

nothing since the evening before, the quantity of blood which he had lost, the excessive pain which he had undergone, were sufficient to cause an extreme thirst. For, as St. Cyril remarks, it is the peculiar effect of intense pain to excite the natural heat so strongly as to absorb the interior liquids, and set the entrails on fire. Hence from the dryness of the palate and mouth, rises a consuming thirst, which nothing can extinguish. Then indeed was fulfilled to the letter in our Saviour, that expression of the 21st psalm, which perhaps he recited at the moment he spoke this fifth word—*My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue hath cleaved to my jaws*, (v. 16.)

Every one is more or less acquainted with the suffering which is occasioned by thirst. But it is those particularly who have felt it, in some illness, that can form a just idea of it. Hence a pious person, who was tormented on his death bed with a similar heat and thirst, said, that he had never comprehended, until then, those words of the psalmist, which he was fond of repeating—*My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue hath cleaved to my jaws*. And he said he judged by this torment what that of our Saviour had been.

But at best we should only imperfectly comprehend this divine torment, if we consider it merely as a natural thirst. Entirely engaged as he is in accomplishing every iota of his father's will, the thoughts of Jesus running through, if we may say so, all the oracles that related to him, perceived there was one, which as St. John tells us, was not yet fulfilled. It had been foretold, that in his thirst they should give him vinegar to drink, (Ps. lxxviii. 26.) and he immediately says, he is thirsty. His executioners then fulfilled the prophecy, and presented him vinegar to drink; that

Jesus tasted it, and that his pains were thereby increased is something of moment, without doubt, but almost nothing in addition to so many sufferings. Moreover, it was not to those who surrounded him that he particularly declared his thirst. The word which he here pronounces, is not addressed like the preceding, to some particular person. It is a sigh which issues from the bottom of his agonizing soul, at the remembrance of his God, and of the redemption which he is achieving, a sigh that is directed at the same time to heaven and earth, to God and man, to all mankind, and particularly to all sinners. If he *thirsts*, it is for the return of paternal tenderness, and of those consolations of God, who has forsaken him. If he *thirsts*, it is because he sees the friendship of God at length taking the place of his wrath, and extending itself to all those whom he has redeemed at the price of his blood. If he *thirsts*, it is to see all men hastening to him, to unite themselves to him, to enter into him, that with him, and in him, and by him, they may receive the mercy which he implores; and to give here, at least, some idea of the untranslatable expression of a holy father, *he thirsts*, in order to be himself the object of our thirst. *SITIT SITIT*. (St. Greg. Naz.)—He thirsts for the conversion of sinners—he thirsts for the perseverance of the just—he thirsts for the salvation and happiness of the entire world.

Scriptural Gems.

ON HUMILITY.

The prayer of him that humbles himself, penetrates the clouds, and returns not back till the Most High regards it. Eccles. xxxv. 21.