

the charitable souls who had presented it to Him. By tasting the bitter potion he wished, also, to mortify His taste and His tongue, in order to expiate Adam's sensuality and the gluttony of his offspring. Perhaps, as a pious author thinks,—for what is not the efficacy of His least actions and whither does His grace not extend?—perhaps He willed to merit for the Holy Church the spirit of sobriety and mortification in eating, and for the sick the strength to surmount their disgust for bitter and repulsive remedies so frequently ordered them.

But though Jesus tasted that inebriating draught, He willed not to drink it. The Prince of martyrs of love would not lose the least suffering that awaited Him. Supreme Pontiff, He is about to mount the steps of the altar to offer His Sacrifice for the salvation of the world. He had need of all His clearness of mind, all His liberty, to accomplish that mystery of love.

I thank Thee, O Jesus, for refusing all relief in Thy horrible sufferings, in order to procure for me abundant redemption !

The hour of sacrifice marked by the Father is about to strike. The executioners will have no need to use violence. The victim Himself presents His hands and feet to be nailed to the Cross. His face, although torn by the thorns,—the executioners might have seen it if their hearts had been less hardened,—His face showed at this moment some rays of the infinite joy that was stirring His Soul. With what satisfaction did He behold the earth drinking in long draughts the Blood that was to purify and redeem it !

Who will not feel his heart swelling with gratitude at so much love ! It is for me, for my salvation, that the Son of God is at this moment suspended in atrocious suffering on the gibbet of the Cross. It is to expiate the bad use I have made of my hands and feet that His sacred hands and feet are nailed on the ignominious wood. "*He was wounded for our iniquities.*" It is to expiate all the sins of touch, all the disorder of my works, all my guilty steps, that He has lovingly allowed His hands and feet to be pierced. It is to spare my members the eternal fire of hell that He devotes His own to infinite pain. It is His love that holds His arms open to embrace me, it is His love that keeps His feet nailed