

the sufferings of our Saviour, and rendered his death necessary, the more we should be convinced that it was we who were then present to his mind, we who touched his heart, we, for whom he prayed, and for whom he implored forgiveness from his Father. O consoling reflection! O fortunate sinners that we are—let us accept this generous pardon which Jesus offers us, let us accept it with confidence. Let us not fear the reproaches of our victim. When we shall have once entered into his peace, into that peace which he procures for us from his Father, he will no longer consider us as his murderers, he will look upon us as his friends, and as friends who are the more worthy of his tenderness, as they cost him so dearly.

But, after having received this pardon from our divine Saviour and Redeemer, will it be necessary for him to exhort us any longer to forgive our brethren in return? Ah! what an exhortation is this example of a God, and of a God who is put to death for our crimes! Whatever may have been the iniquity of their proceedings with regard to us, it is not us, so much as Jesus, whom they have afflicted. Their iniquity, even against us, is one of those sins which caused his death, one of those sins which he forgives, and for which he implores the forgiveness of God his Father. Shall our persons then be more sacred than that of our adorable Saviour! And shall an injury against us, be in our eyes a greater crime than to have caused his death? Or, in fine, shall our heart be more delicate in its feelings than that of the Saviour himself, so as not to be able to resolve to love those to whom the Lord himself makes a tender of his love? Alas! it is we who should properly undertake to excuse their ignorance. Frequently

their unjust proceedings against us spring from error. They imagine we have offended them, when we really have not. Have we never committed the same fault ourselves? Do we set ourselves right at this very moment, with regard to those offences which we fancy we have received? Whilst God closes his eyes on their sins and ours, shall we unhappily be too ready to close our eyes with him on our own iniquities, and keep them open on those of our brethren? Ah! if we had faith, we would, instead of nourishing the least resentment against them, love them the more, the more outrages we should suffer from them, because they would have furnished us a more worthy opportunity of resembling this Man God in the most divine action, of which he has left us an example—the pardon of injuries, and the love of enemies.

It is, especially at the hour of death, and before he offers his last sacrifice, that the christian should remember his enemies, and his Redeemer. It is with them he ought to occupy his thoughts before God, after the example of Christ; and it is by forgiving and praying for them, that he should dispose himself to appear before God, who accepts no sacrifice, unless it resembles the sacrifice of his Son, and who will be merciful only to those who have shewn mercy from their whole hearts.

SECOND WORD.

AMEN, I SAY TO THEE, THIS DAY THOU SHALT BE WITH ME IN PARADISE.

Luke xxiii. 42.

The executioners having finished their work, the decidual instrument is raised, and presents Jesus crucified to the sight of his jealous enemies, and of all the blind multitude whom they have excited, and hurried along to be witnesses of his punishment. It was then—