Sursum or Sparks
flying upward

by
Henry Augustus Rawes

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o f T r i n i t y C o l l e g e , C a m b r i d g e .

L . I I I . 1 .

L O N D O N :
P A T E R N O S T E R R O W .
A N D
1 8 6 4 .

1 4 1 . k . 5 7 .
I put this Book under the Protection

of

St. John, the Evangelist,

the Disciple whom Jesus loved,

and of

my Father, St. Charles Borromeo:

and

I dedicate it

to

those Members of the Congregation

of

St. Francis of Assisi, Notting Hill,

who,

in their love for the Blessed Sacrament,

have given

a Monstrance to our Lord.
PREFACE.

I have called this little Book "Sursum;" because, such as it is, it is meant to lead the mind upward to Heaven and Heavenly things. I also thought that the very word Sursum, taken from the Missal, would be in itself a blessing.

In this Volume, will be found, now and then, repetitions of thought or phrase. This has been done purposely. I wished, so to say, to tie the pieces together, and to show that the object of them all is the same. That object, of course, is God. I wished also constantly to keep before the mind, that the Essential Reward which He gives is the same, that is, Himself: that even the accidental rewards are in many ways the same, though "as star differeth from star in glory, so also is the Resurrection of the dead": and that they are given in the same place, that is, in Heaven. Again, what is said of our Lord is also in a certain sense said of all His Brides. As He is clothed in garments "white as snow," so His Wife, the Church of the Elect, is clothed with "fine linen, glittering and white;" so the "armies that are in Heaven" follow Him "clothed in fine linen, white and clean." His Face is "as the sun shineth in His Power;" so His Redeemed "shine as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." And in fact whatever is said of our Lord is said also of all the saved, for they are all made like Him. One day, "in the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God", we shall meet "in the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ;" "We know that when He shall appear we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him as He is." It is hardly necessary to say that whatever is said of our Lord, as God, as our Redeemer, as the Satisfaction for sin, and so on, is said only of Him. Mary and all His Elect never become one with Him, as Man or as God, so as to lose their personal...
Identity: yet short of this there are no words too strong to describe the Oneness of the Redeemer with His Redeemed. He says Himself, "To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with Me on My Throne, as I also have overcome and am set down with My Father on His Throne." What I say applies to our Lord as the Bridegroom and to the Church as His Bride. The whole Church of the Redeemed and each individual soul is the Wife of the Lamb. And the Essential Reward of our Lady and all Angels and all Saints is, intrinsically, God; and extrinsically, the Vision of God.

There must therefore be a certain sameness in all thoughts about God and His Kingdom. And yet it is to my mind a sameness which is the very perfection of diversity. It is a shadow of the entrancing monotony of God, in Whom is no change, neither can be. In speaking about natural things we can speak of them according to our fancy; and put them in different lights and shades as we please. But we can not do so with God and His Revelation. Different souls may look at different aspects of God or His Truth, and may delight in one more than another. So, to take the highest example possible, one person may have an especial devotion to the Eternal Father, another to the Eternal Son, another to the Eternal Spirit: but no Divine Person can be, in reality, more to any soul than another Divine Person or than All Three. And no one can owe a special obligation to any Divine Person, for of course whatever is done with regard to creatures is done by the Three Divine Persons together and equally, as there is only One God, absolutely and utterly. The conception of these mysteries and of all mysteries, that God has revealed, varies subjectively in different minds: but what it is, according to the intelligence and love of which we are capable, that it always is. It becomes clearer and deeper and stronger, it is true, as our power and will are perfected in God: but still characteristically it is the same. And as the Holy Ghost has
been pleased always to speak about some things in one and the same way, it is not for us to be wiser than He is. Every one, for instance, must be struck with the wonderful sameness of the descriptions of the Son of Man and the Heavenly City and Temple of God, in Daniel or Ezekiel and the Apocalypse of St. John. So I have tried all through as much as possible to keep the same words for the same things. As there is One God, so there is one Throne of God and the Lamb, and one River like crystal flowing from that Throne, and one Tree of Life, and one Wall with its Gates of Pearl and Foundations of Precious Stones, and one Sea of Glass mingled with fire. I may say that this principle extends through the *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament*, and the *Visits to our Blessed Lady and the Heavenly City of God*, and will extend through the *Prayers for the Holy Souls in Purgatory*, (now in the Press) and also through anything else that may be afterwards done. Thus with regard to the Coronation of our Lady or the glory of the Virgin-Martyrs, I purposely speak in both cases of the South wind, mentioned in the Canticle of Canticles, to show that I am speaking of those who are in the same place. So also, in the second of the *Songs of the Bride*, it is the South wind that blows, because the Church of Christ on earth is a part of His Church in Heaven. The North wind blows on the Synagogue: for the Synagogue, though truly the Church of Christ, was not His Church so perfectly as the Roman Church now is: for then He had not come, and now He never for one moment departs from His Bride. He is always in the Blessed Sacrament, on the Altar: and His Eternal Spirit dwells in His Church as a Temple, which He never leaves, and never will leave. So also in the Coronation of our Lady and the Song of the whole Redeemed Church, it is said "where old things are passed away," to show the identity of place; for thus the Holy Ghost describes the New Creation in the fulness
of its glory. He says: "The former things are passed away;" and, "Behold I make all things new." This will explain what I mean.

