in this and other such traits recorded in the Gospel; between those two—the Master and the disciple whom He loved,—there was a silent intercommunication—an intensity of tender love of which the Apostles seem not to have known. Out of this very purity of John sprang the love of his Divine Lord and Master. It was after His Resurrection that our Lord asked Peter, "Dost thou love Me more than these?" Before the suffering and death of the Son of God, Peter did not love him only as man loved him. John's love knew no change. Peter's love had first to be humbled, and then purified by tears, and the heart broken by contrition before he was able to assert: "Lord, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee!" But in the love of St. John we find an undoubting, unchanging love. What his Master was to him in the hour of his glory, the same was He in the hour of his shame. He beheld his Lord, shining on the summit of Tabor on the day of His Transfiguration; yet he loved Him as dearly when he beheld Him covered with shame and confusion on the Cross? What was the nature of that love? Oh, my friends, think what was the nature of that love! Had it taken possession of a mighty but an empty heart? Mightily in its capacity of love is the heart of man—the heart of the young man—the heart of the ingenuous, talented and enlightened youth. Would you know how much love this heart is capable of? Behold it in the saints of the Catholic Church. Behold it in every man who gives his heart to God wholly and entirely. Behold it even in the sacrifices that young hearts make when they are filled with merely human love. Behold it in the sacrifice of life, of health, of everything which a man has, which is made upon the altar of his love, even when that human love has taken the base, revolting form of impurity. Look at it. Measure it, if you can. I address the heart of the young man, and he cannot see it! The truth of it lies here, that the most licentious and self-indulgent sinner on the face of the earth, has never yet known, in the indulgence of his wildest excesses, the full contentment, the complete enjoyment, the mighty faculty of love which is in the heart.

Such was the heart which our Lord called to Him. Such was the heart of John. It was a capacious heart it was the heart of a young man. It was empty. No human love was there. No previous affection came in to cross or counteract the designs of God in the least degree, or to take possession of the remotest corner, even, of that heart. Then, finding it thus empty in its purity, thus capacious in its nature, the Son of God filled the heart of the young Apostle with His love. Oh, it was the rarest, the grandest friendship that ever existed on this earth; the friendship that bound together two virgin hearts—the heart of the beloved disciple, John: the grand virgin love which absorbed John's affections, filling his young heart and intellect with the beauty and the highest appreciation of his Lord and Master, filling his senses with the charms ineffable produced by the sight of the face of the Holy One. He looked upon the beauty of that sacred and Divine humanity; and he saw with the penetrating eyes of the intellect the fulness of the Divinity that flashed upon him. He, at least, had listened to the words of the Divine Master, and sweeter it was than the music which He heard in Heaven, and which He describes in the Apocalypse, where he says: "They heard the sound of many voices, and they heard the harpers harping upon many harps." Far sweeter than the echoes of Heaven that descended into his soul on the Isle of Patmos, was the noble, manly voice of his Lord and Master,—now pouring forth blessings upon the poor,—now telling those who weep that they shall one day be comforted,—now whispering to the widow of Naim, "Weep no more!" now telling the penitent Magdalen, "Thy sins are forgiven thee because thou hast loved much!"—now, thundering in at the temple of Jerusalem until the very stones resounded to the God-like manifestation of Him who said: "It is written that My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves;"—it was still the loftiest music and melo-

dy—the harmonious roll of the voice of God—as it fell upon the charmed ears of the enraptured Evangelist,—the young man who followed his Master and fed his soul upon that Divine love. Out of this love sprang that inseparable fellowship that bound him to Christ. Not for an instant was he voluntarily absent from his Master's side. Not for an instant did he separate himself from the immediate society of his Lord. And herein lay the secret of his love,—for love, be it human or Divine, craves for union, and lives in the sight and in the conversation of the object of its affection. Consequently, of all the Apostles, John was the one who was always clinging around his Master—always trying to be near Him—always trying to catch the loving eyes of Christ in every glance. This was the light of his brightness,—the Divine wisdom that animated him!

