

in which as in an inexhaustible fountain, the precious blood of Jesus, which speaketh better than that of Abel, forever flows for the salvation of sinners, in which it washes the soul from the guilt of sin, and makes it whiter than snow, creating in the sinner a new heart, and renewing an upright spirit within his bowels."

EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

We shall now consider some of the effects of this holy sacrament and also some of the merciful provisions it contains for the salvation of sinners. The object of this sacrament, it has been already said, is to remit sin and to undo its fatal consequences. Now the first effect of mortal sin is to strike the soul dead. It cannot, it is true, rob the soul of the life and immortality proper to it as a spiritual being and a simple substance, but it destroys its supernatural life which is sanctifying grace, and brings death and damnation upon it. As the soul is the life of the body, so God is the life of the soul. It follows therefore that mortal sin by separating the soul from God brings spiritual ruin and death upon it. The soul that sinneth, says the prophet, the same shall die. (Ezekiel xviii c. 20 v.) And what a sad and awful death must be that of the soul in mortal sin! It is a fact and a law regulating the action of death that the nobler a being is in life, the more foul and loathsome it is in death. Man is the noblest being in the material creation and accordingly we find that the action of death upon him is more terrible and repulsive than on any other being of this lower world. If by this law we may judge of the death of the soul what a glimpse we catch of its dreadful state, and of the fearfully loathsome and repulsive spectacle it must present to God and to his holy angels. Lazarus dead and buried in the grave is but a type and image of a soul dead and buried in the grave of sin. If then the merciful Jesus groaned with sorrow and shed bitter tears on beholding the dead body of