

thing here is in comparison with it. What difference will it make to us when we are once in the presence of God, clothed with glory and honor, with white garments, and the palm of victory in our hands, with no sorrows, sighs, or tears to be feared any more forever ; — what difference will it make whether we had a little more or a little less on this earth ? why, this whole life will seem a small speck in the grand ocean of eternity.

In short, in considering any state or condition, the principal thing is, to take into account the advantages it holds out for securing a holy and pious life, so that we may come safe through all the trials and temptations of this world to our only true haven in heaven. In this view, I do not know any among the ordinary conditions of life so good and desirable as that of a life of daily labor.

*Advantages of a life of labor.* A life of labor has always been considered, in the Church, most favorable to the soul. To have nothing which we are obliged to do may seem very fine to our wordliness and love of ease, but it is most dangerous. You know the old saying : « The devil finds work enough for idle hands to do. » It is most true. Idleness opens the door for the worst temptations. Suppose you had pretty much all your time to do what you pleased with, how likely it is that a great part of it would be mis-used. Habits of idleness would be formed, your time would hang heavy on your hands, and you would not know what to do. You would seek for amusement ; you would soon be altogether taken up with it, and your whole life would become one given up to the world and to wickedness ; you would indeed stand a great chance of going straight down to perdition.

The labor of the hands is, then, a source of blessing. It furnishes a great help to spending life in innocence. It fills up our time with honest industry, while it leaves the soul free to raise itself from time to time to God. The labor of the hands is not like that of the head. Head-work fills the mind, and takes up its attention, but handwork leaves the mind in a great measure free. St Anthony was taught this by an angel from heaven. One day when he felt tired by uninterrupted prayer, and unable to continue it, he grieved over it before the Lord, and begged to