How distinct is the action of John, in the hour of the Passion, from that of Peter! Our Divine Lord gave warning to Peter. "Peter! He says, 'before the cock crows you will deny me thrice.'" No wonder the Master's voice struck terror into the heart of the Apostle! And yet, strange to say, it did not make him cautious or prudent. When our Lord was taken prisoner, the Evangelist expressly tells us that Peter followed Him. Followed Him? Indeed, he followed Him; but he followed Him afar off. He waited on the outskirts of the crowd. He tried to hide himself in the darkness of the night. He tried to conceal his features, lest any man might lay hold of him, and make him a prisoner, as the friend of the Redeemer. He began to be afraid of the danger of acknowledging himself to be the servant of such a master. He began to think of himself, when every thought of his mind, and every energy of his heart, should have been concentrated upon his Lord. He followed Him; but at some distance. Ah! at a good distance! John, on the other hand, rushed to the front. John wanted to be seen with his Master. John wanted to take the Master's hand—even when bound by the thongs, that he might receive the vivifying touch of contact with Christ! John wanted to hear every word that might be said, whether it were for or against Him. John wanted to fast his eyes upon every object which engaged the attention of his Lord, and by whose look it was irradiated—a type, indeed, of a class of Christian men, seeking the society and the presence of the Master, and, strengthened by that seeking and that presence. He is the type of the man who goes frequently to Holy Communion, preparing himself by a good confession, and so laying the basis of a sacramental union with God, that becomes a large element of his life; the man who goes to the altar every month—the man who is familiar with Christ, and who enters somewhat into the inner chambers of that sacred heart of Infinite Love; the man who knows what these few minutes of rapture are which are reserved for the pure,—for those who not only endeavor to serve God, but to serve Him lovingly and well. Those are the men who walk in the footsteps of John: those are his representatives. Peter is represented by the man who goes to Holy Communion once or twice in the year—going, perhaps, once at Easter or Christmas, and then returning to the world and the flesh again. God grant that neither the world, nor the flesh, nor the devil will take possession of the days, or weeks, or years of the rest of his life!—he who gives,—twice in the year, perhaps,—an hour or two to earnest communion with God, and for all the rest only a passing consideration, flashing momentarily across the current of his life. And what was the consequence? John went up to Calvary, and took the proudest place that ever was given to man. Peter met, in the outer hall, a little servant-maid, and she said to him "Whom seekest thou?"—Jesus of Nazareth?" The moment that the child's voice fell upon his ear, he denied his Master, and he swore an oath that he did not know Him.

Now, we come to the third grand attribute of John; and it is to this, my friends, that I would call your attention especially. Tender as the love of this man was for his Master—his friend—mark how strong and how manly it was, at the same time. He does not stand aside. He will allow no soldier, or guard, or executioner, to thrust him aside or put him away from his Master. He stands by that Master's side, when He stood before his accusers in the Prefectorium of Pilate. He comes out. John receives Him into his arms, when, fainting with loss of blood, He returns surrounded by soldiers, from the terrible scene of His scourging; and, when the Cross is laid upon the shoulders of the Redeemer,—with the crowd of citizens around him—at His right hand, so close that he might lean upon Him—if he could, is the manly form of St. John the Evangelist. Oh, think of the love that was in his heart, and the depth of his sorrow when he saw his Lord, his Master, his Friend, his only love, reduced to so terrible a state of woe, of misery, and of weakness! This was the condition of our Divine Lord, when they laid the heavy cross upon His shoulder. How the Apostle of Love would have taken that painful and terrible crown, with its thorns, from off the brows to which they adhered, and set the thorns upon his own head, if they had only been satisfied to let him bear the pains and the sufferings of his Master and his God! Oh, how anxious must he have been to take the load that was placed upon the unwilling shoulders of Simon of Cyrene! Oh, how he must have envied the man who lifted the cross from off the bleeding shoulders of the Divine Victim, and set it on his own strong shoulders, and bore it along up the steep side of Calvary! How grateful was John to the wicked executioner, when lifting up his face to gaze, he met the sympathy and sorrow, and consolation of the Lord! With what gratitude must the Apostle have looked upon the face of Veronica, who, with eyes streaming with tears, and on banded knees, upheld the cloth on which the Saviour imprinted the marks of His divine countenance! Yet, who was this man? Who was this man who received the blow as the criminal who was about to be executed? Who is this man who takes the place of shame? Who is this man who is willing to assume all the opprobrium and all the penalty that follows upon it? He is the only one of the Twelve Apostles that is known. We read in the gospels that the Apostles were all mere men,—poor men, taken out of the crowd by our Lord. The only one amongst them who had made some mark, who was noted, who was remembered for something or another, was St. John. And by whom was he known? He was known, says the Evangelist,—he was known to the high priests. He was so well known to them, and their guards and to their officers, and