

Blessed Priest ! strange thou art His jailor,
 Thy hand holds the beautiful key
 That locks in His prison love's Captive,
 And keeps Him in fetters for me.

* * * * *

'Twas over—I gazed on the statue,
 "Our Father," "Hail Mary," still came,
 And to-night Faith and Love cannot help it,
 I must still pray the same, still the same.

—Written at Loyola College on the night of Dec. 8, 1880.



FIRST DAY.

The Flower of Mary's Predestination.

FIRST PART.

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before He made anything, from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old, before the earth was made."—*Prov.*, viii.

HOLY MARY'S month, everywhere with graces blessed, and in our sunny land bright with bloom of countless flowers begins to-day. Let us leave the day of earth whose light is shining like a halo of heaven on her altar, just a little while, to pass across all the days of the Mays of the past, and go back to the unbeginning. Not by reason's light, for, indeed, it is too dim and uncertain, and it is too faint to guide us, for it flickers. Not with the feet of reason, for they too often go astray, nor are they strong enough to climb the slopes that rise to the inaccessible heights where dwelleth in glory the infinite God.

We of the Holy Church, by God's sweet grace in sacraments received and from grand doctrines reflected, have another light, better by far—clear, steady, certain, unfalling—divine Faith.

This light, which "enlightens every man who cometh into this world" (though many there are who will not see its shining), cometh down to us from the bosom of God, and knoweth the way back to its home in the heavens. Let it lead us there to-day. And Faith hath

wings to soar to the highest, while reason, left to itself, hath only feet to walk the ways of this valley of shadows and tears; and so on the wings of Faith, and by Faith's pure light guided, we will ascend to the eternities and enter, with worship in our hearts, the very Holy of Holies of God's divine Will, where hidden, until revealed in God's determined days, all the great decrees, vocations and predestinations are shrined waiting for their accomplishment in time.

There, in the very temple of the Trinity, we will find to-day the first flower for the Crown of our Queen—Mary's eternal predestination. And just as by the rays which the sun sends down to earth we lift our eyes aloft to seek the central source of light, but in looking we are dazzled, and but dimly see its splendors; so by the light of Faith which comes to us from heaven, we look up to its divine brightness, and we see surely, but only dimly the mysteries shining in and from it. We see in part but not in whole, with imperfect sight, but if the little that we do see be so wondrous, what must be the wonder of it all when seen by perfect sight?

Here below we apprehend by Faith what reason cannot comprehend. Human philosophy cannot comprehend the mysteries of man, nor can science comprehend the mysteries of this earth, and yet they accept them as facts of knowledge; and that same philosophy mocks the mind which, without comprehending, believes in the mysteries of God, and accepts them as truths of faith. Their motto is "Knowledge"—and that knowledge is but little better than a guess. Our motto is "Faith"—and our faith is a certainty.

Only in the Holy Catholic Church, where Faith is pure and truth is whole and guidance sure, can we rise

to the contemplation of the eternal truths and approach, with reverence and understanding, finite yet certain, the mysteries of God and man in heaven and on earth, as we do now.

Whatever was, is, or ever shall be, existed in a true sense in the mind of God from all eternity. Angels and men, heaven and earth, all creations were always in his thoughts. From the unbeginning, God, by voluntary decree, determined to create. Why? "Who hath been his counsellor?" Himself.

Deepest in the infinite life of God lives the principle of love. "God is love," wrote the evangelist of love, to whose care the dying Christ left his sorrowful mother. Did she tell him, I wonder, how to phrase his inspired thought? The law of love is to give. It governs God's images on earth, and it governs Him (we speak humanly) in His heavens.

The law of the highest love is to give the greatest gifts. The greatest gift is life—and greater still, life with intelligence and immortality. In God's mind all creations existed—not one but many. Who in His mind is the first-born of all creation? Who the first fruits of all creation? Jesus Christ. All creations were to revolve for grace and light around the future Christ, like stars around the sun. There came a day in heaven's history when God's will, moved by the power of infinite love, pronounced the first FIAT; and lo! the great throne was surrounded by spirits innumerable, into nine choirs divided, bright, beautiful and glorious, and God was glad. He crowned them all with the gift of free will, for He would not create slaves, who, by coercion, would be obliged to serve Him. He made them the Princes of His Court, and they were happy.

But their free will must be tested—and their fidelity. The test was given. What was it? Who knows? How long did it last? Who can tell?

