

supposition of such a tale is absurd, and that such an instance of unparalleled love and base ingratitude never took place. Nevertheless, this tragic history, told by St. Bernard, in the form of a parable, is strictly true. That extraordinary benefactor, that noble, that generous, that compassionate, and most loving prince, is Jesus Christ ! and that traitor, that monster of ingratitude, that base and bloody murderer, is guilty man !

If any thing can recall us from our sinful wanderings, or touch our criminal hearts ; if aught can excite us to the love of Jesus, it must be the consideration of all that this adorable Saviour has endured for our salvation. The benefit of creation, and a thousand others, which he daily grants us, must claim, without doubt, our most lively gratitude. But the hill of Calvary is peculiarly the mount of Lovers, the cross is the great furnace of Love ; and nothing is more calculated to gain our hearts to Christ, than the sight of that bitter chalice to which he condemned himself, and which he drank to the very last drop. The mighty work of creating us from nothing, cost him but a word ; whilst in order to expiate sin, and restore the beauty of his image, which sin had effaced in our souls, he spent thirty-three years on earth in humiliations and sufferings, and died between two thieves on an ignominious gibbet.

Let us, then, fervently meditate on this great mystery of divine love. Let us follow our divine Redeemer, step by step, in his dolorous passion. Let us read our sins in his wounds, and entering through his open side to his most loving heart, let us contemplate the love with which it burns for our salvation.

For the convenience of those who shall perform the Stations of the Cross, I will subjoin some general topics for meditation on the Passion, and form subjects for nine day's reflection, which may serve as a preparatory Novena to any Feast of the Cross or Passion during the year. My object shall be to condense as much matter as possible in a small space, leaving further considerations and affections to the pious Christian himself, and to the heavenly light and inspirations of that Divine Spirit, "who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God ;" and "through whom the love of God is poured abroad into our hearts."

CHAPTER II.

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION OF CHRIST, IS USEFUL TO ALL CHRISTIANS.

By its holy exercise sinners are assisted in returning to God ; those who have begun to do penance are enabled to subdue their passions ; those who are advanced in God's service, are encouraged in their progress to virtue, and the perfect are united to God.

All the prodigies at the death of Christ are renewed by it in the souls of the faithful. "The earth trembles" ; (Matt. xxvii. 51. 52.) that is, earthly hearts are shaken by a salutary fear, when they behold the terrible punishment inflicted on the Son of God by divine justice, for the sins of others. The rocks are split asunder, being softened by grief for the sins which were the cause of so much suffering to Christ. The graves are opened by humble confession, unto the resurrection of a new life. The veil of the temple is rent from the top even to the bottom, so that in blissful vision we may behold the