

upon His priests than upon the rest of the faithful! The priest may be a sinner and entirely unworthy of greater favors, still he is invested with august powers, for to him is given the most stupendous power that has ever been given to man, to perpetuate on earth the Sacrifice of Calvary, to offer up again the Redeemer as a holocaust to His Heavenly Father. The Angels tremble before the Divine Majesty, and are scarce pure enough to appear in His presence, while Christ suffers His priests to take in their hands His very flesh glorified in its state of resurrection and immortality. "To be chosen out from the chosen people, to be partakers of the priesthood of the incarnate Son, of His character and of His powers, to be the visible witnesses of His mind and of His perfections, to be set to make others perfect, to be consecrated to offer Christ continually as the victim for the sins of the world" are some of the privileges of the priest, and what greater privileges than these can man attain.

But apart from the fact that the priests of the Catholic Church are to be looked upon as the representatives of Christ upon earth, have their lives and works in the past been such as to demand our respect and reverence? Let us but look into the history of the past, and there we shall find an answer. When we enter upon a study of the priests of the Church of Christ, what glorious army of brave and self-sacrificing men rise before our vision! At their head march the Apostles, to be succeeded century after century by hosts of devoted and zealous men, who had no other desire than the glory of God and the sanctification of those for whom His Son chose to die. Decked with the thorny crown of poverty, laden with the chains of holy obedience, and bearing in their hands the lily of chastity they have suffered innumerable privations and persecutions for the love of their Divine Master and their fellow-man. All the ingenuity that hatred suggests, and all those diabolical means at which humanity shudders have at all times been used to make them swerve from their duties and to estrange from them the hearts of men. Individual tyrants, civil governments, and fanatical nations have employed all means which malice could devise to crush and obliterate their holy influence upon mankind. But with a supernatural fortitude have these victims of derision withstood all opposition, thereby proving that a still higher power bore them up. Overcome by this spectacle have their enemies, time and again, been converted to