

and, fastened to them, three men were dying in agony. One was innocent, spotless, justice itself; the second a repentant sinner; the third an impenitent criminal. A Saviour, the saved and the reprobate; in the words of St. Augustine: *Tres erant in cruce, unus salvator, alius salvandus, alius damnandus.* Turn our eyes withersoever upon earth, cast about among the millions of human beings peopling our sphere, we shall find no mortal man who does not come under one of these three heads: the just, especially if he be intent on the salvation of others, the whilom sinner, and the hardened wretch who rejects until the end God's proffered graces; there is no exception, and the inexorable rule will hold good as long as man is a wayfarer here below. The title of children of God is not a passport to the joys of Heaven unless it bears the sign-manual of suffering. The same great Doctor of the Church insists upon this truth with regard to those who look to God as their Father. God, he says, "chastises every one whom He accepts as a son. — What, every one? — And were you thinking to find a hiding place to escape? He chastises every one; none is excepted, none shall be without his afflictions. — Who is this "every one?" — You ask who this "every one" is? I answer, even He who alone was without sin was not without His punishment" (In Ps. 32).

That the sinner who deliberately chooses earth as his paradise, and centres his happiness in the gratification of his every vicious instinct, should suffer, is but strict justice. And yet God often grants him a certain measure of satisfaction as a natural reward here below for, perchance, he was not sinful from the beginning; or He grants it in recompense for the practice of certain virtues in the same order, or for whatever good he may have done before he became inseparably wedded to his sin. And thus it is that the faithful sometimes wonder at the apparent good fortune of the wicked in this life. But God is a just God, and the time of his chastisement shall come. "The wicked," says the Royal Psalmist, "shall perish. And the enemies of the Lord, presently after they be honoured and exalted, shall come to nothing and