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THE CROSS.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is Crucified to me, and I to the world.—St. Paul, Gal.vi. 14.

VOL. I.

HALIFAX, FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 1843.

No. 6.

WEEKLY CALENDAR.

- April 9. Palm Sunday.
10. Monday in Holy Week.
11. Tuesday in Holy Week.
12. Spy Wednesday. The Office of Tenebræ is said on this and the following evenings.
13. Maundy Thursday. Institution of the blessed Eucharist.
14. Good Friday.
15. Holy Saturday.

HOLY WEEK.

THE Holiest Week of the entire year is now approaching—the Week in which our ransom was paid—the Week in which so many mysteries were accomplished, so many prophecies fulfilled, so many triumphs achieved, so many torments endured and so many lessons of patience delivered by the meek and suffering Jesus. During this week He fully accomplishes the will of His Heavenly Father. He is betrayed, denied, abandoned by his disciples—his soul is sorrowful even unto death—his agony expresses from every pore of his body a perspiration of blood. He bears upon himself the iniquities of us all—he bends beneath the accumulated guilt of ages both past and future. He is betrayed by a traitor's kiss, he is hurried as a malefactor before unjust tribunals—he

is mocked, scourged, spit upon, derided as a fool, delivered up to the fury of a barbarous soldiery, and the blood-thirsty rage of a still more barbarous rabble. He slowly and painfully drags his heavy Cross along the dolorous way that leads to Calvary, and on that place of skulls, that mount of Death, his innocent flesh is nailed to the Altar of his Great Sacrifice, and amidst the shouts and imprecations of his enemies he is raised aloft between Heaven and Earth a naked, bleeding and mangled victim. His piercing Crown of Thorns is on his head and over him is written the titles of his royalty, the cause of his death. For this kingly dignity he was born, for this he came into the world, and after three hours of intense agony during which he attracts the love of his faithful subjects, and establishes his absolute dominion in their hearts, he dies the King of Love, and in his death perpetuates the reign and triumph of his love on earth while time shall last.

In this week he enters the royal city as a King and is received with hosannas. Alas! in five short days those fickle Jews will change them into crucifixes. When he beholds Jerusalem at a distance he sheds over it tears of love: Happy city over which Jesus wept!

Thrice happy, O Jerusalem, if those precious tear drops had melted thy stony heart, and taught thee to know the day of thy visitation! Daughter of Sion he comes to thee meek; and thou wilt receive him with all the fury of revenge! He comes to thee sitting on a lowly ass; and thou wilt exalt him on an infamous gibbet.

In this week his treacherous disciple—the man of his peace, in whom he hoped, who eat his bread, will betray him into the hands of his enemies, and sell for a few pieces of money all the Treasure of Earth and Heaven. He will be first feasted on his precious Body and Blood; and will afterwards, with an ingratitude which deserves ten thousand hells, deliver up that adorable body to the manacle, the buffet and the scourge, to the spittle, the fool's garment, the mock sceptre, and bloody crown, to the rude nails and sharp lance, to all the bitterness of vinegar and the nauseousness of gall—to the hard, cruel and agonizing bed of the cross! He will also basely sell that priceless blood which when it touches one spot of earth will wash away all its abominations, which “pacifies the things that are in heaven and on earth, which contains such boundless and purifying efficacy that it is able to cleanse even the terrible crime, by which it was shed.

In this week too, on the eve of his passion, “the night in which he was betrayed” Jesus ‘having loved his own

who were in the world loved them to the end’—loved them to his last moments, to the end of his painful life, to the end and term of all love—loved them with a pure, constant, generous, ardent, disinterested and excessive love. And as a dying proof of his love this ‘merciful and compassionate Lord, made a memorial, an abridgment of all his wonders; he gave food to those who fear him.’ He bequeathed them the legacy of his Body and Blood, his soul and his divinity, that they might eat thereof, and through him, live forever. He left them the body that was broken, and the blood that was shed for love of them, that whenever they received them they might ‘show forth his death’ and commemorate his infinite love ‘greater than which no man hath’ for it was a love ‘as strong as death,’ a love which triumphed over the bitterness of death.

During this week he delivered his parting instructions, made his affectionate prayer to his Father for the Disciples whom he loved, commended to them charity, unity and peace, washed their feet as an example of humility and love, sung a hymn of thanksgiving to his Father, made the most perfect act of resignation to his will in the garden, wrought many wonders, converted many sinners, displayed a divine patience and admirable silence which astonished even his enemies, asserted his kingly dignity even whilst he is treated as a slave, and is made obedient to death, even the death of the Cross!

In this week he triumphs over sin, death and hell—destroys the dominion of the Prince of Darkness, opens for his children the kingdom 'of his admirable light,' takes away its sting from death, its horrors from the grave, converts the gibbet of infamy into a standard of glory, bears off an entire world as the spoils of his victory, leads captivity captive, and bestows gifts on men, visits and consoles the gloomy prison of the Saints of old, bursts asunder the bonds of Death, the Child of sin, and rises from the tomb in the majesty of his own power, after having caused the angels of Heaven to rejoice, as well as the creatures whom he had redeemed, and offered to his eternal Father the greatest homage, the sublimest glory, the fullest atonement which even a God could render to a God.

