

"In the heavenly Jerusalem there will be no error, because there we will see God; there will be no suffering, because there we will enjoy God; there will be no uneasiness nor fear, because there we will repose in God."

I might quote many more extracts from the great orator, for Bossuet delighted in speaking of the glory of the elect; but I forbear—because I conceive that one of the best means of giving an idea of the delights of heaven is to point out the miseries of the earth. Above, *there is an ocean of bliss! Here below, there is a few drops of joy.* "On earth (says Ecclesiastes) we tremble while we smile."

"We think to rest ourselves here, and, nevertheless, time carries us off, and we are the prey of our own duration. Which of us does not desire rest? Both he who works in his house, and he who labours in the field, and he who sails over the ocean, and he who trades in land, and he who serves in the army, and he who busies himself in courts: all look forward to repose."

"Every man of sense marks out for himself a place of retreat and rest—a place which he looks at from a distance, as a haven into which he will throw himself when tossed about by contrary winds. But this asylum which you prepare for yourselves against fortune is still in her power; and no matter how far you may extend your foresight, you can never guard against her freaks. You think you are safe on one side—ruin will come on the other. You have made every thing secure all around—the edifice will suddenly tumble from the foundation. If the foundation be solid, a thunderbolt will come from above, and leave the whole in ruins. I wish to say simply, and without figure, that misfortunes here below assail us, and penetrate through too many avenues to allow us to be forewarned, and ready to resist them at every side. There is nothing on earth on which we place our dependance—children, friends, dignities, employments—which may not only fail us, but which may be turned into infinite bitterness for us; and we shall be too great novices in the history of human life, if there be any necessity of proving to us this truth."

Behold how Bossuet painted the misery of this worldly bliss in presence of Louis the Great, and he found the earth so poor only because he contemplated the felicity of the elect! When you turn your eyes from a radiant sun to the objects which surround you, they all seem obscure.

In the solemnity of All Saints, the Church desires to make us emulous of heaven. We would, therefore, do well, on this day, to conceive a distaste for the place of our exile. We never love our country so much as when banishment becomes insupportable.

Before she established a festival common to all the saints, the Church had feasts for the different orders of the heavenly inhabitants.

Thus the Eastern Church still celebrates the Feast of *all the saints of the Old Law*—that is, of all the just who preceded the coming of the Messiah. The office takes place on the Sunday before Christmas.

The Feast of *all the Apostles* has been for a long time celebrated on the first of May; that of *all the Disciples* on the fifteenth of July.

That of *all the Martyrs* had also its particular day.

The solemnity in honour of *the Fathers of the Desert* had been established on the Friday of Quinquagesima week.

The first who solemnized at Rome the *Feast of all Saints* was Pope Gregory III., who sat on the Chair of St. Peter in 731. Pope Gregory IV., having come into France about the year 835, recommended Louis le Debonnaire to cause the great commemoration of the Saints to be celebrated throughout his dominions, and it was accordingly done on the first day of November.

From that period *All Saints* has become the Feast of Autumn—the feast that closes the five days—the least that is nigh to death.

It is on this day, whilst the winds are whistling around the old churches, and the leaves of the forest are scattered by the blast which announces winter, that Religion, in her sanctuaries, chants this hymn to all the Saints:

"O holy citizens of heaven, we, poor mortals, assemble with joy to sing the victories and crowns which you have gained, at the cost of so many struggles and such severe labours!

"We, clothed with miseries, celebrate you, whom the Almighty has invested with glory.

"We, who eat the bread of labour and of tears, solemnize you, who live only by love and truth, and who drink in golden cups the living waters from the sacred fountains.

"We behold you, who were humble on earth, this day mingled with the holy Elders, who cast their diadems of glory at the feet of the King of kings.

"O you, who wert our brethren on earth, continue to be so in heaven! We are poor, and frail, and miserable, whilst you are clad in shining robes, that are washed clean in the blood of the Lamb; but do not turn away your eyes from your brethren here below!"

When the arches of the cathedrals and the village churches resound with these poetic words, the days begin to shorten, and the night soon falls. Hence the evening *Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament* on All Saints would be given in dark-