Many, if not most of the writers on the "Angelic Fall," teach that God revealed to the angel world the creation of this world and our race, and manifested to them the future Christ—God and man, and commanded them to adore Him. There came an hour when a dark storm of pride swept by the throne of God. The mystery of the God-man, eternally hidden in divine decree, flashed on their vision from the far off future (for God strengthened and intensified their spiritual sight to behold the truth of the Incarnation), and they were bidden to believe and to worship in the heavens the future Christ of our earth, the Christ-God in a human form, born as man, in a nature lower than theirs, of a human mother. Right on their vision, and with a suddenness that startled their high intelligences, shone the central mystery of all creation, like a sun rising out of clouds, and gilding the very clouds around it and beneath it with the golden glory of the purest light of heaven. It was the miracle of God in eclipse. The light and the shadows fell on and moved over the angel-world. The clouds that hung round and seemed to dim the brightness of the great mystery, were to test the trust of those spiritual intelligences in the wisdom and the works of their Creator.

Lucifer and his followers would not believe—or believing, would not adore the Man-Christ, their future king, nor honor His mother, their predestined queen. They rejected the brightness of the sun of justice and mercy, because of the clouds around its light. They arose in pride. God in the eclipse of humility they would not

have. He was beneath them, and they would not worship. On them fell the awful eclipse of an eternal exile from the light of joy and the joy of light. Thus sin came, the first sin. It rose right beside the Most High. It began—strange mystery—in the spirit of the first and highest of the angels in the aristocracy of creation, who stood nearest to the throne. It was a horror in the heavens only an instant, and the darkness, without a moment's mercy, was swept away out of the sight of God into everlasting darkness. They who stood the trial of their free will and remained faithful were elevated into higher places and confirmed in everlasting grace. Heaven lost not a gleam of its glory. God lost not a joy of His infinite happiness, but the fallen lost all in losing Him.

Will God create again? His first and brightest creatures, the princes of His court, have fallen. Yes, he will. But will he trust the power of free will to the next creation? God will never make creations who would be slaves or machines, and they would be one or the other if bereft of free will.

From the unbeginning he had resolved to create the human race. He would unite together matter immortal and immortal intelligence crowned with the gift of free will. His son was to belong to that race and find a mother in it. It was to be created not only to His image, but to His likeness as well. Adam and Eve were to found the race. He foresaw the race would fall as the angels fell, and yet, notwithstanding this knowledge, he resolved to create the human race. Which resolve, to those who deeply think, instead of being an argument against His goodness, is a wondrous proof in its favor.

Adam was to be made to the image and likeness of the future Christ. Eve, the mother of the race, was to be formed to the image and likeness of Mary, the mother of the Christ of this race; but Adam and Eve must wait. God, in His own appointed time, shall create their dwelling place. In the history of time and earth they will precede Christ and Mary, but in the divine decrees Christ and Mary precede them. Jesus and Mary were not afterthoughts, owing to the foreseen fall. They were God's first thoughts before and notwithstanding the fall. Their predestinations antedated, if I may use the word, all predestinations angelic, human, or the predestinations of those of any other race which God might create. Thus, as Eve was contained in the first Adam, who fell, being part of the same creation, so Mary was contained in the decree of Christ's, the second Adam's predestination, as having, of all creatures first and highest, part in the redemption.

ASPIRATION.

"THE LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon Him; to all that call upon Him in truth. He will do the will of them that fear Him, and He will hear their prayer and save them."—*Psalm cxliv.*

PRAYER.

OUR FATHER and Hail Mary.

SECOND DAY.

The Flower of Mary's Predestination

SECOND PART.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, * * * separated unto the Gospel of God, which He had promised before by His prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning the [His] Son, who was made to Him of the seed of David, according to the flesh, who was predestinated the Son of God. * * *"—*Romans, i.*

FROM the unbeginning, Jesus Christ, The Man of the human race, was predestined to be the Son of God. Therefore, Mary, the woman of the human race, was predestined to be the Mother of the Son of God, by becoming the Mother of Jesus Christ. The two predestinations are inseparable. One cannot be without the other in the decrees of eternity, because one has not been manifested and realized without the other in the days of time. There is no equality between these two first predestinations, because one is the predestination of the Man-God, who is infinite, while the other is the predestination of a finite creature; but each in decree eternal, as in earthly fact, is necessary to the other. We cannot put asunder their predestinations in the will of God no more than we can separate their realizations in the worship of earth.