Oh! this is indeed a great week, a mysterious week, a holy week, a week of mercies innumerable, of graces most abundant, of lessons most eloquent, of sorrows most profound, of love most attractive! Well might it have been asked in times of old, Who will refuse to be converted in this week? What sinner's heart will remain obdurate? What eyes can behold the sufferings of Love without floods of tears? Who is so wicked that in these days he will not become holy? Who so intemperate that will not become sober? Who so passionate that will not become meek? Who so loquacious that will not become silent? Who so uncharitable that will not forgive? Who so impure that will not become chaste? Who so unmortified that will not become penitent? Who so dead in sin that will not be restored to the life of grace?

In this week also the Church, the Faithful Spouse of him who loved her to death, seems to exhaust all her heavenly resources to show more fully the extent of her feelings. The most beautiful and touching passages of the Book of life are chosen for her liturgy. David, and Isaiah and Jeremy, the Prophet of Sorrows, are called into requisition, and their thrilling words are wedded to the most plaintive sounds of music, and accompanied by the most affecting ceremonies, every one of which is an instructive Sermon preached, through all the senses, to the heart. In this week she has her Solemn Bene-

diction, distribution, and procession of the Psalms—her melancholy prophecies of the passion, and her Gospel narratives of the sufferings and death of her Spouse. Her altars are naked, desolate and covered with mourning. She and her children fast according to his own prediction, 'for the sorrowful days have come in which the Bridegroom is taken away' She has her Tenebræ and office of mourning in which she bewails the extinction of the 'Light of the world' All her sounds of gladness have died away, her joyful words are heard no longer. She is fastened to the Cross with Jesus The Cross is her whole theme—the subject of all her homage, the Great Book which she presents to her children, that they may read in its bloody pages all the enormity of sin, and all the love of its Destroyer. In this week too her charity is unhounded. As Christ died for all, She prays for all. Not only her erring and disobedient children who have risen up ungratefully against this best of Mothers—not only those 'other sheep which are not of her fold' but the Heathen, the Infidel, nay, the Deicide Jew is included by name in her petitions for mercy. In this week, she admits to pardon her penitent children, and baptises her Catechumens in the fountain of Regeneration.

Oh let us spend this Holy Week as becomes the Saints. Let us renounce our 'dead works, to serve the Living God' Let us hasten to Calvary with our Beloved Mother, and under the branches of the Tree of Life which is planted on its summit, let us refresh our wearied souls and repose in peace. Let Jesus Crucified be our only Knowledge, and his wounds our assured refuge.

Let us read them over one by one, and suffer them to transfix our souls as arrows of divine love. Let those bloody apertures in the body of our king, be so many eloquent mouths to exhort us to love him. His sacred side has been opened for us, and a passage thereby made to his most loving heart. Let us enter in by the way of love, and embrace with our whole hearts that most affectionate Heart which loved us so much, and which we have so often cruelly wounded. Let this be our refuge and everlasting repose. And when our hearts shall be entirely united to Jesus, let us die with Him on the cross, to sin, and we will deserve to rise with him at Easter to all the glories of a new life.

Considerations on the Passion of Our Lord.

CHAPTER I.

A man from the lowest dregs of the people was once accused of the crime of treason. Being declared guilty of having conspired against the state, and against the person of his sovereign, he was condemned to the severest punishment of the law, and the king swore not to grant him his pardon. It was necessary that his blood should flow, in order to wipe away the outrage that was offered to the majesty of the crown.

This monarch had an only son, the object of his tenderest affections, and the heir of his kingdom. The young prince, hearing of the fate of this unfortunate subject on the very day that he was to be led forth to execution, was moved with so ardent a desire to save his life, that he formed the heroic resolution of suffering in his place, in order to deliver him from death. He hastened to his father, and after having obtained from him a promise, under his oath, to grant his request, he informed him of his design, and conjured him to allow him to be put to death instead of his guilty subject. The king was stricken with astonishment at this unexpected demand. His heart was rent asunder with grief, and he shed an abundance of tears. But he had sworn a double oath. He could not suffer the crime to escape with impunity, nor refuse the life of the traitor to his son; and he was thus forced to give a consent, which plunged his paternal heart in the most profound sorrow. This innocent victim asked another favour,

which, as a dying request, his father, notwithstanding his great reluctance, could not refuse; and this was, to adopt the guilty traitor in his place, and to leave him the inheritance of his kingdom.

The young prince set out for the place of punishment full of joy, and went to announce to the real culprit that he was going to die in his place, and thereby obtain, not only his pardon, but the right of succession to the kingdom. The only return which he asked was, that he should sometimes think of his benefactor, and repay him by a just and grateful affection for such prodigious love.