I have also endeavoured to preserve the symbolical meaning of epithets throughout. I may give one example. In the Coronation of our Lady, I have given to her Sandals studded with Emeralds. My reason is this: according to mystical writers the Emerald in the Foundation of the Heavenly City signifies purity; and purity extended to the feet of our Lady seems to me to symbolize her Immaculate Conception and her perfect correspondence with grace. "Jesus saith to him; He that is washed needeth not but to wash his feet and is wholly clean." Again: "I will instruct thee in this way, in which thou shalt go;" "Thou hast set my feet in a spacious place;" "Justice shall walk before him and shall set his steps in the way."

Now nothing can be truly satisfactory to a soul that loves God, except that which tells of Him and leads to Him. The faithful soul has no eyes, but for her Beloved. She goes through the streets of the City seeking Him, and she knows not whom she passes. So if this little Book has any value, it is because, however imperfectly, it speaks of God. It is the want of Him that mars so much for us the beauty of some of the grandest productions of the human mind. We are astonished at the graphic vigor and majesty of Homer; at the sublimity and grandeur of Æschylus; at the gracefulness and philosophic depth of Sophocles; at the plaintive tenderness of Theocritus; at the sweetness and polish of Virgil; at the crystallized beauty of Horace; we are astonished at all this and delighted with it for the time; and then we say involuntarily, Where is God? Where is the Name above every name, sweeter, stronger, more beautiful than all? We do not care to know how Phœbus Apollo came down from Olympus with his
quiver on his shoulders, or how Minerva lit up the head of Achilles with a golden cloud and flame; how Prometheus suffered, or Agamemnon, king of men, was waited for, or Oedipus wandered; how the Tamarisks grew, or the bees were hived, or the leaves fall in the woods at the first autumn cold; how proud Troy fell and ceased to be; how Soracte stood covered with snow, or about the storms of the Cretic sea, unless these things bring us nearer to Him Who made us and to Whom we are going. I am not for a moment objecting to the study of these books. I should think it absurd to do so; I believe that it would be a great loss for any mind to be deprived of the Classics. I am only thinking of that mournful feeling we have, when we see so much natural beauty unlighted by Divine Grace. Still I know that all these men were judged according to their light. God never counts as guilt to any man that which he cannot help. He always sows before He expects to reap. I am not therefore finding fault with these writers, but only lamenting their want. We long to see so much natural beauty made more beautiful by something about God. And I claim, for myself and all those who love God and our Lord, a right to seek for Him everywhere and to make Him First and Last in our souls; to rejoice when we see a gleam of His Light; and to be disappointed when we see it not. I put it at the lowest, and I claim our right to make God everything to ourselves. St. Bernard says, most beautifully: "All food for the soul is dry, if this oil be not poured over it. It is tasteless, if it be not seasoned with this salt. If you write about anything, I do not care about it, unless I can read Jesus there. If you speak about anything, I do not care to hear your words, unless I can hear the sound of Jesus."

Still, I think that many of these writers are religious in their own way, according to that which they knew: and this is better than nothing. But we feel the same want in many of the most beautiful writers
of our own language. The want is worse in this case, because they ought to have known, and might have known, if they had pleased. Take for instance Shelley and Keats, the founders of the present school of secular poetry in England. Where can you find greater natural beauty and where can you find such an utter absence of the light from Heaven? There are many perhaps who will agree with Byron when he said that the fragment of Hyperion was the grandest thing of its kind in the English language: yet it is utterly Pagan throughout, most beautiful indeed, but with the cold, classic beauty of Greece. Then again, what can be more exquisitely sweet and pathetic than Adonais, Shelley’s Monody on the death of Keats? But there in the very place you would have looked for it, there is not one single word of the Christian’s hope or the Resurrection. Since Childe Harold and The Lady of the Lake we have had no such beautiful Poem, that I know of, as Evangeline. I speak of mere natural beauty. But that which gives it such an especial charm is the religious feeling and the reverence for sacred things pervading it. It is to me a very sorrowful thought that its gifted writer is not a Catholic. I am not desiring to have nothing but religious poetry. I can enjoy Campbell’s splendid Lyrics, never equalled, I think, except by Horace and Collins, and once by Dryden, in Alexander’s Feast, (perhaps, from what I have read of him, I should add Filicaia); but still I do say that I can read with far more pleasure even than these the simplest and plainest little Hymn that tells us about God, our Creator, and Jesus Who died for us on the Cross.

