

tirely occupied with Jesus alone. It was into his head that they had driven the crown of thorns. For Jesus alone they reserved their cruel blows, their vile phlegm, their clamours, their insults, their blasphemies, and outrages of every description. Jesus alone had his mother at his feet, whilst he was dying. Added to this, the extraordinary sensibility which must have been felt by his divine body, the perfect organization of which was not deranged by the shadow of sin, or excess.

Pilate was apparently ignorant of, or at least forgot all these circumstances, when he was astonished in the evening that Jesus was already dead, whilst the two thieves were still breathing. Who does not see that in this long series of moral and physical suffering, that Jesus had endured a thousand times more than was sufficient to cause his death. if he had not been pleased to retard it, that he might suffer more, by a more than human power?

For our parts, without sharing in this astonishment of Pilate, let us take advantage from it, by reflecting, that above all the miseries which we have described, this divine Saviour had experienced another suffering, of which the former present us but a faint image. Yes, ye blind and barbarous Jews, open your prophets, and you will see that in persecuting this God-Man, your hands inflict only the second blows upon him. An invisible hand has already stricken him: an invisible hand has inflicted those cruel wounds upon him, to which you have only added, *Because they have persecuted him whom thou hast smitten.* (Ps. 68, v. 27.) But, can I describe, O Lord, these divine and invisible wounds? And yet I ought to do so, for they are the work of my hands. "These wounds

are the iniquities of us all, whom God has placed upon Jesus. (Isa. 53, 5.) O God! what a frightful burthen! All the sins of all men, all the iniquities, all the atrocious deeds, all the horrors which have been committed to the end of the world, proceeding from the hearts of men, like so many impure serpents come to take refuge in the heart of Jesus. Ah! behold what rends and torments his heart more than all the phlegm and insults! Behold what covers his sacred face with an incomprehensible shame! *Confusion has covered my face.* (Ps. 18.)

Shame! what a torment shame is, when it enters into the presence of virtue! What a torment then must not the confusion of Jesus, who was innocence itself, have been, when he appeared loaded with crimes, in the presence of a thrice holy God!

To his confusion and his suffering—and what suffering! A suffering which is necessary before God's justice to expiate those very crimes of which we have spoken. Now, though the imagination is incapable of representing to itself all the immensity of our Saviour's suffering, yet it can go so far as to be overwhelmed by the idea which it may conceive of it. The contrition which we cold and insensible sinners feel for our crimes, is a sorrow that rarely affects our sensitive part. It is frequently no more than a mere affection of the spirit, which considers it the greatest of all misfortunes to have offended God. And blessed be the God of Mercy, his goodness is satisfied with this sorrow. Heaven forbids to deliver ourselves up to a sorrow whose liveliness would interfere with our existence or our health. But if God spares us in this manner, he has done so at the expense of his own Son, and