

not to pay for. The ancients raised columns and arches to their heroes and gods to show their gratitude. Many a tablet in marble or perennial bronze may still be seen, after two thousand years, with names graven on them of men whom their countrymen desired to thank and honor. And in our own days, what other motive than gratitude urges us to celebrate, in the same way, the benefits and favors we receive from our fellow-men? Social life has invented a thousand ways of showing how we appreciate those who do us good. The simple "Thank you" that we hear on every lip is an echo of the voice of nature.

This sentiment of gratitude is so natural to man that once he is known not to possess it, he is shunned. The world judges him mercilessly.

Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,  
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child,  
Than the sea-monster.

*King Lear, 1. 4.*

In a word, no man glories in his ingratitude; and no matter how his deeds may be interpreted, no one will formally acknowledge himself guilty of it.

Now if ingratitude is so base when shown by man to man, how shall we qualify it when it is shown to God? After all, man's gifts to man must necessarily be paltry, and gratitude therefor must naturally be limited by the occasion or the cause that brought it forth; but God's supernatural gifts to man are so munificent and so numerous that not to be grateful for them is not merely heartlessness, it is a crime.

In order to gauge the measure of God's gifts to us it will suffice to recall that admirable contemplation on