If any one wants to see what the true religion will do for a man, let him compare the Divina Commedia with Paradise Lost; that is, the work of Dante with the work of Milton. Both had not only wonderful imaginations but also the creative power in the highest degree. Milton had perfect mastery over his own noble mother-tongue; and Dante, I am told, had the same power over his.
Milton, I think, could go a little higher than Dante: but Dante could go a great deal deeper than Milton or any Poet of whom I know. There is scarcely anything in literature so wonderful as the intenseness of Dante. No one probably would doubt the sincerity of Milton. I am not of course going to defend or excuse many of his opinions; but surely he was a great soul. And perhaps to him the One Faith was never presented so that he was able to see it: I can not tell; God knows. He lived in evil days, and a thick darkness was over the land: and his soul seems to have been filled with a just scorn and indignation, when he thought of the dissoluteness and licentiousness by which he was surrounded. He must have hated licentiousness and the wanton disregard of the commandments of God. These are some of the words in which speaking of Belial he tells us whose children he considers the licentious to be:

In courts and palaces he also reigns
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.

And in fact there is much about the Puritans which we can not help liking, despite all their absurdities. And I need scarcely say that those absurdities, of which so much has been made, were not common to all: and certainly were not to be found in such men as Milton. Theologically they were wrong with regard to the Roman Church, like most of our countrymen; but morally, with regard to the English nation, they were in the right. Their zeal was ill-regulated, their piety was unattractive, and many of their opinions were very mischievous. But I prefer a zeal for God though it be “not according to knowledge,” to a zeal for the devil. And I would also rather hear about God, in the most nasal twang, than hear the profane, licentious songs of the Cavaliers sung by the most melodious voices. Uncouth and ....
tractive Godliness (or even an attempt at it) is better than courtly and attractive devilry. In fact, God in any way is better than God not at all. Certainly these men by their absurdities repelled many persons from religion: but if they were attracted by the other side, they were attracted from religion and God altogether. And with regard to the true Church one side was as wrong as the other. But who can wonder that these men were so grotesque and mistaken often? Zeal out of the Church is always ill-regulated, and runs wild. The human mind needs training, as much as jasmine or honeysuckle, and never more than when under strong religious impressions; and this training can only be found in the Roman Church.

As to Milton himself, I can not but believe that he had, to use his own words, "an upright heart and pure!" and his object was, as he tell us, "to assert Eternal Providence, and justify the ways of God to men." Yet his words do not lift us up to Heaven and God as the words of Dante lift us. Every Catholic must feel a great want running through his Poem. I am looking at the matter from our point of view. He does not speak with reverent familiarity of Heavenly things. He was unable to do so, from want of knowledge. He is not at home in his subject. He is not walking through well-known streets, but wandering about the desert, trying to find his way. His false theology disfigures the beauty of his noble Poem, sonorous and majestic as the rolling of the sea. Passage after passage is untrue or offensive to pious ears, though not intentionally so. There is a constant jar on our sense of reverence. Now compare Dante with this: and what a difference there is. No one without the faith can understand what I mean. I do not speak of his grandeur or his pathos or his tenderness or his intense-ness or that wonderful creative power, which has scarcely ever been equalled, certainly never surpassed; but I speak of the way in which he makes us feel the Presence
of God through his Poem: and I love him for that. There
is God in it from beginning to end. Whether he is
within the iron walls or amidst the vermilion minarets of
Dis, or on the strand by the boiling pitch of Malebolge,
or with Judas amidst the ice in the fourth round of the
Frozen Circle, he is always thinking of Him "Whose
Will and Power are one," though for reverence he does
not mention His Name in that horrible pit. He may
sometimes have been betrayed into errors of judgment
about persons in those stormy and difficult times in
which he lived, but there is no doubt that he does bring
the invisible world before men, and does glorify God and
His Church. His Poem is full of the Summa of St.
Thomas. And, judging it only as to art and natural power,
it is doubtless far greater than it would have been had
he been without the faith: and so had Milton been a
Catholic I have no doubt that his mere natural sublimity
would have been greater than it is.