This unhappy wretch, careless of the fate which awaited him, was engaged at the time in playing with his fellow-prisoners. He did not even condescend to listen with any attention to the happy news; nay, at the very name of the king's son, he vomited forth a torrent of reproaches against the young prince. Being delivered from his chains, he ran with the multitude to the public square. He there beheld, with the utmost indifference, the generous prince, who was going to his execution, in order to save him. All on a sudden, being seized with an infernal rage, he joined those who were insulting his deliverer. He exceeded them all in the outrages which he heaped upon him. Nay, like a demon, he begged that he might be permitted to take the place of the public executioner, and he actually had the barbarity to put to death him to whom he owed his life.

O Christian souls, whose bosoms are filled with tenderness and compassion, methinks I hear you exclaim, that this is but a romance or a dream; that the

supposition of such a tale is absurd, and that such an instance of unparalleled love and base ingratitude never took place. Nevertheless, this tragic history, told by St. Bernard, in the form of a parable, is strictly true. That extraordinary benefactor, that noble, that generous, that compassionate, and most loving prince, is Jesus Christ! and that traitor, that monster of ingratitude, that base and bloody murderer, is guilty man!

If any thing can recall us from our sinful wanderings, or touch our criminal hearts; if aught can excite us to the love of Jesus, it must be the consideration of all that this adorable Saviour has endured for our salvation. The benefit of creation, and a thousand others, which he daily grants us, must claim, without doubt, our most lively gratitude. But the hill of Calvary is peculiarly the mount of Lovers, the cross is the great furnace of Love; and nothing is more calculated to gain our hearts to Christ, than the sight of that bitter chalice to which he condemned himself, and which he drank to the very last drop. The mighty work of creating us from nothing, cost him but a word; whilst in order to expiate sin, and restore the beauty of his image, which sin had effaced in our souls, he spent thirty-three years on earth in humiliations and sufferings, and died between two thieves on an ignominious gibbet.

Let us, then, fervently meditate on this great mystery of divine love. Let us follow our divine Redeemer, step by step, in his dolorous passion. Let us read our sins in his wounds, and entering through his open side to his most loving heart, let us contemplate the love with which it burns for our salvation.

For the convenience of those who shall perform the Stations of the Cross, I will subjoin some general topics for meditation on the Passion, and form subjects for nine day's reflection, which may serve as a preparatory Novena to any Feast of the Cross or Passion during the year. My object shall be to condense as much matter as possible in a small space, leaving further considerations and affections to the pious Christian himself, and to the heavenly light and inspirations of that Divine Spirit, "who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God;" and "through whom the love of God is poured abroad into our hearts."

CHAPTER II.

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION OF CHRIST, IS USEFUL TO ALL CHRISTIANS.

By its holy exercise sinners are assisted in returning to God; those who have begun to do penance are enabled to subdue their passions; those who are advanced in God's service, are encouraged in their progress to virtue, and the perfect are united to God.

All the prodigies at the death of Christ are renewed by it in the souls of the faithful. "The earth trembles"; (Matt. xxvii. 51. 52.) that is, earthly hearts are shaken by a salutary fear, when they behold the terrible punishment inflicted on the Son of God by divine justice, for the sins of others. The rocks are split asunder, being softened by grief for the sins which were the cause of so much suffering to Christ. The graves are opened by humble confession, unto the resurrection of a new life. The veil of the temple is rent from the top even to the bottom, so that in blissful vision we may behold the

glory of the Lord, meditating both on the benefits of the divine perfections, and on the depths of the incarnation. This 'rock is a refuge to herons,' that is, to sinners. Hither do purer souls flee like doves, and build their nest in the recesses of this rock; and others like harts, who are wont to seek the lofty mountains, and whose conversation is in heaven, here find their place of rest. From hence, "they suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the hardest stone." (Deuteron. xxxii. 13.) For, in his passion, Christ was like the hardest rock, in bearing torments and injuries; and when that rock was struck, there flowed out oil to heal our wounds, and the honey of divine consolations.

From hence we may conclude what end a Christian should propose to himself in meditating on the Passion, viz. : either to purify his soul from sin, or to advance it in virtue, or to unite it by the most ardent love to God.

Moreover, we may consider the Passion as a subject, either of joy, or sorrow.

It is a subject of joy, because in that mystery, the abyss of divine mercy is disclosed, the gate of heaven is opened, the extent and depth of divine love are exhibited, and the great value of man is most clearly manifested. Hence, Abraham seeing this day of the Lord's Passion, in the ram which was substituted for his son Isaac, "saw it and rejoiced," (Genes. xxii. 13. John viii. 56.) and Christ himself in the Canticles, terms this the day of his coronation, of his espousals, and of the joy of his heart. This mode of considering the Passion is suited to the perfect.