Jesus Christ, as man, was predestined to possess the divine substance, and to be, therefore, God perfect as well as perfect man. Mary was predestined to form,

out of her flesh and blood, the human nature of the Man-Christ, to which the divine nature is to be personally united, and, therefore, by God's will she is made a necessary element in the predestination of Jesus Christ, to be in God's appointed time the Son of God.

It is impossible for God to elevate a human person higher than Mary, who was to become in time, and on earth, the Mother of Him who in the heavens and from all eternity is the Father's only Son; and, therefore, Mary stands amid all creatures solitary in her grandeur, unapproached in the order of grace, and she cannot be judged by the standards with which we judge other creatures. She must be measured by God's standards, and those standards are found in her eternal predestination to be the Mother of the God-Man, Son of the eternal Father and Saviour of the world. We must not forget that. Human personality was not glorified nor exalted, much less divinized by or in Jesus Christ, for though real man He was not a human person.

He left human personality just where and as it was before, and yet every person, in any creation, has and must have personal relations and degrees of relationship with Jesus Christ. That relationship is the test of the moral position of any and every creature. To break its bonds means sin and condemnation; to preserve them means grace and salvation. To make that relationship nearer, dearer, higher, closer, more intimate, marks the various ascending degrees of Christian sanctities. To weaken the bonds and make them less near and dear, less close and intimate, marks the descending grades of human sinfulness.

"I was God's chosen prophet," Isaias exclaims back in the shadows of the old dispensation, and the other

prophets re-echo the same, for the gift of prophecy was divided among many. There was succession in their office and order.

"I was Christ's Apostle," cries out St. Peter, and the eleven and his and their successors repeat the same; for the dignity was divided among many. "I was His penitent," exclaims Mary Magdalen, and all the sin-wrecked souls in the world that ever drift on mercy's waves to His feet, the calm and beautiful shore of pardon, sigh the same; for the grace of pardon is distributed among many, and countless is the number of penitents. "I am His disciple," exclaims, in the joy of his heart, the true believer, and innumerable are the voices rising out of every age and nation proclaiming the same; for the grace of discipleship is divided, and many as the sands of the sea are the faithful followers of Christ. "I am His angel," cries out the faithful Michael, in the glory of the heavens, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand voices in the eternal courts re-echo the cry; for angelic dignity is divided, and greater in number and in splendor, brighter than all the stars that arch the aisles of space, are the hierarchies on high.

Prophet, apostle, penitent, disciple here below, angels above, how they fill the earth and the heavens with ceaseless hymns of glory to God and His Christ, the accords of which are as innumerable as the singers in creation's countless choir.

But apart and alone—and though amid—above them all, stands one with a tone in her voice none other can ever borrow; and a tone so true, so sweet, so tender, with such a mystery and meaning in its melody—a human SOLO in creation's choir—Mary of Nazareth, who, in the humility of her glory and in the glory of her humility,

exclaims "I AM HIS MOTHER." It is a human voice with a finite tone.

Out of the eternal silence floats something like an echo, from a voice divine, in an infinite tone—from God Himself—"I am His Eternal Father."

"I am His Eternal Father!" "I am His Mother!" Incommunicable words, these. None other, save God and Mary, can pronounce them, for none other holds such personal and natural relationship to Jesus Christ.

He has prophets, apostles, evangelists, penitents, disciples, ministers in creation, beyond the reckoning of man—but He has only one mother, and can never have another.

Thus it is that personality belonging to our human nature, in Mary of Nazareth, has reached an elevation of glory simply, and forever inaccessible. The eternal paternity of the Infinite Father, which is not shared in by the Son or the Holy Ghost, is the first and greatest (if we may use first and greatest where there is nothing secondary or less great) mystery within the Trinity. The divine maternity of Mary of Nazareth is the first and greatest mystery outside of the Trinity. God's power could go no farther. Personality, angelic or human, could rise no higher. Within the Trinity, even to the Eternal Word and the Eternal Spirit, paternity is incommunicable, it belongs to the Father alone. Outside the Trinity, Mary's divine maternity is incommunicable to any finite creature; and, therefore, the predestination of Mary to be the mother of Jesus Christ was, and is, next to the decree of the Incarnation, and by her consent made inseparable from it, the grandest act of infinite wisdom, power, mercy and love conceived in eternity and consummated in time. Such another act

will never again be made, for such another act can never again be called for; because, though Mary was a finite, and chosen though still free agent in it, the act itself was infinite, and as such, covers every fact of good or evil in all creation—of good, to better, bless, crown and glorify it; of evil, to remedy, pardon, punish or eternally doom it.