Now I do not mean to say that Devotion should be
the excuse for stupidity. At the same time I for one
could not bring myself to speak disrespectfully of a
stupid person, unless he were in fault. For God gives to
every man the measure of intellect which He chooses:
and thousands of great intellects are now in hell, through
their own fault, and will be there for ever; while thou-
sands of very little intellects (very little, that is, whilst
in this world) are now, by the free grace of God and
their correspondence with that grace, high in the Be-
atile Vision. And I can read the simplest little book
which tells me of God, with far more pleasure and profit,
than the grandest book which says nothing about Him.
I value highly all the gifts of God whether physical or
intellectual; but I care most for His Love. For this
reason the Holy Scriptures should be so dear to us, above
all other books. They are most blessed who faithfully
and dutifully dig deepest in that inexhaustible mine of
love and wisdom. It is this also which gives each s
especial beauty to the Missal and Office Book. Now, not speaking of the Holy Scriptures, and still less of our Lord's Words enshrined in them, there is nothing in the world so grand as the Apostles' Creed. For majesty, simplicity, and light, it is unapproachable. It always seems to me to be like a massive, solid tower of the clearest crystal. But as to human works I think that the Summa of St. Thomas is the grandest Epic Poem that ever was written. No story of Achilles or Æneas can be like the story of that Divine Man, Whose Sacred Human Heart was pierced in the stillness of death on Calvary. In the Summa we find those immortal words which tell us of Him: of His Godhead, and the Godhead of His Father and His Spirit, of His Incarnation, Life, Preaching, Works, Suffering, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Session at the Right Hand of God: of His Mother, His Apostles, His Church, His Angels, His Saints; of His Revelation and His Sacraments and His Coming again as the Judge and Rewarder. The words of that book fall ever with fresh beauty on our minds: it tells us so majestically of God and His Works. Precise, accurate, clear, strong, wise, deep, and comprehensive, we may indeed truly apply to it the words of one of our poets: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever." It is more than that, for it is a "possession for ever." Thus the Summa is a chant of thanksgiving; a Hymn of victory; the triumphal march of a conqueror with the spolia opima of his enemy. As one truth is enunciated after another, and as one doubt after another is destroyed, it is "fair as the morning-rising", or "terrible as an army set in array." It is the very sanctification of the human Reason, Godlike and free with the highest and most perfect freedom in submission to the Voice and Will of God. It shows us plainly what the world ought to have learned long ago, and might have learned, if it had pleased, that no where on earth is the Reason, by which we are made like God, so honored as in the Catholic
Church. In one way, it sounds in my ears, like the measured tread of a victorious army; in another way, like a prelude of the New Song, "the Song of Moses, the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb" which they sing before the Throne. But as I think this of the great work of St. Thomas Aquinas, so I think that the most beautiful devotional Poem that ever was written is *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas A Kempis. Graceful tender and pathetic beyond all words, thoughts of beauty in beautiful raiment, it is full of the love and light of our Divine Master; and it sets Him before us, for our example and help and rest, as He has never in human words been set in our sight before or since. These two books, like Moses, come down to us from the Mount, lit up with the glory of the Divine Presence.

Now people talk in these days a great deal about depth and breadth of thought, and earnestness, and so on; and there are many who seem to think it the first mark of a great mind to put away all thought of God, when considering His Works. To attempt to decide any question of politics or science by its harmony with the Law or the Revelation of God is thought to be the mark of a narrow mind. I pray God that in that sense my mind may be as narrow as possible to all eternity. I have an old-fashioned belief that we ought always to seek God first in all things. What, for instance, is the good of digging and scraping in Eocene or Pleiocene formations, or in the Red Sandstone or the Permian Rocks, unless it be to know more of God and to love Him more? What is the use of peddling about with old bones and bits of crockery, unless it brings us nearer to God? The natural world is as truly a Revelation of God, as the Church or the Bible. It is not so clear nor so glorious, but still it is as truly His. And it is simply and absolutely impossible for one Revelation of God to contradict another. It is just as possible for the Eternal Father to contradict the Eternal
Son, as it is for any geological strata which God has made to contradict the Revelation which He has given.

I am anxious not to lengthen this Preface, but I must say one word of God in politics. Nowadays if any one writing or speaking of politics ever tries to do so according to the Divine Law, it is said of him contemptuously that he is a moralist and not a statesman. He has not, I suppose, that broad philosophic mind which is able to keep the Creator out of sight. Such a man is laughed at; as if the wisest and best statesmen are not those who try to legislate in the presence of God, as they live in His Presence. And I certainly have always understood that God will judge us for everything we do, say, or think, in public as well as in private life. I have also always understood that we have never, in any time, or in any place, to be ashamed of God. I look upon this divorce between God and the political world (and also I may add the literary and metaphysical world) as the most fearful of the signs of these evil times. There are many wise and learned men, and deep thinkers, and clever writers amongst us, but somehow they do not happen to stumble on God or the Truth. I am certain that none of these deep thinkers will ever come upon anything deeper than the first and second of the questions and answers in the Catechism: Q. Who made you? Ans. God. Q. Why did God make you? Ans. To know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this life, and to be happy with Him for ever in the next. I commend these words to the consideration of those deep thinkers who know everything except the God Who made them, and all laws except the Law of their Creator.