The next mode is by way of grief and compassion, because Christ has suffered so much, and his sufferings

have been caused by me. And as he himself felt so much sorrow and sadness it is just that I should sympathize with him, lest that complaint which he made should be applicable to me: "And I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none; and for one to comfort me, and I found none." Psal. lxxviii. 21.

Christ likewise drank the chalice of his Passion, not only by enduring torment in his body, but also by thinking of his torments beforehand in his mind. Of the former, he said to the sons of Zebedee: "Can you drink the chalice which I am about to drink?" Mat. xx. 22. Of the latter, there is the addition, (in St. Mark, x. 38.) "Can you drink the chalice which I drink; or be baptized with the baptism, with which I am baptized? as if he was even then daily drinking it, from the apprehension of his impending torments. But in the garden of Gethsemani, he entirely drained it. Wherefore, we should endeavour to drink our chalice in this two-fold manner, both by conformity of suffering, and an affection of compassion.

In this affection, we will follow the example of the Mother of Christ, whose soul was pierced through by the sword. Luke ii. 35. This is also the peculiar gift of God, concerning which we read in Zacharias, (xii. 10.) "And they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, as one mourneth for an only son."

But this affection will not suffice, unless there be a similitude in suffering—either by voluntary punishment of the body, or by cheerfully enduring those afflictions which come to us from others. For amongst the gifts of God. St. Paul reckons: 'not only that you should

believe in him, but also that you should suffer for him." (Phil. i. 29.) And of himself, he writes elsewhere, (2 Cor. iv. 10) "always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies." He also glories in this: "I bear the marks of the Lord in my body." (Gal. vi. 17.)

From the exercise of these, we will also obtain the desire of imitating those heroic virtues, the living model of which our Lord displayed in his Passion. This is the principal end, and is recommended by St. Peter, when he says, (iv. 1.) "Christ, therefore, having suffered in the flesh, be you also armed with the same thought."

But, in order to obtain the proposed end in meditating on the Passion of the Lord, we require preparation, not only on account of the general reason by which we are obliged to prepare our souls before prayer, that we may not be "like a man who tempteth God." (Eccl. xviii. 23.) but also on this special account, that our Lord himself prepared with great earnestness for the sufferings of his Passion. Wherefore, I will imagine, that Christ himself says to me, "Remember my poverty—the wormwood and the gall." (Lam. iii. 19) And I will answer him in the words that follow the above, (20. 21.) "I will be mindful and remember, and my soul shall languish within me. These things I shall think over in my heart, therefore will I hope," because the devout commemoration of the Passion of Christ excites great confidence.

Our preparation then should be such as St. Bonaventure prescribes. "A man should begin so noble a work,

humbly, confidently, earnestly, and with all possible purity of heart. In stim. p. i. c. 2.

1. *Humbly.* Not only because in the beginning of prayer, "The just man is first accuser of himself," (Prov. xxiii. 17.) but also, by the special consideration, that I have plunged my Saviour into so much misery, and this will be to me a subject of great confusion. Nay more, I will consider myself unworthy of assisting at the sufferings of Christ. For it was by great privilege, that he communicated the anguish of his mind to his three disciples in the garden, and that he wished St. John and Magdalen to be present with his Mother at his death. But the proud are hindered from beholding this spectacle, as it is written in Job, (xxxvii. 24.) "Therefore, men shall fear him, and all that seem to themselves to be wise, shall not dare to behold him.

2. *Confidently.* Because if I devote myself to the consideration of this Passion, I will share in those fruits and merits, for which the Lord suffered. Three motives will excite this confidence in me. The great merit of the Passion itself—the great love of Christ, which induced him out of compassion for us, to become our advocate—the example of the good thief, who found pardon and grace on the cross itself.

3. *Earnestly*; as Christ himself prayed before his Passion, not heavily, or tepidly, like the sleeping disciples.

4. *With a clean heart*—such as we ought to present ourselves with, to receive so precious a liquor as the blood of Christ, flowing into our souls, from the effect of this heavenly meditation.

Novena in honour of the Passion of Christ.

ON THE VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR LORD'S PASSION.

FIRST DAY.

Who is it that suffers ?

The Lamb without spot ; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. 1 Pet. ii. 22. The Holy of Holies, to whom his spirit was given without measure ; whom his very crucifiers acknowledged to be a just man, and the son of God, when they said with compunction (Matt. xxvii. 54.) "Indeed, this was the Son of God ;" and, (Luke xxiii. 47.) "Indeed this was a just man."

He suffers, who had entirely spent himself in doing good to others ; "who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil." (Acts x. 38.) So far, therefore, from deserving such punishment, he merited all obedience and love. Whence he complains, (Ps. xxxiv. 12.) "They repaid me evil for good."

He that suffers, is the great Lover of Mankind, who became all things for us—our Father—our Master—our Physician—our Redeemer—our Shepherd—our Creator—our Beatifier—the Spouse of our souls.

