

eternity. Once it was impalpable—when apart from grace;—once united, if the haze of temptation and sinful propensity be shaken off, it becomes bright and visible, and goes on its way rejoicing, to be lost and tarnished no more.

Here is the sting of death is in very deed robbed of its virulence, and when the sun of mortal life hath set, neither to itself nor to those that remain is its substance fled, nor its purpose in creation at an end. If robbed in lustre, the soul leaves this world, its powerful intercession is exerted in favour of those who remain on earth; like that of the canonized Saints of the Church, of whom she hath many more than those whom she hath singled out for man's worship,—such as those twelve thousand who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, in white garments; or that multitude of tribes, and nations, and people, and tongues, which no man could number. Those, by their continual prayers, obtain perpetual dew of grace to fall unseen into the hearts of men, with that individual tenderness, with which they loved their homes on earth; and mourned and prayed in secret, while yet alive; but whom they still pray for with renewed fervour, all the more powerful now, that it is sinless and immaculate, and that instead of a single sigh sent upwards, it is joined with the united suffrages of all their fellow-saints.

How many saintly innocents are there, taken away hence, ere reason had come, not indeed like those of old, in Bethlehem, baptized with blood, but in the regenerating streams of baptism;—how many lift up their pure hands in the sight of God, and invoke mercy on those, who were their means of life and bliss; whose parents baply mourned over their early loss, and shed bitter natural tears over the waxen stillness of dead infancy, and who for a while refused to be comforted by the words of the Church, whose tones of joy assured them, that *Beati immaculati in via*,—that they have exchanged the perils and snares of an uncertain end, for the beatific vision and angelic nature. Pray, then, dear little ones,—sweet rosebuds of heaven,—for your earthly parents; pray, angels of God, for your brothers and sisters, whose little hearts were half broken when ye went, and whose playful mood was hushed with unwonted awe, when they gazed on the peaceful slumber of death, and on the narrow bed where the vessel that contained your heavenly fire still lay, beautiful in death, as if it had shared in the sudden joy, into which you went, and retained in death a moulded smile of heavenly contentment. Pray, sweet innocents, for her that bore ye, and suffered so much for you,—long sickness, weary pangs, and much anxiety,—and who wept for ye, as is nature's wont. Pray for him who was your father in the flesh; and pray for those who led ye to the font,

and for him who, by virtue of the power of the Church, drove out the wicked spirit from its too fair dwelling, and who poured on your head those cleansing waters of regeneration, which made ye fitting temples for the Holy Ghost, and meet for what ye now possess—the kingdom of Heaven.

Death is indeed bitter, where the seal of faith has not been set. To such it is hopeless and a void; with the parting spirit all is broken, and neither for the living nor the dead is there a further communion, save only in the treachery of affection, or unavailing memory that veils while it embitters. But in the deep-rooted faith of ages, the sting of death is indeed taken away, the grave is no longer victorious, and hell no longer triumphs. The link that binds the quick, the dead, and the glorified, is not made of flesh, but rather is riveted and welded by its dissolution, and is made meet to be hereafter renewed in the glorified, what here had its origin in the imperfect state; so that the loosing of a band by death, is made to act doubly on the living and the dead, and to call forth a wondrous interchange of purification, which flows through the alembic of affliction, distilling charity.

We are not one on earth—we are many: the cold and chilling creed that turns a deaf ear to the collective graces that emanate from the Church Catholic, may pride itself in an ideal assembly, but the unhappy individual who embraces it is indeed isolated; he lives apart, and in the midst of thousands he is alone. Each one is one of those for whom the accumulated treasures of the Church have been laid up in store, and if he will not be of the number of those who shall inherit a blessing, he must needs be of those who shall receive a doom. Alas! such an one is isolated—he is a withered and a broken branch, that shall not give out its goodly leaves for ever. He dies, and the shadows of night cover him; those behind weep, but pray they cannot, save only in a natural terror for themselves alone in unavailing sorrow. They are of the number of those who have no hope—a mist, dark and impenetrable, shrouds the future,—no vision of a gathering Angel pours forth in the vast unknown its incense of holy prayers, hidden sighs of contrition, or golden fruits of secret alms-deeds;—no Angel guardian waits for their dead, to shield the soul of the departed from the deep pit, or to guide its way to holy light;—no office of holy Church is offered up for its repose;—no tapers lit attend it to the grave, and point to a joyful resurrection;—no prayers are uttered as the spirit passes away;—no morning, mid-day, nor evening remembrance supplicates absolution and forgiveness for whatever it may have committed through human frailty;—no communion of glory stills the sighs and sobs of natural affection, and makes that