And indeed what can be more terrible than that God should be so little thought of and so little regarded as He is? People seem often to be ashamed of saying, I cannot do this because it is wrong in the sight of God; or, I must do this, because it is right in His sight. It would be well
for us, if we always said this. I hate cant with all my heart, and I hate also all affectation of piety, and all needless display of it; but I can not consider it any of these things to say in a simple, manly way, at all times and in all places, that in everything we must think first of God. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent, a time to rejoice and a time to mourn, but surely every time is a time for God. If there is any time from which the thought of God ought to be excluded, those who think so will perhaps tell us what that time is. Of one thing I am quite certain; and that is, that if there be any time or place in which God can not be kept in mind and loved: they are not fit for us, if we be His servants. But in these days God seems to be studiously kept out of sight, and men actually seem to be ashamed of Him. God forbid that it should ever be so with us. I have spoken of the Puritans before; and I only wish that those who have to do with the government of this country had in them a little more of the Puritans' sense of the constant Presence and Government of God. They were mistaken and misguided in many ways; but they were right in thinking that God rules the world in every moment: they were right in thinking this, and right in acknowledging it publicly, as the law of their public actions. I wish it were so with all our politicians.

I would to God indeed that they were all Catholics, with the light of the Faith; but if this may not be, let them at least acknowledge God in public, as they acknowledge Him in private. It would be a refreshing thing, to see in these days a Vane or a Fleetwood in the House of Commons. There is now no religion at all, or a miserable sickly religionism that is almost worse than none. I do not wish to be misunderstood: there are doubtless in Parliament many men, who are excellent and exemplary in their private lives; but I want to find a man who will boldly in public proclaim God and the Laws of God, as the source and rule of all legislation and all
prudence. I want to find a man who will venture to say that God ought not to be kept altogether out of sight, but ought to be a little regarded in His Own world. No doubt they are "all honorable men," but I want to find a little more of God. It might not be statesmanlike to keep the Divine Law always in sight; but I know that it would be Godlike.

One word now as to ourselves; and I make an end. The great evil that we Catholics have to dread in these days is worldliness. The spirit of worldliness is coming in on us like a flood. I see it, as plainly as I see the sun in the Heavens, and I am not going to say that I do not. All this would be impossible if God were in each soul, as He ought to be. But satan is now striking at us through the world. There is worldliness in the brain and worldliness in the heart. And with it there is always a servile and unmanly spirit. We have the certain promise of our Lord, that no intellectual evil can ever touch the Dogmas of the Faith: we have also His certain promise that no moral evil can destroy His Church: but we have no such promise for particular Churches or individual souls. Nay, we read how God has threatened a Church for its shortcomings that He would remove its candlestick out of its place. How terribly does the Beloved Disciple speak of worldliness: "Love not the world nor the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the pride of life; this is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away and the desire thereof. But he that doeth the Will of God abideth for ever. Little children it is the last hour; and as you have heard that antichrist cometh, even now there are many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us but they were not of us. For if they had been of us they would no doubt have remained
with us; but (they went out) that it may be made manifest that they are not all of us.” And considering what God has done for us in restoring the Sanctuary after three hundred years of desolation, the least that we can do is to prefer Him to the world, if only out of the commonest feelings of gratitude. When the Reformation, that terrible curse, fell on this land, God seemed to have hid His Face from us: and now when He has restored our “judges as they were before, and our counsellors as of old;” let us be faithful to Him. We ought to have His Name on our hands, our hearts, our foreheads. It should be always in our mouths. I do know of one thing more contemptible than love of the world; and that is fear of the world. I know of nothing more contemptible than that.

But the point of all that I have been saying is that we should live hourly in the love and fear of God: and that we ought never to be ashamed of Him or His Revelation or His Church. As to this Book, its only value is that it is an attempt to help souls to this union with God. Whatever it may be, I have desired to promote by it the glory of Him Who is our Creator and final Reward. And thus it is especially written for those who love the Sacred Heart. It makes no appeal to others; for there is nothing in it, which the children of the world will desire, but rather much that they will despise and reject. Yet I trust that there are some, who may find pleasure or help in its contents. They are, I know, only stammerings, or the lispings of a child that cannot speak; but they tell us of the Divine Bridegroom of our souls, Who loved us and lived for us and died for us. They are merely, as I have called them, a few little Sparks flying upward. I shall be content, if they make for any, be it but for a little while, a light in this darkness. I have written in this book what I thought would be, speaking after the manner of men, read with pleasure by the inhabitants of
the Heavenly City of God. I hope that it may souls to hate the world and love God; but I more that the Divine Bridegroom will acknowledge the Brightness of His Coming.

Oct. of our Lady's Nativity, 1864.

St. Francis of Assisi,
Notting Hill.
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PART I.
OUR RELATION TO GOD.

ADORATION.

Because God is God, and we are what we are, we owe Him supreme worship. All His rational creatures owe Him this worship and are bound to serve and love Him. This is His claim, because He is the Creator; not because He is just or true or holy, but simply because we come from Him. An unholy Creator is an absurdity and a contradiction in terms.