"I am God's Mother" is a declaration beyond and above which there can be but one higher announcement to men, Christ's: "I am your God!" Christ's announcement to angels and men, to all creatures of all creations. "I am your God," and Mary's declaration, "I am His mother," define forever their incommunicable relations to one another and to all creation, while, at the same time, they at once, and forever, fully determine the only true, correct, certain and perfect inner acceptance, and the only correct, certain, true and perfect outward profession of faith in the presence of two truths which are inseparably bound together, and meet, without either greatening or lessening the other, or either absorbing the other, in the one great mystery of the redemption.

There is another being that is not a person, a moral yet visible being that alone can and does present to the eyes of faith these two truths, separate, yet united, with all their evidences, meanings and consequences. That moral being is mystically a virgin and a mother, bringing forth Jesus Christ in the minds and hearts and lives of men, and in the full sight of the world. She is the bride of the Lamb, who, as Mary of Nazareth, alone could say "I am the mother of Jesus," has alone the sacred and exclusive right to say "I am Christ's Church." That Church, by the grace of God to each of us given, is our own Holy Roman Catholic Church.

She, alone, not only realizes, but through all the days of time, livingly perpetuates the Incarnation; and she only by faith can apprehend, and by divinely commissioned infallible authority does and must proclaim, as part of the Incarnation, the mystery of Mary's eternal predestination, with all its everlasting meanings and consequences.

Ah! how the Trinity must have loved her in the act of her predestination. She became daughter of God the Father, mother of God the Son, and spouse of God the Holy Ghost; and through her Son, she, the finite creature, enters into real kinship with each of the divine persons of the Trinity. For Jesus Christ has two origins—one in heaven, as God in the bosom of the Eternal Father, having infinite relations with Father and Holy Ghost—the other on earth, as man in the bosom of His Virgin Mother, who, therefore, becomes lovingly related to the three persons of the Holy Trinity. Take away in fact, or deny in thought, either of these two origins, and Jesus Christ cannot be what he was predestined to be, the Son of God. Mary is to give Him the humanity by which He will become the Saviour of the world, whilst the eternal Father, from all eternity, generates His divinity, which, when united to the humanity received from His mother, will make the world's salvation infinite. Without Mary He would not be man, and could not live, teach, suffer and die for us. Without His eternal Father He would have no divinity, and could He have lived, taught, suffered and died for us, our redemption would be vain.

Jesus Christ is the "first fruit of all creation," as the Scripture says, and He is the sole cause of all predestination and salvation. But Christ is the fruit of

the womb of Mary, and she, by the operations of the Holy Ghost, is the cause of Christ's human existence. And as in the decrees of eternity, so in all the glorious work of Christ in time, she stands not by favor but by holiest right with Him and beside Him. He, as man, is her fruit. All the fruit which ever will be produced by Him, belong primarily to Him, but must secondarily belong to her. By the work of the Holy Ghost she gave to the Son of God a new existence, in which existence Jesus Christ, her son, gave to the Father what else the Father never could have received, infinite worship. She made Him man. The Father generated Him God. The Holy Ghost, who terminates the Trinity and within the Trinity is barren (we speak it in reverence), producing no person, becomes infinitely fruitful, outside of the Trinity, in the womb of Mary, when He does produce Jesus Christ, Man and God.

In every work of grace that ever was, or ever will be, Father, Son and Holy Ghost have part. But all grace is from and through Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is by Mary; therefore, in every work of grace the mother of the Father's Son Incarnate has also her part; and remember that all these beauties, glories, truths, are contained in the two eternal predestinations of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and of Mary of Nazareth as His mother. All salvation and predestinations come from theirs—and if theirs be inseparable, as inseparable they are, Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, is an ever-living, everlasting element in all predestinations.

Now did we not do well to leave the earth a little while in order to ascend to the eternities, where we have gathered the fairest flower, on Mary's first day, for the crown of our Queen? Let us come back to her altar again, and first think and then pray.

