

sorrow sweet that draws the weeping survivor closer to the Cross, by the side of her whose soul was pierced through with the sword of grief.—Alas! their dead was but *one*, and they who remain are desolate.

Speak we this in bitterness? Alas, it is not so, but as a motive for renewed desire that not one, but all may partake of the blessings of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world, though to us begun herein; that the glorious time may come for the filling up of that kingdom, and that through those who now dwell apart that happy time may come. The marriage feast is laid, but there is yet room for many guests; the porch stands open, and on the symbolled pavement of this NAVE there is place for countless kneeling worshippers. The clustered pillars were made to hide the tears of the gentle but broken spirit. Why are they not filled, and why should the afflicted not seek refuge in the bosom of a mother that loves so tenderly, and can soothe so sweetly? The pavement was laid for the knees of the contrite, and why then should there be hearts so proud as to stand aloof, and not to seek for consolation where it is alone to be found? Why should the confessionals be deserted, when sin is not deserted? When the rankling of an uneasy conscience pricks, galls, or festers under concealment; when the virtue of absolution might have been given, and that dew of reconciliation poured forth, making him that was a sinner beautiful, and him whose garments were foully stained, white as snow. But, alas, where faith is not, the seared heart knows not of love; it stands apart, though in a crowd; it is desolate, though buoyed up with mirth; it is forsaken when in sorrow; in very truth it is unhinged from the chain of holiness, and in death is indeed, in every sense of the word—ALONE.

O Death, bitter and painful, Death in the accumulated torment of lingering fire, and whole disease, wasting the once fair flesh with painful rack and inward pains; O Death, in all the horrors of material decay, welcome, an hundredfold welcome, so as the ray of faith may only pass through the dismal chamber, and we lie tormented at the foot of the Cross. Soon the last struggle shall cease, and then how brightly shall the fruits of a patient forbearance shine rewarded for the brief though fiery trial! How sweet the remembrance of the racking pain, when the soul shall look on the glorified wounds of Christ's holy Passion; how dear to recall the dark struggle of temptation, when the soul in its agony felt no relief but in saying, "Thy will be done;"—here cut, here burn, *pali non mori*;—when there shall be revealed above the hidden sufferings of the Garden of Olives; or what the sword of grief begat in the chaste breast of our Mother at the foot of the Cross. How alertly shall the meek spirit recall those despites,

by which the bitterness of man oppressed and maligned us, when the mysteries of Herod's court, and Pilate's judgment-seat, shall be revealed before us in wondrous light; and in glory the soul shall repeat the word it learned on earth, "Father, forgive them, for they knew not what they did." O Death, under the guardian wing of faith, thy sting is gone: thy bitterness made sweet; thy power is but repose; the body which thou hast dismembered is separated but for a while; it is not dead, but sleepeth, to awake in glory.

There is no death but sin: and happy would it be had it come ere the fatal plunge had been taken. Happy are they who die in infancy, when the dew of baptism is still on their souls, and they are clean in the sight of God. Happy are they who though they lived, and have often fallen, yet made not shipwreck of the faith, but early sought that reparation which is laid up in the treasure-house of the Church, for all that seek it early and contritely. To such, death in its most frightful terrors is better far than doing despite to the Spirit of God, by that sin which is unto death, that mournful suicide of the soul, which wilfully turns from the known truth, to revel again, and wallow in the mire. There are scandals,—there always shall be such;—but if, while we meditate in this holy place, we make not use of the appliances which they afford, we too may waken from our thoughtlessness in the deep gulph of perdition. The PORCH is passed. We are still in the NAVE, but whosoever tarries here must continually remember, that all who truly dwell therein, who have meekly entered by the right way, have but one common bond of continuance,—that bond is HUMILITY.

We are in a safe place, but not secure; we are safe while we weep and are humble; we are safe when we cling to the wounds of our Saviour, and seek to live like him; we are safe when we beat the breast and call for mercy; while we water the confessional with our tears; while we waken the lofty echoes with our sighs; while the incense of charity exhales from our hearts, and the *Miserere* is on our lips. But whilst temptations surround, without and within; while the fleshly continent still keep us back, till we have entered into the Chancel of Heaven, by the Porch of death, we are not secure. Like the subtle electric fluid, whose motions are still a mystery, and on the discovery of some wide general laws, learned men do prate so boastingly; there is a fluid still more subtle, for it is spiritual, the laws of which are well known, but unheeded, and that is—PRIDE. Even in the good it rises, and in the very sanctuary of this holy place, puffeth up; so that thousands make a boast of what should lead them to the altar, and to their knees, saying, as St. Peter did of old, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." Hence we are never secure, and must needs be watchful.