And further, because we are not only His creatures, but His fallen creatures; and not only fallen but restored, or living amidst the possibilities of restoration, the duty which we owe to Him is of a fourfold nature; like the river which "went out of the place of pleasure to water Paradise," being "divided into four heads." I am not now enquiring what it is in the nature of God, which makes it necessary for us to worship Him in a certain way, and to give Him a certain service. I take for granted the nature of our homage, as it is taught by the Church, and I merely wish to draw out from this, in a plain way, some few of those lessons which we thus learn about God and about ourselves.

And amongst all kinds of knowledge there is and can be nothing like the knowledge of God. There are many kinds of learning which are good, but learning about God...
is best. It is not only best, but so far beyond and above all other science or knowledge, that nothing can ever be compared with it. High and glorious, "in the inaccessible light," God reveals Himself to His creatures: they see and know Him by faith or sight; and in Him and only in Him they can find an enduring and perfect rest. To all other things there is a limit, but there is no limit to the love which we ought to have for God.

Now we learn the four duties which we owe Him, from the nature of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. For the Mass is firstly a Sacrifice of adoration. We offer it to God, as the highest and most perfect act of Divine worship, in testimony of His Supreme Dominion as regards life or death. Next it is offered as a Sacrifice of Propitiation or Expiation, for the remission of sin or of the punishment due to sin. It is offered also as an impetatory Sacrifice to obtain from God blessings of different kinds by the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. And lastly it is offered as a Eucharistic Sacrifice or a Sacrifice of thanksgiving, for all the countless blessings that we have received from Him.

Thus the duties, which express our relation to God, are adoration, penance, prayer and thanksgiving. I will begin with adoration.

By adoration therefore I intend to signify precisely that supreme worship which belongs to God and to none other. And when we come to think of it, we shall see that the capability of thus adoring an Uncreated Intelli-
gence is a gift in itself only second to that which we shall have when we shall see that Intelligence in its strength and purity and beauty, intuitively, in the Beatific Vision, "face to face."

For a while we have to wait for this in the darkness, but one day the darkness will go and the light will come. Let us, then, see what this adoration is. We adore God, not only as our Creator, but also as our Redeemer; for Redemption is a new Creation. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And the work of the first creation, wonderful and glorious as it was, seems, I may truly say, to be in a sense shorn of its wonders and its beauty when compared with that other creation, the regeneration and perfecting of the sons of God, in the midst of which His voice is ever heard, saying, "Behold, I make all things new."

Thus we believe that God is; and by faith we have exactly that, neither more nor less, which we shall afterwards, through His mercy, have by sight. He is immense, infinite and eternal; perfectly sufficient, in and by Himself, for Himself and His own supreme Beatitude; the Beginning from which all creatures come, and the End to which they ought to return. And whether they are going from Him, or coming to Him, "they live and move and are" in Him, and only in Him.

As we serve Him and love Him we are fulfilling the end for which He made us. If we sin against Him we turn His gifts against Himself, and abuse to our own
destruction the powers which he has given us; and nothing can be meaner, nothing falser, nothing more traitorous than this.

Next, we believe that He is the Supreme Dispenser of rewards and punishments, doing what He will with His own, according to His Wisdom and Justice. All rewards which are true rewards and worth having are those which bring us nearer to Him; and the only punishments about which any one need care are those which separate, or tend to separate us from Him. Indeed remedial punishments which tend to increase our union with Him when that union is begun, or help to begin it when it does not exist, are amongst the highest and truest blessings we can have. But God is something more than our Redeemer; He is Himself our exceeding great Reward. With Him is the fulness of joy; only in His light can we see light; and He Himself, showing Himself to the souls of the Blessed, whether human or angelic, is the “River which makes glad the city of the King,” that is, each soul of His Elect, in which He lives and reigns.

But again, in His absolute Sovereignty He is Supreme Lord of life and death. He gives us our life when He pleases: and again when He pleases He takes it away. He breathes into us the breath of life, and makes us living souls; and then beneath the touch of His Divine Hand we lie cold and dead, and are put away in our graves.

This power He can delegate to others, or permit
Others to use without an express delegation.

Thus, by His express command the Canaanish idolaters were exterminated. For them, at least in this world, He had no mercy, and when He had once spoken, the sword of the Israelite could not spare. He had the right to take away the lives which He had given, when and where and as He pleased, by plague or fire or famine or poisonous serpents or sudden death. So also He had the right to do it by the sword in the hands of men. They were His messengers of vengeance, the instruments by which He executed judgment on the sinner.

Those to whom He spoke received an express command about which they could not be mistaken, and without sin they could not disobey. Whatever feelings of tenderness or natural reluctance may have stirred their hearts they were no longer their own masters in this; and looked at rightly, they were only setting forth in a terrible type that great destruction at the last, when the tares shall be gathered together that they may be burned; when the reprobate shall be cast away from the Face of God, into the fire that is never quenched.

