

to receive! For all that thou hast done for us is of thy grace and boundless mercy, and yet thou still continuest to vouchsafe, every day, by sparing us in our crimes, and by blessing us with many blessings! Thanks be unto thee, O most merciful God, for ever, but woe unto us for our ingratitude, lukewarmness, and pride, notwithstanding all thy benefits and promises!

CHAPTER III.

ON THE PURITY AND SUBLIMITY OF THE APOSTLE ST. JOHN.

1. "Ecce puer meus electus, quem elegi." (Esai. li. 2.)

"Behold my beloved servant whom I have chosen."

What gave to the blessed Apostle John so clear an intellect, and made him so beloved by our Lord Jesus Christ, that he should understand and write such lofty mysteries of God, far beyond all the doctors in the world?

It was his great purity of mind and body, his perfect charity, burning towards God and his neighbour, not in word only and speech, but in deed and in truth. For this he himself testifieth openly in his epistle, when writing of this twofold charity. But if ye cannot rise with St. John the Evangelist to the contemplation of such exalted mysteries of the Holy Trinity, yet be zealous in meditating and following the humility and patience of Christ with the sick Lazarus. And though you may not be able to fly up with St. Paul to the third heavens, yet learn to weep and implore forgiveness with the blessed Mary Magdalene at the feet of Jesus.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SANCTITY AND EXCELLENCE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

1. "Vas electionis mihi est." (Act. ix. 15.)

"This man is to me a vessel of election."

Who is it made St. Paul so great and exalted in the sight of God?

It was his contempt of the world and all earthly things, his self-denial and mortification of the flesh, and his casting away all temporal honour, and, more than these, his perfect love of God and his neighbour, by serving Christ in this world, for no earthly gain, or self-advantage.

Among all the many revelations made to him by God, what did he teach the most often or impress the most constantly to the faithful at Rome, Corinth, Galatia, or all over the world? It was Jesus Christ, and him crucified for us, for whom he desired to suffer many things, and feared not to die, for the honour and love of his name. He bore about in his body and his heart daily the marks of his passion.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE GREAT HUMILITY OF ST. FRANCIS.

1. "This is he who despised the life of the world." (Ant. Eccl.)

"Hic est qui contempsit vitam mundi."

What made the humble St. Francis so devout and so beloved of God in this life, and so exalted in glory? Verily it was his profound humility, and because in all the divine blessings and daily exercises he bore about with