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*Author of "All for Jesus," "Growth in Holiness," "The Sacred Sacraments,"
"Creator and the Creature," etc., etc., etc.*

"Tanto dolore compassa est Virgo, ut inexplicabilis sit lingua angelicæ; et
solus Jesus dicere potuit, qui solus potuit maternos penetrare dolores."
S. Bernardini of Siena.



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BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA
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TO
THE LADY GEORGIANA FULLERTON

THIS VOLUME

IS INSCRIBED IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF A

SEASON OF DARKNESS,

WHICH GOD CONSECRATED FOR HIMSELF

BY A MORE THAN COMMON SORROW.

PREFACE.

This Treatise was sketched for the first time at St. Wilfrid's in the summer of 1847, more than ten years ago. It has, however, been several times revised, and more than once entirely recast. It was not, however, finally settled in its present shape until the spring of 1855; for not till then was the Author satisfied with the consistency of our Lady's position throughout, nor with its adaptation to the requirements of scholastic theology. The Author has had the completed Treatise by him for some time, as the stage of preparation in which his materials were for a work on the Passion rendered it necessary for him to ascertain how much of that ground would be occupied by the Dolours, and in what manner; and it appeared better to compose the present Treatise, and even finish it for the press, before advancing his book on the Passion into another stage of its preparations, in order that the ultimate harmony between the two might be the more complete. But, as the time was not come for the publication of the Dolours in its predetermined place in the series of books which the Author has planned, it was laid by until its turn should arrive.

It is now twelve years since the Author became a tertiary of the ancient Order of the Servites, and so bound to

advance, as much as he might be able to do so, the Devotion to the Seven Dolors; and he has always confessed to himself the obligation. When the London Oratory was founded in 1849, the Rosary of the Seven Dolors was adopted as one of its public characteristic practices, and other measures were taken with success to propagate the devotion. There seems some warrant for believing that graces and blessings have accompanied this humble apostolate of that practice so dear to our Blessed Mother.

The Treatise is now submitted with much diffidence to those who love our Lady's honor, and the spread of all devotion to her, with a hope that they may feel less disappointment in reading it than the Author has done in writing it, and may not be haunted, as he has been throughout, with an ideal which he could not reach, and a vexation that, when he had said all he could in the best way he could, it should always seem so little to be said of Mary, that it almost appeared as if it had better not have been said at all. The thought of the love that prompted the endeavor is, however, some compensation for the imperfection of its success.

THE LONDON ORATORY,
Feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, 1857.

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THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

CHAPTER I.

THE MARTYRDOM OF MARY.

THE beauty of Jesus is inexhaustible. Like the Vision of God in heaven, it is ever diversified, yet always the same, always cherished as an old and familiar joy, yet ever surprising and refreshing the spirit as being, in truth, perpetually new. He is beautiful always, beautiful everywhere, in the disfigurement of the Passion as well as in the splendor of the Resurrection, amid the horrors of the Scourging as well as amid the indescribable attractions of Bethlehem. But above all things our Blessed Lord is beautiful in His Mother. If we love Him we must love her. We must know her in order to know Him. As there is no true devotion to His Sacred Humanity, which is not mindful of His Divinity, so there is no adequate love of the Son, which disjoins Him from His Mother, and lays her aside as a mere instrument, whom God chose as He might choose an inanimate thing, without regard to its sanctity or moral fitness. Now it is our daily task to love Jesus more and more. Year follows year; the old course of feasts comes round; the well-