

and perversity,—these are the wounds which disfigure our human nature. The statue has no further need of the sculptor who fashions it ; but we have need of the hand which has formed us ; without it, we would fall back into our original nothingness. Each instant, it is necessary that God should give us aid and strength, in order to live and act.

It is the same in the supernatural order. Of ourselves, we are powerless to do good ; we cannot even pronounce the name of Jesus in a meritorious manner. We are sinners, having a hundred times abused the goodness of God ; and in the face of this moral degradation, what personal good have we, in which we may glory ?

The exterior advantages of birth, rank or fortune are independent circumstances of our will. They are without us, they do not belong to our nature ; they increase our obligations, and expose us to many perils.

The advantages of intellect, talent, beauty and strength, are gifts of the Divine liberality. The Apostle says : “ What hast thou that thou hast not received ? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it ? ” (1 Cor. iv., 7.)

“ When you are praised,” says St. Catherine of Genoa, “ understand it is not you, but the gifts of God.” Oh ! How true it is, that in order to be humble, it is sufficient to possess good sense. Lacordaire had reason to affirm that humility is a great part of common sense.

Oh Jesus, who hadst taught us by word and example, to shun honors, to condemn ourselves, who hadst taught us the vanity of worldly goods and temporal advantages, grave more and more this teaching in our souls ; grant that in adoring and contemplating Thy adorable Heart, so humble and so meek, we may destroy the sentiments of the man of sin, to substitute for them, those of the new man, that is to say, Thine own !

The Christian should not be satisfied with that humility