

times, God showed Himself willing to forgive the guilty for the sake of the innocent; regarding the merits of the ones to treat the others indulgently. This ordinance of God has not changed. In it the Church has found the reason of her discipline in this matter. She has always said to the faithful that it is from the treasure of the superabundant merits of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, of all the Saints, that she draws the satisfaction presented to God as atonement for our sins. She alone could do so, having alone received the power of the Keys; just as in all societies which have a common treasure, it is incumbent upon the supreme authority to dispose of its contents.

Count de Maistre justified indulgences by the statement that they are, in the religious order, but an application of a law which is universal in the world. "There is not, said he, even among the Protestants, a single father who has not forgiven a guilty child through *the intercession and the merits* of another child with whom he is better pleased. There is not a sovereign who has not remitted or commuted the penalties of a culprit *for the sake of* a father, a brother, a son, a relative, an ancestor of the guilty one. In both cases you have indulgences. And this principle is so natural and so general that it shows itself continually in the least exercise of human justice...