

love of God his joy and his reward; who finds therein his true life, and who thirsts for eternity because he thirsts for eternal love!

Let us then venture freely, joyously, to repeat with Jesus Christ that a sacrifice, without reserve, meets infinite felicity in heaven. Let us dare to hope in eternal happiness. Let us venture more; let us dare to say with Jesus Christ, that unto him who serves God, God will provide already here below compensations without number. It is Jesus Christ who declares this: Jesus, the son of Man; who, in the days of His flesh, holding communion with His Father, had need of communion with men; who Himself chose a disciple as the intimate confidant of his heart; who deemed it necessary to ask His apostles to comfort Him in His agony by watching with Him; Jesus, who knows that our heart has need of His sympathy, and that, being men, this sympathy ought to be human. Ah! my brethren, the Gospel is more than human; it is more than those systems which exalt our nature to-day, but to despise it to-morrow, and which, under the pretext of serving our dignity, disregard the most profound aspirations of our souls. The Bible is the most human of all books, and this trait alone should suffice to show that it comes from God.

For this character, so profoundly human, which we find in the thought of Jesus Christ, does it not impress you in the expressions into which this thought is translated? He might have spoken of sacrifice in abstract terms; but He employed a mode of expression which all can understand: "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time . . . with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life."

These are doubtless naught but images; but behind these images there are impressive realities. Behold in times of persecution those who expe-

rienced the bitter grief to see their houses forced, their domestic sanctuaries profaned, all their sacred treasures scattered to the winds! Is not this the history of our fathers? Behold the soldiery conducting their orgies at the hearth which is sanctified by prayer, at the holy place where our fathers bowed the knee, where our mothers, prayed at the cradle of their children! Do you understand what sufferings they endured who bore these outrages, and left behind them the ruins of their homes? Exiles of the faith, where will you go, and what will this earth, which is not worthy of you, offer to you hereafter? They will go there, my brethren, where God has called them. They will carry to distant shores the truth for which they have sacrificed all, and shown such an admirable example of their fidelity. Despoiled of all, they enriched the nations who opened their doors unto them. On their journeys they sowed everywhere the seeds of moral life and earthly prosperity. In the new, as in the old world, they laid the foundations of numerous churches, of free and powerful governments, in such a way that their descendants have inherited one hundredfold the fruits of their sacrifice. And just as the primitive persecutions of Jerusalem, in scattering throughout Syria exiles without number, could not but enlarge the borders of the Church, in like manner the religious proscriptions of Europe caused the departure to the new world of a great people, who carried with them the reunited destinies of the Gospel and of liberty. Is not this a visible and an impressive realization of the promise of Jesus Christ?

And now do you know in what other sense this word can be realized in our midst? "Persecutions" threaten us no longer. Nevertheless, let us not err upon this point and fall asleep under an indolent optimism. Blind indeed must be that person who does not see in the sentiments of the popular masses of our epoch the infallible symptoms of the struggles which await us. Blind indeed must they be who believe that