The greatest writers, men who have sounded the depths of truths, teach that true devotion to the Virgin Mother is a certain sign of predestination. Have we that true devotion? Do we make our lips wings to waft Hail Mary's to heaven? Ah! the Hail Mary came from heaven, but it wants to go back home again. It wants to fly from the sinful world to the sinless heaven, and to bring in its sweet, simple words, our petitions to our King through our Queen. Happy the lips that breathe the Queen's prayer. Blessed the hearts that shrine worship for the Son, love for the mother and homage for the Queen!

ASPIRATION.

O THE depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments and how unsearchable His ways! For of Him and by Him and in Him are all things. To Him be glory forever.—*Romans*, xi.

PRAYER.

I BELIEVE in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

THIRD DAY.

The Flower of the Promise.

FIRST PART.

And the Lord God said to the serpent: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed."—*Gen.*, iii.

WHITHER shall we go to-day to gather another flower for the crown of our Blessed Queen? Yesterday we gathered, in Eternity, the Flower of Mary's Predestination. To-day let us enter the Garden of Eden and find the Flower of the Promise.

Does God ever rest? Never. His Power and Love have ceaseless activities. He is always in action; but His action costs Him no effort.

Does God ever rest? Always. With Him work is rest, and rest is work. He is always creating, and forever resting in His manifold creations. This very hour He is creating souls for this earth; and who knows? mayhap new worlds and other races in the immensity of His Heavens.

Ah, me! men's minds sometimes seem as narrow as their own little horizons. They fain would confine God within the limited circle of their own knowledge. They know the history of the angelic world, dimly and only in part; and they read the story of this world, but only in fragments; and they fain would believe that beyond this and the angel-world God has done nothing. Not a half of what God has done and is doing and will do has

been revealed. Reason is always at fault in measuring the immeasurable. Revelation tells us only a tithe of the doings of God. What is sufficient for our soul's salvation Revelation teaches. It seldom goes beyond this; but it sometimes does, and when it does it opens to the wondering eyes of Faith vast, luminous horizons, bright with infinite suggestions of God's power and glory.

How long after the creation and fall of the angels did God wait before He created this our world, and the human race? No one knows. And between these two creations, were there other creations of worlds and beings unknown to us? Who can tell? Beyond our horizons extends the Illimitable. Think you that it is a barren and lifeless waste, without creatures to worship, or voices to praise, or intelligences to glorify the beautiful God?

No, no. God is Power, and the passion of power is to act, and God is Love infinite and the law, and the love of Love is to give life and happiness. Examine a drop of water with the microscope. What do you see? A little world teeming with life. Thousands of living creatures are born, grow, live and die in the little world of a drop of water. Does this not show how God loves to give life?

And even matter that is lifeless—does it not manifest something strangely like unto life in the cohesion of its atoms?

Now lift your eyes aloft at night and gaze on the beautiful stars, and remember that beyond your vision's farthest reach there are bright worlds innumerable. Are they all tenantless? Are any of them, or some of them, or many of them inhabited? We know not—but why may it not be? It may be—why should it not be?

that there are in the heavens stars and planets, other than ours, peopled by intelligent beings, different from us in the composition of their natures, and yet like our race, made to know, love, serve and possess God, with us, in eternity. It may be that we belong to the lowest order of intelligent beings, that we are the poor plebians of the universe. And it may be that this is the reason why the Son of God, by whom all worlds were made, wishing to humble Himself to the lowest, descended into this lowest part of all creation, and became one of our race by assuming our nature. If it be so, the blood of the Cross shed on earth's Calvary benefits whatever is above us. Does not the Apostle of the Gentiles coming back to earth from the third heaven, seem to be in accord with our thought in the first chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians? Be this as it may, this is the world in which we are concerned.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Thus begins the story of our world. It is God-made. Let science, without faith, quibble, quarrel, theorize, doubt, deny. Let philosophers attribute the world's creation to chance, to the fortuitous coming together of atoms, or to any other absurd cause. It is a way they have. But the moment they deny its divine creation they fall into puerile absurdities. They destroy the dignity of the material world. For it has a dignity of its own. The mark of the hand of its God is bright and clear and holy on it all. The words of Genesis, written on the gates of this earth's creation, shine with a light that never fades; and the same words are written in the traditions of all nations and peoples. Who made this world? Ask the race that inhabits it. The human race answers God. That is sufficient. If there