to their fellow-priests, that when our Lord was in the house of Annas, John entered as a matter of course; and when Peter, with the rest, was shut out, all that John had to do was to speak a word to the officers—"because," says the Evangelist, "he was well-known to the high priests"—well-known to the chief magistrates,—well-known to the men in power—well-known to the chief senators. "Oh, John! John! I am prudent! I may be evidence against your fellows! Remember that you are a noted man, so that you will be set down by the men in power, for shame perhaps, or indignity, or even death; if you are seen with those who, perhaps, will be sent, it will be verified against you! Let Peter go; no one knows him. Let Peter go, or some one whom no one knows. Let John remain;—some one on whom Mary can lean,—some one in whose beautiful countenance she can look with trust,—some one to lean on, and to love her. But consult your own interests. Don't be rash. There is no knowing when we may want your aid or your authority!" Oh, this is the language of the world. This is the language which we hear day after day. "Prudence and caution!" "No necessity to parade our religion!" "No necessity to be thrusting our Catholicity before the world!" "No necessity to be constantly unfurling the banner on which the Cross

of Christ is depicted—the Cross on which He died to save the souls of men." "No necessity for all worship in secret. Let us go on Sunday to divine service quietly; and let the world know nothing about this!" This is self-love. This is cowardice. Oh, how noble the answer of him, whom all the world knew! How noble the soul of him who stood by Him, when he knew he was a noted man, and that, sooner or later, his fidelity on that Good Friday morning would bring him into trouble! Ah, how glorious the action of the man who knew he was compromising himself—that he was placing his character, his liberty, his very life in jeopardy! That he was suffering perhaps, in the tenderest intimacy and friendship? That he was losing himself, perhaps, in the esteem of a wise, a proper and a prudent thing when they order. He stands by his order. He stands by his order. He says, in the face of this whole world, "Whoever is His enemy, I am His friend. Whatever His position to-day I am His creature; and I recognize Him as my God!" And so he trod, step by step, with the fainting Redeemer, up the rugged sides of Calvary. We know not what words of love and of strong manly sympathy He may have poured into the afflicted ears. We know not how much the drooping humanity of our Lord may have been strengthened and cheered in that sad hour by the presence of the faithful and loving John? Have you ever been in great affliction my friends? Has sorrow ever come upon you with a crushing and overwhelming weight? Have you ever lacked heart and power in great difficulty, and seen no escape from the crushing weight of anxiety that was breaking your heart? Do you not remember that such has been the daily experience of your life? Do you not know what it is to have even one friend—one friend on whom you can rely with perfect and implicit confidence—one friend who, you know, believes in you and loves you, and whose love is as strong as his life? One friend who, you know, is unshaken by even though the whole world be against you? Such was the comfort, such was the consolation that it was the Evangelist's privilege to pay to our Lord on Calvary. No human prudence of argument dissuaded him. He thought it,—and he thought rightly,—the supreme of wisdom to defy, to despise and to trample upon the world, when that world was crucifying his Lord and Master. Highest type of the man, saying from out the depths of his own conscience, "I am above the world!" Let every man ask himself this night, and answer the question to his own soul: "Do I imitate the purity, do I imitate the love, do I imitate the courage or the bravery of this man, of whom it is said that he was 'the disciple whom Jesus loved?' He got this reward. He got this reward exceeding great. Ah, how little did he know—great as his love was—how little did he know the gift that was in store for him and that should be given him through the blood that flowed from that dying head! Little did he know of the crowning glory that was reserved to him at the foot of the Cross. How his heart must have throbbled within him with the liveliest emotions of delight, mingled in a stormy confusion with the greatness of his sorrow, when, from the lips of his dying Master, he received the command: "Behold thy Mother!"—and with eyes dimmed with the tears of anguish and of love, did he cast his most pure, most loving and most reverential glance upon the forlorn Mother of the dying Son! What was his ecstasy when he heard the voice of the dying Master say to Mary: "Oh, mother, look to John, my brother, my lover, my friend! Take him for thy son!" "The John he says: 'Son, I am going away. I am leaving this woman the most desolate of all creatures that ever walked the earth. True, she is to me the dearest object in Heaven or on earth. Friend, I have nothing that I love so much! Friend, there is no one for whom I have so much love as I have for her! And to you do I leave her! Take her as your mother, Oh, dearly beloved!" John advanced one step—the type and the prototype of the new man redeemed by our Lord—the type whose glory it was to be—that he was to be Mary's Son! He advances a step, until he comes right in front of his dying and blessed Lord, and he approaches Mary the Mother, in the midst of her sorrow, and flings himself into her loving arms, and the newly-found son embraces his heavenly mother, whilst from the crucified Lord the drops of blood fall down upon them and emanate the union between our human nature and His, and fulfil the promise He had made to His Heavenly Father in the adoption of our humanity.