A son should feel for the murder of his father, and a spouse for the sufferings of her bridegroom. How much more should I not feel for the sufferings and death of Christ, who even before his Passion insinuated himself into our inmost heart, by a wonderful sacrament ; in order, that we in return

might feel his sufferings, as if they were our own !

[NOTE.—At the close of this Meditation the Litany of the Passion, or any other form of prayer to our suffering Lord may be recited, according to each person's devotion and leisure.

SECOND DAY.

What does he suffer ?

His sufferings may be comprised under two heads—his external suffering, which our Lord himself called a Baptism, and his internal, which he denominated a Chalice.

With regard to the former he suffered all kind of torment. In external things ; because he was stripped of his very garments, which were divided amongst them by his executioners, and he was crucified naked and in public In his honour ; every kind of contumely was offered him. In his reputation he was traduced in divers ways. In his virtues ; he was looked upon as a Samaritan, as one possessed by a devil, a seducer, a glutton, and a wine drinker, (John vii. 20. viii. 48.; Mat xi. 19. xxvii. 63.) a blasphemer and a reprobate. In his wisdom ; he was considered illiterate, as one become mad and a fool. Mark iii. 21. In his miracles he was treated as an impostor, magician, and one who worked through Beelzebub. Luke xi. 15. In his body ; he endured torments, which themselves were the greatest of a and which were heightened by the delicacy of his frame. In his friends because he was either deserted them in the hour of distress, or because he suffered on account of what they endured, and especially his blessed Mother.

Let us consider how he suffered in each of his senses.

His eyes were tormented in beholding the actions and gestures of those who mocked and derided him; also, in seeing the tears of those who loved him. His eyes were also disfigured with spittle, blinded with the blood which streamed down from his head, and worn out of their sockets by his own tears.

His ears were horrified by listening to the blasphemies, the false testimony, and the unworthy accusations which were made against him.

His smell was offended by the fetid odour of Calvary, the place of skulls and death.

His taste suffered from the burning thirst, and from the vinegar and gall that were offered him to drink.

His touch suffered, for he was tormented in all his members—also, by the scourges, the thorns and the nails.

We may also reckon over the principal parts of his body, and consider the peculiar torment which he endured in each; so that, it is true of Christ, "From the sole of his foot, even to his head, there is no soundness in him." (Isaias i. 6.)

His interior sufferings were of the greatest degree, as we may infer from his dreadful agony, his sweat of blood, and his sorrow even unto death.

THIRD DAY.

From whom does he suffer?

From men of every degree; high and low, rich and poor, lay and clerical, Jews and idolators; from those on whom he had conferred many benefits during the course of his public ministry.

All these were excited against him by various motives. Some could not bear to be reproved by him for their vices; others dreaded the power of Cæsar; others were hurried along by a blind religious zeal.

The persecutors of Christ were urged on by the powers of darkness, by the very devils themselves. For, "the devil put into the heart of Judas to betray him." John xiii. 2. And Christ himself when apprehended said: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Luke xxii. 53. Neither was our Lord delivered up to the power of Satan on the same terms as Job; for the Devil was commanded to spare his life, but for Christ no exception is made.

The sufferings of Christ were also increased from his knowledge of the hearts of his tormenters. He knew the demoniac rage with which they thirsted for his blood to be such, that the greatness and malignity of their hatred exceeded even the punishments which they inflicted.

FOURTH DAY.

For whom does he suffer?

For all mankind, without exception; to restore to God the honour of which he was robbed; to appease his wrath, justly excited against men, to procure grace, and the necessary means of eternal salvation for them; to open to them the gates of heaven, and purchase for them the glory of endless beatitude.

An infinite ransom was required for this great work; because the sins of men were innumerable, their malice was infinite, as the Majesty of God whom they offended, was infinite.

And although on account of the infinite divinity of the sufferer, one drop of blood would have sufficed, yet he was pleased to pour it out to the last drop, that his redemption might be plentiful and superabundant; and that, as St. Bernard says, (Serm. 3 de Nativ.) from the greatness of the remedy, I might be able to estimate the magnitude of my danger.

Moreover, as the whole of man was wounded, so he wished to suffer in every thing, that he might apply a suitable remedy to each of our vices; his nakedness to our cupidity, his ignominies to our pride, &c.

He suffers for his enemies, even for his very murderers, that he might obtain for them, from God, the pardon of their Deicide; and thus he prayed for them to his Father on the cross; nay, he excused them, and said, that "they knew not what they did."

He suffered for all mankind in such a manner as to offer up his torments to his Father, for each. He, therefore, applied them to me in particular, and I can say with St. Paul, "He that loved me, and delivered himself for me."—Galat. ii. 20.

FIFTH DAY.

With what sentiments did he suffer?

With those of the most ardent love, of which St. Paul writes, "That you may be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and height and depth; to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge." Ephes. iii. 18. 19.