Again, as in all times, so in this time, the civil government of every land exercises a power of life and death which can only come from God. For as He only gives life, so He only, in Himself or by His own authority, has the right to take that life away. But as the Church has always maintained the lawfulness of capital punishment for certain crimes, it follow of necessity, that the power
to inflict this punishment can only come from Him, Whose hands are the issues of life and death.

Thus to think of God is to adore Him, that is if try to act up to our knowledge. To desire the good, far as we know it, and to believe the true, as far as know it, is to adore God: for only God is absolute good and true. When we know that God is and He rewards or punishes men, and so desire to please Him and when also we know that He is also the Supreme of life and death, and so submit ourselves unreserved to His Divine Will, then we adore Him. There is a knowledge, a knowledge clear but unfruitful: I do call that knowledge adoration.

But this is not all. For those who have the light the faith, the adoration of God means much more this. He is our final knowledge, and our personal law; the light of our understandings, and strength of our wills. We know Him because He is vealed; and we love Him because He is known; and obey Him because He is loved. He enlarges our hearts, that we may follow Him perfectly in the way of the precepts or the counsels. What we know, we know from Him, either miraculously or naturally. Every science far as it is true, is the handmaid of His unchang Truth. Every discovery whatever it may be which contradicts His Truth is hopelessly and unchangeably false. Whatever face it may have, it is rotten at the heart. All true thoughts converge to Him as a centre, thot
ADORATION.

is not only every where but immense in and to Him-
that beyond all space; and all true ways lead only to His
Eternal Throne.

Again, if we seek to know what we ought to do, we find
our law in His Commandments. There are those which
He gave on Sinai, those which He gave on the Mountain of
Elatude, those which He gave by His Apostles, and those
which He has given and still gives by the living voice of
His Church. These last are to us the interpreters of all.
They translate for us unknown tongues. They speak to
us with a voice which we can understand. They give us
light instead of darkness, certainty instead of doubt, and
truth instead of lies. That which is dimmed is enlight-
ened and hidden things are made known. The light shines
on us and in that light we can rejoice. All shadows
of darkness are destroyed in the light of the noontide sun.
Now these blessings and all other blessings which ever
we have or ever can be come from God. “Every good
creature, and every perfect gift comes” from Him. All bless-
ings are His free gifts, the gifts of His boundless Charity,
the outpourings of that Bountifulness, which is only lim-
ited by the smallness of the creature but is in itself infinite
and eternal. Without Him we are nothing; it is an in-
credible joy to think of this. Without Him we have
nothing; and it is an incredible joy to think of this also.

But as we adore Him, by knowing His Truth and keep-
ing His Commandments; so also we adore Him by desiring
to see Him and to possess Him. Strange as it must seem,
He thirsts for our love and our presence in His Though He has need of nothing yet He desires men should be saved. We know Him, keep I mandments, and desire Him as our final end. Be creatures our souls reach onward and upward With a desire beyond all other desire we seek f and with a thirst to which no other thirst can pared we reach out for that water, clear as crys is the unveiled Vision of Himself. There are man that are not God, which we may lawfully de for which we may lawfully pray. Yet these th more and more blessed as they lead us nearer t they have more light upon them as they draw us from the world and nearer to Heaven; they are purer, truer, as they take us more and more wi Veil. And when we rightly know God and ours it be only with a little knowledge and in a little how weak must be our desire for all that this we give compared to our desire for the sight of that ted Loveliness which is to those who see it end and peace and rest and life. There are indeed in the natural gifts of God for which we may lawfull but after all, our best and highest and truest prayer we may “see His Face.”

So adoring God we must love Him with all of and soul and strength. We must hope in Him, tru depend upon Him, submit to Him, live in Him, ke selves for Him, and wait for Him. The ador
Penance.

darkness will one day be the adoration in light. Faith
and hope will be lost in love. They who have been true
adorers of God in this world will adore Him for ever and
ever in Heaven.

Penance.

Penance: what mingled thoughts are called up by this
word. It tells us of an unfallen creation in Eden, when as
yet there was no sin and consequently no pain nor sorrow
nor death; of lives pure and innocent, unsullied by the
transgression of the law; of the children of God living
obediently and lovingly in the home which their Father
had prepared for them; of "the Voice of the Lord God,
walking in Paradise in the afternoon." But it tells us al-
so of wilfulness and evil curiosity and disobedience; of sin,
death, and suffering; of the serpent "cursed among all
cattle and beasts of the earth;" of the multiplied sorrows
of the woman, who was first in the transgression; of the
words spoken to Adam, "Cursed is the earth in thy work;
with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of
thy life;" of our first parents cast out from the Paradise
of pleasure, exiles and wanderers in the homeless world;
of the wisdom of the majestic Cherubim barring the road
to Eden; and of the brightness of that "flaming sword,
turning every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life."