The scene at Calvary I will not touch upon, or describe. The slowly passing minutes of pain, of anguish and of agony that stretched out those three terrible hours of incessant suffering,—of these I will not speak. In your estimation and in mine they do not need to be spoken of. But, when the scene was over,—when the Lord of Glory and of Love sent forth His last cry; when the terrified heart of the Virgin throbbed with alarm as she saw the centurion draw back his terrible lance and thrust it through the side of our Divine Lord,—when all this was over and when our Lord was taken down from the Cross and His body placed in Mary's arms,—after she had washed away the stains with her tears, and purified His face,—after she had taken off the crown of thorns from His brow, and when they had laid Him in the tomb,—the desolate mother put her hands into those of her newly-found child, St. John, and with him returned to Jerusalem. The glorious title of "The Child of Mary" was now his; and with this precious gift of the dying Redeemer he rejoiced in Mary's society and in Mary's care. The Virgin was then, according to tradition, in her forty-ninth year. During the twelve years that she survived with John, she was mostly in Jerusalem, whilst he preached in Ephesus, one of the cities of Asia Minor, and founded there a church, and held the chair as its first Apostle and Bishop. He founded a church at Philippi, and a church at Thessalonica, and many of the churches in Asia Minor. His whole life, for seventy years after the death of his divine Lord, was spent in the propagation of the Gospel and in the establishing of the Virgin Church. But for twelve years more the Virgin Mother was with him, in his house, tenderly surrounding him with every comfort that her care could supply. Oh, think of the rapture of this household that we read of so much! Every glance of her virginial eyes upon him reminded her of Him who was gone,—for John was like his Divine Master. It was that wonderful resemblance to Christ which the highest form of grace brings out in the soul.—Picture to yourselves, if you can, that life at Ephesus, when the Apostle, worn down by his apostolic preaching, fatigued and wearied from his constantly proclaiming the victory and the love of the Redeemer, returned to the house and sat down, whilst Mary, with her tender hand wiped the sweat from his brow, and these two, sitting together, spoke of the Lord and of the mysteries of the life of Nazareth; and from Mary's lips he heard of the mysteries of the thirty years of love in the humble house of Nazareth, and of how Joseph had died, she holding his hand, and of how Joseph had died by his side. From and the Son of God standing by his side. From Mary's lips he heard the secrets,—the mournful secrets of her Divine Son,—until, filled with inspiration, and rising to the highest and most glorious heights of divinely-inspired thought, he pronounced the Gospel that begins with the wonderful words, "In the beginning was the Word" denoting and pointing back to the eternity of the Son of God. Picture to yourselves, if you can, how Mary poured out to John, years after the death of our Lord, her words of gratitude for the care with which he surrounded her, and of all her gratitude and upholding her that he had done in consoling and upholding her that she had done in consoling and upholding her. Oh, this Divine Child in the hour of His Sorrow! Oh, this Divine Child in contemplation. Next to that mystery