The proofs of this affection are, that he ardently desired to suffer for us. I

have, said he, a baptism, wherein I must be baptized, and O how I am straitened until it be accomplished! (Luke xii. 50.); that he embraced his sufferings when they drew nigh, whereas, there are many who profess a desire of suffering, but flee from it when it approaches—that he was prepared to suffer even much more than his most cruel and wicked enemies could invent or inflict. "He was offered, because he himself willed it." Isai.

SIXTH DAY.

What virtues did he exhibit in his Passion?

He particularly wished to display all virtues. He came on earth as the master, teacher, and model of virtues, and thus at the end of his life, he was desirous of giving, as if in a compendium, a specimen of all. He merited those virtues, for us by his Passion; it was, therefore meet, that by the very acts of those virtues he should merit them for us.

Many of his virtues were before obscured; they are now brought forward and openly displayed, as if he were leaving them to us as his last will, according to what he said of charity. "This is my commandment."

He exercised those heroic acts, the practices of which he terms blessed—poverty of spirit, even to his garments, for he hangs naked; and humility, which is so nearly allied to poverty, being made "the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people." (Ps. xxi. 7.) Meekness; "who, when he was reviled, did not revile, when he suffered, he threatened not, but delivered himself to him that judged him unjustly. (1 Pet. ii.

20.) And, "he was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearers, he opened not his mouth." (Isai, s. iii. 7.) He mourned, when "with a strong cry and tears, he offered up prayers and supplications on the cross." (Heb. v. 7.) Nay, his whole body perspired blood, through the greatness of his grief.

He thirsted after justice, as he was desirous of all the conditions of justice, and of purchasing, even with his life, true justice for us, saying, "I thirst." He was so merciful, that he delivered himself entirely up to relieve our miseries, which excited the compassion of his tender heart, and therefore, his sacrifice was most pleasing to his Father. "For it was fitting we should have such a priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners." (Heb. vii. 26.) He was a peace maker, because by his death he reconciled us to God. "But now in Christ Jesus, you who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is your peace, who hath made both one." Ephes. ii. 13. 14. In fine, he suffered for justice sake; and all those things which he foretold his disciples would suffer, he himself endured in the highest degree. When men shall revile you and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly, for my sake," &c. Matt. v. 11.

His obedience is to be specially considered from the words of the Apostle, "He humbled himself, being made obedient unto death." Phil. ii. 8.

This obedience was in a most difficult matter. It was most entire: Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst, (John xiv. 38.) that the punishment of his drinking vinegar should be executed.

His obedience was most prompt. "I

do not resist. I have not gone back. I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheek to them that plucked them. I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me, and spit upon me," (Isaias l. 56.) from whence, we may perceive, likewise, that his obedience was most humble. It was an obedience constant unto death, and an obedience of love. "That the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, so I do." (John xiv. 31.)

SEVENTH DAY.

What journies or stations did Christ make in his Passion? When, where, and in what circumstances did he suffer?

His journies or stations, were seven.

1. From the chamber of the last supper he went into the garden, where he was sorrowful, prayed and sweated drops of blood.
2. From Gethsemani, where he was apprehended, he went to Annas.
3. From Annas to Caiphas.
4. From Caiphas to Pilate's hall.
5. From thence to the palace of Herod.
6. From Herod back to Pilate.
7. From thence, after his condemnation, to Mount Calvary.

With regard to each of these, we may form various considerations, such as, on the Person and Dignity of the Sufferer, his interior feelings, his steps, his words, &c., his attendants, the people by whom he was surrounded, the places to which he was led

He suffered in the flower of his age, in the bloom of youth, at the festival of the Pasch, when there was a great con-

course of the Jewish people, in the royal city and metropolis of the kingdom.

He suffered on Calvary, a public, exposed and infamous place, a place of skulls and death.

He did so; that as he died for all, he might be seen by all, that he might be subject to more ignominy and horror, and to signify, that by his death, he would vivify the bones of the dead.

He chose midnight, and an ignoble, wretched dwelling for his birth place to conceal his glory; but he suffered at mid-day, for his greater confusion, that his death might be more notorious, that his misery might be more fully seen, and to shew the supreme ardour of his love, by which he offered himself a holocaust for our sins.

He suffered between two thieves, and in the sight of a great multitude, most of whom were the slaves and agents of the devil.

EIGHTH DAY.

What were the sorrows of the blessed Virgin on account of the sufferings of her Son?

They were proportioned to her love, which was of the highest degree, because

1. He was her Son, according to nature, and entirely hers, for she had conceived him without a father; and she, therefore, had the combined love of a father and mother for him. Moreover, she conceived him by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, who is Love itself, and this Divine Spirit stimulated her love.

2. Because he was her First-born, and Only-begotten Son, circumstances which aggravated her grief, as we read in Zacharias. "And they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son;

and they shall grieve over him, as the manner is to grieve for the death of the first-born. (xii. 10.)

3. On account of their wonderful resemblance to each other; thus mothers are wont to love those of their children, who are most like themselves. But Christ, in his entire body and manner greatly resembled his mother; and she, likewise, resembled him in his excellent habits and virtues.

