

of the present month of November, and of which we must strive, were it only in our own interests, to gain a practical knowledge, is one of the very serious obligations of life. It is a duty incumbent upon us as men, as Christians and as sinners. Linked as it is in a special manner, through the loving condescension of the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, with the devotion to His adorable Person, it should be one of the characteristic virtues of every Associate of the League.

God fashioned the heart of man. He made it susceptible of emotions of tenderness and pity at the sight of misfortune and suffering. This merciful instinct is one of the last saving impulses to survive the hardening influence of sin. So much so that it requires an effort on the part even of the obdurate to counteract the impression necessarily awakened by the wail of anguish or the sight of abject misery and starvation. It has disarmed vengeance ; and the spectacle of a lifelong enemy reduced to beggary and smitten with bodily ailments has been known to quench the very fire of revenge. Spontaneously and without reflection we are moved by the appeal of a fellow being in distress. To resist this impulse, to turn a deaf ear to his supplication, to close the eye to his pitiful condition, would be to stifle the very cry of nature within us, and to make us forfeit all right to the title and prerogatives of men.

This results from the fact that whoever the wretched suppliant may be he is a fellow man. He sprang from the same beginning, his life and end are in all similar to our own ; he bears our likeness in all, save that he is destitute of food and clothing. He may have been a pauper from his birth, or the rapacity and injustice of others may have despoiled him of his inheritance. " The poor," says St. Chrysostom, " were once youthful, robust, wealthy perhaps ; for who is ignorant of the vicissitudes of life ? Far from scoffing at their misfortune, consider rather that, secure as we may now seem, the same ills may befall us, and withhold not our loving help from the lowly " (Hom. 30 in I Cor.).