

THE FOUR LAST THINGS

JUDGMENT.

1. According to generally received opinion, the particular judgment (see p. 10, para 8) takes place at the very spot where the person dies.

2. Thus the moment the soul leaves the body she finds herself in the presence of Jesus to be judged according to her works and to hear the sentence determining her fate, whether it is to be one of happiness or of misery.

3. The following two extracts from St. Luke ought to fill us with deep solicitude as to the coming judgment on ourselves and be a warning to us carefully to prepare ourselves for it:

« And when great multitude stood about Him so that they trod one upon another, He began to say to His disciples: « Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nor hidden that shall not be known. For whatsoever things you have spoken in darkness shall be published in the light, and that which you have spoken in the ear in chambers shall be preached on the housetops. And I say to you, my friends: Be not afraid of them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom ye shall fear. Fear ye Him, who after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear Him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? Yea, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows. »

« And I say to you, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the Angels of God. But he that shall deny Me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but to him that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven. » (*Luke* XII, 1-10).

« Let your loins be girt and lamps burning in your hands, and you yourselves like to men who wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen I say to you, that he will gird himself and make them sit down to meat and, passing, will minister unto them. And if he shall come in the second watch or come in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants. But this know ye, that if the householder did know at what hour the thief would come, he would surely watch, and would not suffer his house to be broken open. Be you then also ready, for at what hour you think not, the Son of Man will come. »

« And Peter said to Him: « Lord, dost thou speak this parable to us, or likewise for all? » And the Lord said who (thinkest thou) is the faithful and wise steward whom his lord setteth over his family to give them their measure of wheat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom, when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing. Verily I say to you he will set him over all that he possesseth. But if that servant shall say in his heart: My lord is long a coming; and shall begin to strike the manservants, and to eat and to drink and be drunk, the lord of that servant will come in the day that he hopeth not, and at the hour that he knoweth not, and shall separate him and shall appoint him his portion with unbelievers. » (Ibid. 35-46.)

Explanation of the Plate.

4. The picture attempts to portray the *particular judgment*, which is held immediately one has breathed his last.

5. Here we have endeavoured to point the contrast between the judgment of the just man and that of the sinner. They are lying dead in two adjoining rooms, the former on the left, the latter on the right. Jesus is shown sitting in judgment simultaneously over both.

6. The relations of the just man still praying for him by his bedside. Under the protection of the Blessed Virgin and St Joseph his soul has just been taken up before the Supreme Judge by his Guardian Angel. An Angel is holding in one hand the crown destined for her, and in the other

the scales of justice, whereof that containing her merits weighs down the other. Jesus welcomes her and pronounces a favourable judgment.

7. The soul of the sinner too appears before the Sovereign Judge, but, unable to meet His regard, she hides her face. She is under the escort of devils and is bound by a chain with which Lucifer is dragging her down. The scales containing her sins weighs down the other, and as there is not a single good work recorded to her credit in the book of fate which the angel holds, Jesus turns her away and sentences her to eternal damnation.

N.B. - As regards the *Last judgment* and *Heaven* and *Hell*, there have already been described and illustrated respectively at pages 10, 16 and 17.