4. On account of the wonderful sanctity and wisdom of Christ. For charity properly regulated, has the greatest love for those that are most holy, because they are most like to God. If to this love, that of nature, which is the greatest possible in a mother for her son, be added, the love is wonderfully increased, and consequently, the grief is more vehement. And if the daughters of Jerusalem bemoaned him so much, because they knew his innocence, what must his Mother have felt, who knew him so well, and so intimately.

5. On account of the inestimable benefits she had received from Christ, for, he that is mighty had done great things for her; and particularly, he made her his Mother, and rendered her worthy of being his Mother. Now, love is grateful, and is always anxious to make a return. How, then, must she not have been affected, at the sufferings of her benefactor, and of such a benefactor!

6. Because her Son was also the son of God. To maternal love then, she added, that of the creature for the Creator. When she was, therefore, interiorly filled with a sense of his divine excellence, and most ardently loved her God in her Son, his unmerited and cruel sufferings must have really pierced through her tender heart.

7. Because the spirit of the blessed Virgin was united with God, and therefore, with her Son. Hence, she must have considered and felt his sufferings,

as if they were her own. She knew, also, that her grief afflicted the heart of her Son, and this pierced her with new sorrow. Moreover, her grief was very much increased, because she well understood all those circumstances of our Lord's Passion, which were heretofore mentioned, and from which we are to form a proper estimate of the bitterness and magnitude of his sufferings. Oh, how truly did the sword of grief pierce through her soul. (Luke ii. 35.)

NINTH DAY.

What were the virtues exhibited by his Mother during the Passion of her Son?

Resignation of her own will: conformably to that saying of Christ, 'Not my will, but thine be done.'

Humility. Amidst so much suffering, ignominy, contempt, and grievous accusations of Jesus, who is condemned as a malefactor, she is not ashamed to acknowledge herself openly as his Mother, and to share in all his ignominy.

Fortitude and greatness of soul; though she is filled with the most deadly anguish at the sight of her agonizing Son, she does not sink under her grief, but stands before the cross, and contemplates those immense sufferings, which with such cruel pangs afflict her heart.

Charity for mankind; she is not indignant at the murderers of her Son, but rather has compassion on their blindness. And because, he endured his sufferings for the salvation of all, his pious Mother, after the example of her Son, offered them up to God the Father, even for those who crucified him.

An Exposition of the 21st Psalm,

BY A CATHOLIC PRIEST.

THE TITLE.

UNTO THE END: FOR THE MORNING PROTECTION—
A PSALM FOR DAVID.

ARGUMENT.

This Psalm so evidently treats of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, that it could be very absurd to attempt explaining it in any other sense. The title relates to the Resurrection, which is signified by the words, Morning Protection, or Susception. For the Resurrection took place in the morning and through the power of God, who lifted up Christ, as it were, from the tomb, and brought him to life, according to that saying of the Psalmist, I have risen up, because the Lord hath protected me. (Ps. iii. 6). The Hebrew word, *aieleth*, signifies a stag, or according to some, a star. But the seventy-two interpreters have properly translated it, protection, because with them the verb *aial* means, to protect. Neither is there a great difference between this meaning and the Hebrew readings of Morning hart, or Morning star. All relate to Christ's resurrection, because at his resurrection he is justly compared to a star, for he arose clothed with light as with a garment, and he says of himself in the last chapter of the Apocalypse, 'I am the bright and morning star.' He is also like a hart, or a doe, both because poisonous animals can do no injury to a hart, which even with its breath draws out serpents from their holes, and kills them, as St. Jerome on this psalm, and St. Basil on the xxviii. assert; thus Christ, with the breath of his mouth will destroy the impious, and was uninjured by all the persecutions of the wicked; and also because a hart flies most swiftly into the highest mountains, from whence Christ is frequently compared in the canticles, to the young hart bounding over the hills. For on the day of his resurrection he ascended in the

most rapid flight from hell and death, to a glorious and immortal life.

This psalm is recited by the church in the Morning Office for Good-Friday, and also at that most affecting ceremony of stripping the altar of all its ornaments, and linens, to represent the nakedness and abandonment of Christ in his Passion, which takes place at the close of Divine Service, on Holy Thursday and Good-Friday.

1. O God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou forsaken me? Far from my salvation are the words of my sins.

