

trials and misfortunes, is that of calm endurance ; let us be patient in adversity, and misfortune will weigh less heavily upon our shoulders. Tertullian in speaking of the early Christians, said : "They were never sad." Yet, they were looked upon as the outcasts of mankind, pursued like public malefactors, to be thrown to the lions and tigers in the amphitheatre, — but they thought of their Master and model, and they were patient.

"Tribulations are the means of arousing us from the lethargy into which vice has plunged us, and of bringing us back to God whom we have forgotten." (St. John Chrysostom, Homily on St. Matthew). "You may say : the means are severe. Yes ; but they are opportune. God treats us first with rigor, then mercifully," says St. Augustine ; "the misfortunes which weigh us down, cause us to turn to God," (St. Gregory) ; and St. Bernard says : "Jesus is a lily crowned with thorns ; hence if we would gather the flowers, we must come into contact with the thorns." (Sermon on the Passion). Beautiful comparison, which recalls to us that elementary truth : we must suffer, if we would merit a recompense. We cannot possess Jesus, the Sovereign God without some sacrifices.

Meekness must be unchanging. The virtuous man never suffers himself to deviate from this path ; nor does he allow himself to be overcome by the trials and contradictions which he encounters. A true knight is not easily vanquished. The virtuous soul is always serene, and is submissive under the sufferings which God permits in order to try its faith. Why do we so often give way to murmuring and impatience, which disturb the equanimity of our soul ? For the reason that we do not possess true and solid meekness. What is impatience, but disguised movements of anger ? These form the ordinary matter of our accusations, yet they are incorrigible habits. They are involuntary, and prove no doubt, the sincerity of the soul, disclosing its wounds ; but they bear no evidence of virtue.