

gled with hope. And why should not hope descend into our hearts, when we ask peace and repose for our relations, for our friends, who have passed to another life?

In these admirable prayers of the Church, sometimes there are cries of grief, sometimes cries of hope. Death laments itself, rejoices, trembles, is reassured, sighs, and supplicates.

"The day that they have given up their spirit, they return to their original earth, and all their vain thoughts perish.

"O my God! remember not the sins of my youth, nor my ignorance!

"O God! cease to afflict me, for my days are nothing!

"When you shall seek in the morning, you shall find me no more.

"I am weary of life: it has become a burthen to me. O Lord! are your days like the days of mortal men, and are your eternal years like our transitory years?

"Why, O Lord! do you turn away your face, and treat me as an enemy? Ought you exert your power against a dry leaf, against a leaf which is blown away by the wind?

"Man, born of a woman, lives but a short time, and is filled with many miseries. He is like a shadow which never remaineth in the same state.

"My days have passed away, my thoughts have vanished, all the hopes of my heart are blasted. I have said to the tomb: thou shalt be my father; and to the worms, thou shalt be my mother and my sisters!"

One voice says: "My days are vanished like smoke, and my bones have fallen into dust."

Another replies: "My days have declined like a shadow."

"What is life?" demands the priest.

"A little vapour," replies the crowd.

"The dead are asleep in the dust.

"They will arise as they were.

"They will awake again.

"Yes, glorious in the Lord.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for their good works follow them, and they rest from their labours in the bosom of God!

"From the depths we cry unto thee, O Lord!

"Lord, hear our voice!

"If thou wilt reckon all our iniquities, oh! who shall be able to endure thy judgment?

"But mercy is great in thy hands! O Lord! be thou merciful to us. From morning unto evening in thee doth Israel hope!"

Either I am blinded by great prejudice, or never did sorrow and fear, grief and hope, employ more captivating words than those that are used in

the Prayers for the Dead. There is in them more than the sadness of the earth, more than the plaints of the living. The voices of those who exist no longer are mingled with the sounds of those who weep on earth, and they issue forth from the silence of the tombs for this great concert of tears and lamentations.

David, Job, Tertullian, Bossuet, Chateaubriand, have supplied me the words in which I have written on the Day of the Dead. If I were to appeal to each one's memory, I should be again certain of creating deep emotion; for, amongst those who shall read these pages, nearly all have worn mourning around a tomb—nearly all have witnessed the carrying out of a coffin, and recited a *De Profundis* beside the grave—nearly all have heard the lumps of clay falling into the earth, and resounding so mournfully on the boards of the coffin. But we shall not call forth such torturing recollections. All Souls should not be a day of fear, but rather of hope, and almost of consolation.

From the beginning, the Church has always prayed for her departed children. She, who knew the mercies of the Lord, did not cease to offer for the dead the sacrifice which redeems souls, and opens for them the gates of heaven. But Saint Odilon, Abbot of Cluny, was one of the first to establish a general commemoration of all the faithful, and for this solemnity he chose the morrow of All Hallows.

In a short time this observance was adopted and practised throughout the whole Western Church by the authority of the Apostolic See. Soon after, it was placed amongst the number of those feasts whose observation is of precept both to people and clergy.

This feast of sorrows, of reminiscences and prayers, had become general in England, even at the beginning of the thirteenth century, as appears by the council of Oxford, held in 1222. It is there ranked among the solemnities of the second class.

(The pious and talented author here relates that he knew a Scotch Lutheran, who was converted to Catholicity, in consequence of our doctrines of purgatory. This young man had the misfortune to lose a beloved brother, who was carried off in the midst of a ball. He fell into the most profound melancholy, and was tortured with apprehensions as to the fate of his brother in another life. The physicians, and his friends, recommended him to travel, and it was on his voyage to France that Vicomte Walsh met him. They soon became acquainted, and on landing went to the same hotel. We shall now suffer the author to conclude the story in his own words.)