

A MONTH'S MEDITATIONS

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A Month's meditations by Cardinal Wiseman

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CARDINAL WISEMAN

**A MONTH'S
MEDITATIONS**

A Month's Meditations.



BY

CARDINAL WISEMAN,
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A MONTH'S MEDITATIONS.

*From MS. left by the late CARDINAL WISEMAN,
and now for the first time published.*

- 1.—On the Good Use of Meditation.
- 2.—On the Good Employment of Time.
- 3.—On Sanctifying our Ordinary Actions.
- 4.—On the Use we should make of Creatures.
- 5.—On Preparing for Death.
- 6.—On the Death of the Wicked.
- 7.—On the Grave.
- 8.—On the Situation of Each Individual at the Last Day.
- 9.—On the Separation of the Good and Wicked at the Last Day.
- 10.—On the Pain of Loss in Hell.
- 11.—On Contrition.
- 12.—On Repentance.
- 13.—On Patience and Resignation.
- 14.—On Meekness.
- 15.—On Venial Sin.

- 16.—On Uncharitable Speech.
- 17.—On our Prevailing Defects, and on Resolutions against Them.
- 18.—On Gratitude to God for our Redemption.
- 19.—On Gratitude to God for His Church and His Sacraments.
- 20.—On Love of God's Church.
- 21.—On Prayer.
- 22.—On Humility.
- 23.—On Charity.
- 24.—On the Dispositions with which we should receive Holy Communion.
- 25.—On Devotion to Our Lady.
- 26.—On Devotion to our Patron Saints.
- 27.—On Fervour in the Service of God.
- 28.—On Constancy and Perseverance in Virtue.
- 29.—On Seeing the Humanity of Jesus in Heaven.
- 30.—On the Fulness of Heaven's Joys.
- 31.—On the Eternity of Heaven's Joys.

A MONTH'S MEDITATIONS.

First Day.

ON THE GOOD USE OF MEDITATION.

I. Reflect how the mind of man is compared by our Saviour Himself to a soil, upon which the seed of God's word falls, and which produces fruit in proportion to the degree of cultivation in which it is kept, and the care with which the seed is treated. For if, like the thorny ground, or like the stones, our hearts give the good seed no nourishment, it must needs perish and produce no fruit. Now the tillage and care are given by reflection and meditation upon the truths contained in the holy word of God. If the grain which is cast into the furrow were the instant afterwards plucked out again, before the earth had had time to close about it, it would be just as though it had been cast upon the surface of a rock, where it would soon be trodden under-foot, or picked out by

the birds, or parched by the sun. But if it is buried deep in the bosom of the earth it soon begins to show signs of vegetation, and springs up above the ground, and is crowned with useful fruit. By meditation is the word of God laid deeply in our breasts, and nourished by our thought till at length its effects appear in our works, and its salutary fruits ripen before heaven. For meditation consists in retaining long in the thought the truth which the ears have received, and revolving it again and again, till it penetrates deeply, and settles in the mind, as part of the stock of our knowledge. A truth merely heard is like a passenger who goes rapidly through a place where he is hardly noticed and soon forgotten. A truth meditated on is like a resident whose presence sensibly acts upon his town, and has a practical influence within it. A truth merely understood is like a sudden storm of hail, which tears up the surface of the earth a little, but soon runs off and leaves it as parched as before. A truth well pondered on is like the rain, which descends softly and slowly, and penetrates deeply, and causes things to

spring up. Nor is this to be said merely in regard to such truths as are of their nature abstract, and not likely to make an impression on the mind. It is equally true of what is in itself most impressive and moving. What does it profit us to know, as we already do and have done for years, that the Son of God became man for our sakes, and died for us upon the Cross? But let us once begin to meditate upon these great truths; let us ponder in our minds the immensity of that Being Who so abased Himself; let us turn over in our thoughts the circumstances of His birth, and of His early life; let us go minutely over the manner of His death and the quality of His sufferings, and then let us contrast them with our evil deserts and ingratitude, and we are soon brought to form a new estimate of our obligations to our God, and are stirred up to a deep shame for our offences, and a sincere sorrow and hatred for sin. Now this is meditation. The same is the case in regard to any other moving subject, such as death or hell, which will do us but little good if merely mentioned to us, or read of by us, but will quickly strike us with