Yet it tells us also of the return of the golden years;
of a restoration, which not only leaves nothing to be de-

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sired, but outdoes in blessedness and glory all that had
been lost; of a "New Creation," far more beautiful than
the old; of a clearer stream and a brighter sun than ever flowed or shone in that first Paradise "which the Lord God had planted," and "wherein He placed man, whom He had formed." It tells us of our innocence, our restoration; of Eden, the world, and Calvary.

It is not necessary here to enter on the difficult question of Satisfaction, vicarious or otherwise. How it was to pass that God accepted for us our Lord's Sacrifice on the Cross, we cannot tell. But that He did so is as certain as that He is. I take for granted that penance is the spirit of penance, whether of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, is acceptable to God and meritorious in His sight.

sinned; Christ died for us; in Him and only in Him are restored.

Now by penance I here understand all that is included in the idea of sin, propitiation, and renewal. If we wish to see what the reality signified by this word teaches about God, we must consider that once we needed no penance, and that now the penance we need is possible. We must bear in mind that once we were with God; that the exercise of our freedom we fell away from Him; so that now, by His great love, we can go back to Him again.

From this we learn much; but chiefly as regards God Himself we learn His Purity, Justice, and Mercy; and regards God and ourselves, His Goodness and our vilness. For is it not good of God to make us, to give us what He has given, and to do for us what He has done? And it is not "an evil and a bitter thing" that we, in our vol
ness, should be so ungrateful, so rebellious, so faithless, so unloving as we are?

Let us, then, consider the Purity of God. It is impossible in the least to imagine the intenseness of that uncreated Purity. He is a consuming Fire, and nothing that is defiled can enter into His Presence. Even the Heavens, the souls of His highest Angels and Saints, are not clean in His sight. So, as He loves His creatures with a most divine Love, He hates sin with a most divine Hatred. No change can come near Him; no idea can ever present itself to His Mind. He has had all ideas eternally. He knows all things, all that have been and all that ever will be and all that ever possibly might be. His Love, therefore, of what is good, and His Hatred of what is evil, are eternal and unchanging. This is His Purity.

Next, there is His Justice. Now we must not fall into the mistake of talking about His Justice and Mercy as if they were set one against the other or as if one undid the work of the other. His Justice and His Mercy are in reality the same thing, for each is Himself. But we cannot understand this now, as we do not yet see Him with a comprehensive vision. And so, in our ignorance, we are obliged to speak of these Attributes as if they were different when they are not. In this sense, then, He must punish those who sin, because He is just. Hating sin with a sovereign Hatred because of His Purity, He punishes with a sovereign punishment those who are reprobate; and punishes, also, always with a proportionate
punishment those who sin but afterwards repent.

Then there is His Mercy. 'He receives with open arms the returning prodigal. And even in judgment He remembers mercy. When we call to mind how terribly, speaking in our human way, we grieve God by our sins, it seems most wonderful that He should welcome us back so lovingly as He does. He has a divine thirst for the salvation of souls. From all eternity He has known how in His Human Nature He would feel the great thirst of the Sacred Heart on the Cross. In this way He seems to be always saying to us from Heaven and the Blessed Sacrament, I thirst. So His desire for us is far greater than our desire for Him, though we can, in no way whatever, increase His essential Beatitude. It seems also as if He Who is uncreated Knowledge forgets all the evil we have done as soon as ever we return to Him. "When he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and was moved with compassion and running to him fell on his neck and kissed him."

And yet when God is merciful, He is just. His Mercy is strict Justice, and His Justice is perfect Mercy. If it were not so, there would be in Him an imperfection or a change. Even amongst men the just are merciful and the merciful are just. I cannot myself see how, even in this world, any man can be truly merciful unless he be very just, nor truly just unless he be very merciful: and far more is it so with God. In Him we see the intense-ness and perfection of Justice and Mercy when they are
blended together and become one Uncreated Virtue.

What a relief, then, it is to turn from creatures to God. How dark does the light of this world appear; how worthless its treasures and rewards; and how unsatisfying its best and truest consolations, compared with the light of Eternal Purity, and the rewards and joys which are given us by Him whose Justice and Mercy cast one bright shadow on the earth.

PRAYER.

The formal cause of prayer is the nature of God, in that He is simply and absolutely sufficient for Himself and consequently for all creatures. The material cause is our necessity.

God has need of nothing. He is His own life and His own joy; and being ens a se He cannot change. In His Essence, in His Attributes which cannot in reality be distinguished absolutely from Himself or from one another, and in His moral Nature, He is always the Same, and always sufficient for all Beatitude, whether it be created or uncreated.

But we have need of everything and have nothing in or from ourselves. Besides, we are always changing and being changed; remaining constant only in one thing, and that is our dependence on some Being who is out of us and above us. God, therefore, has every thing to give, and we have everything to get; and so we show Him our necessities, and ask Him for what we want.