

portionately intensified against him. The Church tells him so, and never omits to warn him of "the wrath to come" and the never-ending torments of the fire of hell that most surely await him unless he does timely works of Penance. She proclaims from her pulpits that the word of the Saviour expresses an unchangeable law, "Unless ye do penance, ye shall all perish," and that to the present generation, equally as to those of old, the dictum of St. Paul applies, "They who are of Christ, have crucified their flesh with its vices and concupiscences" (Gal. 4c.) Nevertheless, she is considerate for the weakness of her children in these latter times, seeing that the ancient fervor of piety has generally abated; and an almost universal dread of pain and bodily austerity has seized the minds of men, even the strongest; and the conditions of human life have undergone a remarkable change in divers ways, especially in the activity of industrial and commercial enterprise, and the prolonged hours of labor, and the severe demands of task-work, and the consequent strain upon the mental and bodily energies of men in the pursuit of worldly business, striving for success in the face of ever-increasing competition. For these and other causes the Church permits the general use of nourishing food in Lent nowadays, trusting to other resources for the awakening of the spirit of penance and the just reparation to God's offended majesty by her erring and repentant children throughout the holy season of Lent. She expects that her moderation in relaxing the former severity of the fast will encourage the faithful to observe with thorough exactness the few and small restrictions of food now required of them; and she believes that a little mortification practised with fidelity in the spirit of obedience, is more meritorious before God than the most rigid austerities grudgingly submitted to. She expects also that good and loyal Catholics will compensate for the dispensation she grants in the law of fast and abstinence by denying themselves indulgence in other things that contribute to bodily pleasure or comfort, but are nowise necessary to life and health. Every one knows his own habits, and few they are who cannot, with profit to the soul, and perhaps to the health of the