be a few insensate minds, which, discordant among themselves, give other and different answers, why let them rave over their theories. They stand against the race, and the race stands for God as the maker of its dwelling place; and the race is right. Let beliefless science adequately account for the history of a single grain of sand. It cannot, try it never so hard. It is baffled. Science stands on the outside of matter. It never yet has entered into the hidden sanctuary of substance, and it never can. Like the veil which hid the Holy of Holies from the gaze of the people, so around the mysteries of matter hangs a veil which the hand of science can never lift. And yet science would fain have us accept as truths beyond question the mysteries of its philosophies, while it laughs us to scorn for accepting, and with highest reasons, the divine mysteries of the supernatural order. The horizon of knowledge is narrow and bounded by earth. The horizons of faith are as illimitable as the heavens.

"God created the earth:" that makes the mystery of earth's existence beautiful and sublime, and solves the mystery by naming its creator. Slowly, day by day, moved the great Creator in His work. He was building a habitation for the race to which, in the far future, His only begotten Son was to belong. Came the sixth day, and a voice spoke: "Let us make man to our own image and likeness."

Think you that only on the sixth day the voice thus spoke? God had determined the words by voluntary decree of love from all eternity. And the sixth day was Friday. On a future Friday the fallen creation will be redeemed.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the

earth, and He breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul," and He planted a garden in Eden and there placed man, the visible image of the invisible God; and not out of the dust of earth, but out of Adam's side He made the woman for his companion, and He walked with them in the evenings in the garden. He created them immortal and crowned them with supernatural justice. Ah! Eden was then a home of holiest joy and purest happiness. As He had tried the free will and fidelity of the angels, so He gave a test of obedience to our first parents. God tests all His creatures. The angels fell through pride which uprose in disobedience. Man fell through disobedience caused by pride. "You shall be like Gods," said the tempter. In both falls there was high treason against the majesty of God. Of every tree in the garden they might freely eat, except of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; in eating of it lay the penalty of death. How long did the trial last? It is not known.

And God was wont to walk with them at evening time in the garden of their innocence; and in Adam God beheld the image of the future Christ; and in Eve the image of the mother of His Son, and He was glad. Did God walk with them, in Eden, in holy converse in order to lighten the trial of their obedience and to make them strong to meet the tempter who was to come?

He came at last, and he approached the weaker. Eve was alone. He tempted her insidiously. She hesitated. But when the tempter said "if you eat of the tree you shall be as Gods," she yielded and did eat of the fruit, and gave it also to her husband, and he did eat. Thus, as the angels had fallen, they fell. Ah! the great darkness that swept across their fallen souls! Ah! the wild

rush of passions into their hearts! Ah! the awful horror of their guilt! Ah! the unutterable fear to meet the beautiful God! And they hid themselves.

As if, in sooth, to hide would be their crime's concealment! Why the whole universe felt at once the shock of earth's first sin and the crash of the fall. Down crumbled the lofty pillars of the temple of human nature, the glorious pillar of supernatural grace of the soul and the beautiful column of immortality of the body. The temple was in ruins. Adam and Eve were uncrowned and dethroned. The royal, grace-woven, mantle of original justice, the sign of their sovereignty, fell from their souls and bodies; and no wonder, as Scripture says, that they felt themselves naked. Rising, as they did, in rebellion against God's command, material nature threw off its subjection to their sovereignty. Woman, man's equal, was placed under his power, and man became a victim to the strong forces of nature which, by his sin, escaped from his control and scorned his power. Such was the fall of Adam and Eve, and with them, and in them, fell from its high estate the entire human race. So sin entered, and with sin, death. It might have been otherwise. An instant's disobedience darkens forever the history of the race. What will the creator do? Not a moment of mercy nor a sign of hope gave He the angels in their fall. No promise of restoration afar off was theirs. Not a word of love. The high treason was too near the throne; but on them sudden fell a dark, swift, hopeless, everlasting malediction. 'Twas an act of infinite justice. Ah! will mercy come with God when He enters the garden to meet the criminals? Ah, yes! already they are repenting. The first tears have fallen. They are hiding themselves

away from the face of God, and by their very hiding they are acknowledging their guilt and its shame.

ASPIRATION.

"O HOW great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee; which Thou hath wrought for them that hope in Thee, in the sight of the sons of men!—*Psalm, xxxi.*

PRAYER.

RAISE up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy power, and come, that by Thy protection we may deserve to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins and to be saved by Thy deliverance. Amen.