

must seriously reflect on the past, the present, and the dark mysterious problem that lies before him. It is appointed for men once to die, and after that the judgment. I must soon present myself before the bar of that judgment which alone is just, to give an account of my stewardship. Now, I behold the earth which at one time I would have been sorry to leave, now I see how false are the charms of the world, how powerful its attractions, how dreadful its allurements how sweet its honey appears though it has the sourness of vinegar. In the days of my childhood I was brought up in the Catholic faith, and though for years I have, to my grief, wandered like a stray sheep from the precepts, wise counsels, and frequenting the sacraments of the church, yet I wish to die in her bosom, and my greatest consolation at the last moment is to be fortified by the sacraments which Christ has left in His Church. Too soon, alas, I lost my best friends, my dear parents, who would no doubt, have brought me up in the fear and love of God, and in the practice of approaching the sacraments. The result was that I soon fell an easy victim of evil associations. Among my now companions I learned to regard the practice of going to confession as an intolerable slavery, but in abandoning its restraining influence I fell into a slavery of a different kind—the slavery of passion and sin—and my career downwards was very rapid. Now that I am on the brink of eternity, how vain and wicked do the false maxims of bad companions appear to me. These who have boasted of liberty and free thought and who would banish away the thought of God, of a future life, and man's responsibility, what do they offer instead to heal the wounds of society, to heal the wounds of a simple soul and make it resolve on a better course? Nothing but false maxims and the pleasures of sin without restraint or remorse. If I had attended my religious duty I would not be here to-day occupying my present position. The confessional would have saved me from the tyranny of passion, would have broken up the occasion and would have prevented the habit of sin to become a second nature. I was taught all this in my boyhood. I was made fully aware that one who approaches the sacraments must resolve on leading a good moral and Christian life. I abandoned the sacraments and am reaping the bitter fruit. I courted the vain pleasures of life, and became acquainted with sin. I went about from day to day with a weight of trouble on my heart that was eating my life away. Through my late misfortunes I shaped my course alone. I felt that I had been grievously wronged by man, and every day some additional