

disfigured exhausted Redeemer, with lacerated body and thorn-crowned brow. The soldiers, with bitter irony, had thrown a worn-out purple mantle over His shoulders and thrust a reed, as a sceptre, into His hand.

"Behold the man!" said Pilate, adding: "Will you crucify your king?"

At sight of the blood-stained figure, the Jews recoiled in mingled horror and disgust. Their King!...that pain-crushed man, reduced to the lowest degree of human suffering, misery and abjection!.....

Veiling their eyes to shut out the sight, and turning their backs, they shouted:

"Tolle! Tolle! Away with Him; crucify Him!"

Blinded by hatred they forgot all patriotism:

"We have no king but Cæsar."

* *

And now on the summit of Golgotha are seen three crosses.

The just One hangs crucified between two robbers. Gesmas blasphemes and scoffs at the Divine Sufferer whose resignation displeases and exasperates him.

Dismas is silent....He turns his eyes. He listens to the words of pardon and love pronounced by the dying Saviour.

He tries to remember....Long ago, far, far back in the depths of the guilty past, he once encountered,.... Yes, he has already met those gentle, pure eyes, so full of mercy.

Yes, he remembers now!

One stormy night he and Gesmas had arrested two travellers who were hurrying away with a proscribed child. As they had no ransom to offer, Dismas with brutal hand had snatched the child. And behold, the innocent Babe awaking in his arms had looked at him tenderly and mercifully, as the dying Redeemer was looking on him at this moment.

All was clear to him.

The mysterious child, adored by shepherds and kings in a stable, whose divine smile had aroused emotions of pity in the bandit's callous heart, was the Son of God now dying for the redemption of the world.