David speaks in the person of Christ on the cross, and at the height of his agony, as appears from the gospel of St. Mathew. (xxvii. 46.) in which we read, that when Christ was about to expire, he said, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? which are the first words of this psalm, for the words, look upon me, are not found in the Hebrew, but were added in the Septuagint, for the sake of elucidation. But when Christ complains to God of being abandoned, he does not mean that he was forsaken by the person of the Word, as if the hypostatic union were dissolved, or that he was deprived of the favour and good will of his Father; but merely signifies, that by God's permission, he was to suffer in his human nature those dreadful torments and that ignominious death, from which God, if he pleased, might have easily delivered him. Neither did this complaint arise from impatience, or ignorance, as if Christ was not aware of the cause of his passion, or did not cheerfully submit to be forsaken by his Father, but it was a kind of declaration of his most bitter sufferings. For as during the whole course of his Passion, the Redeemer had borne every thing with so much patience, that not even a sigh was heard to escape him, all might have imagined that by some superior power he was rendered

impassable, and insensible to pain. He therefore, at the point of death declared that he was really man, that he was really capable of suffering, and that being forsaken by his Father, he experienced in his inmost soul the bitterness of his passion. Hence, he says, My God, my God. Christ, in the form of a servant, calls the Father his God, because at that hour he properly worshipped him as a true God, and offered him the sacrifice of his body, the most excellent of all the sacrifices that were ever made.

Look upon me. He intreats him to look at the situation in which he is placed for his honour, to acknowledge the obedience of his Son, and to accept the sacrifice which he offers him for the human race. Why hast thou forsaken me? This is not only a declaration of his sufferings as we have said above, but also a certain expression of astonishment, as if he had said, Can it be possible that you would allow your dearly beloved and only Son, to suffer this extremity of torture? Thus we read, So God loved the world, as to give his only Son, (John iii. 16.) and He did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. (Rom. viii. 32.)

Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. That is, I have said that I am justly forsaken in my sufferings, because, the crimes of the whole world, with which I have charged myself, are incompatible with my deliverance, for in order to expiate them, I must suffer and die.—That Christ charged himself with our sins, as if they were his own, is frequently asserted in the scriptures. Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. (John i. 29.) He bore our sins in his body, upon the wood. (1. Pet. ii. 24.) The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. (Isaias liii. 6.) Him, who knew not sin, he made sin for us, (2 Cor. v. 21.) that is, a victim for sin. As, therefore, a victim for sin must be immolated, in order to expiate

sin, therefore Christ having become the victim for the sins of the whole world, properly says: Far from my salvation are the words of my sins: that is, I cannot escape death, because the sins of the whole world, are laid upon me, in order to atone for them. The words of my sins is a Hebrew phrase, for they use the term *dabar*, a word, to denote a matter, or circumstance.

2. "O my God, I shall cry by day, and thou wilt not hear: and by night, and it shall not be reputed as folly in me."

He again assigns another reason to prove, that he is forsaken, and without any hope of temporal deliverance. I shall cry by day, says he, and by night I shall cry, and thou wilt not hear me, so as to deliver me from death. He seems to allude to the two prayers which he offered one by night, in the garden, and the other during the day, on the cross. And it shall not be reputed as folly in me. That is, my exclamations by day and night cannot be imputed to me as folly; for although I am aware that I will not be heard, so as to be delivered from temporal death, yet I cry out with reason, because I know the principal intention of my prayer will be accomplished—viz. that I should redeem the human race, and not be detained in death, but raised up to immortal life. [To be continued.]

HOLY WEEK.

FROM THE FRENCH OF LAMARTINE.

Here dies away the world's distracting sound.
Lo! here the port, ye starless mariners!
Approach! approach! here reigns a calm profound:

Yet not the calm of death.

No clouds are here, no gloomy tempest lowers.
A pure and equal light here glads the soul,
Light which the living sun continual pours
From the bright domes of Heaven.

Like men who sleep before the dawn is gone,
In youth our vision's o'er, we to this home
Repaired: real joy is ours, while you dream on.
Awake! awake! 'tis day.

Ye loving hearts draw nigh: here love doth dwell.

Love here is kindled—love all pure and true.
Its earthly dross the flames of heaven expel:
Immortal what remains.

Pray'r ever watchful in this blest abode,
The star of morn with gladsome voice proclaims:

The pleasing hours glide by in praise to God,
His praise beguiles our days:

The solemn bell awakes with morning fair;
Its ~~image~~ loud with the bland zephyr's voice
It ~~mingles~~ wailing on the tremulous air
Our gently morn'ring sighs.

O'er hung with rocks, beneath a vault conceal'd,

An altar stand; is't ~~thine~~ Almighty Lord?
Yes ~~thine~~! by love constrained, to faith reveal'd,

Thou deignest here to dwell.

Reason, be still! and let my heart adore.
The cross,—the Saviour's cross new light affords;

A dying God appears!—I doubt no more:
No—love doth love explain.

These heads that humbly bend, these hearts that glow,

These perfumes sweet, these sighs that heav'nward rise,

These transports and these hearts of love that flow,

Proclaim—here dwells thy God!

Favour'd of Heaven! by our example sway'd,
Like the poor beggar of some palace gate,
May I from far adore, and bend my head
To him who gives you peace.

Oh bid my willing praise with yours be told,
My incense with your incense mount to heav'n;
Earth's children to the angel choir of old
Their feeble accents joined.

Each morn my weary life declines apace;
I'm full of days, of sorrows, and remorse.

This humble shed beneath I ask aplace,
Here by the sainted dead.

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