

self by constant application, docility, and silence, and made rapid progress in every thing she was taught. Her spare time after school hours she spent in the house, assisting in the kitchen, or working in the garden, and thus led an industrious life; her benefactress frequently brought her to her apartments, and taught her knitting, embroidery, sewing, and marking linen. There, in pious and edifying conversations she developed her understanding, directed her judgment, gave her a thousand useful advices, and instilled into her that love of propriety, management, and attention, which is so necessary to preserve a well-ordered house.

By docility to the lessons of her mistress, Sophy increased in virtue and wisdom before God and men. Innocence was her beauty, and modesty heightened the charm of her good qualities. Her fair complexion, and the graces of her whole person, never filled her with any vain thoughts, for she preserved her heart untainted and pure. She particularly shewed great compassion for the poor, and often distributed amongst them the food that was given her at table, which she kept for the relief of the miserable objects who applied every day at the house. But this bounty seemed to be of no value in her eyes, as nothing of her own was mixed up with it; she often gave them small sums of money, which Madam de Linden bestowed her for her little recreations. Instead of laying them out on trifles, as many children in her situation would have done, Sophy employed them in purchasing clothes, shoes, and linen which she distributed to the poor. As she had herself experienced the privations of want, she felt it a duty in her new position to relieve the families of the wretched, and to bring them, unknown to the world, little articles of dress, which they required, with a constant injunction to secrecy on her charities. It was long after that these acts of charity which she performed with so much ardour, and which her ingenious humility had kept secret from those around her, were discovered. These relations with her neighbour were based on the greatest simplicity, to which she united much prudence, according to the beautiful advice of our Divine Master, *to be simple as doves, and prudent as serpents*. Being always disposed to assist her neighbour, she forgot herself to hasten to the assistance of others.

But, let it not be supposed that the virtues of this young girl were momentary acts of enthusiasm produced by accident, or the result of a happy natural disposition. They were the effect of the empire which she exercised over herself, and the fruit of her desire to please the Lord. She was continually engaged in acquiring that evenness of temper, firmness of character, and above all, that

tranquillity of soul which afterwards contributed so much to her happiness. This latter disposition of a heart in which virtue reigns supreme, is a real gift of heaven.

As Sophy advanced in years, she also increased in virtue. Her mistress seemed to redouble her love for her, and made her a friend and confidant. Sophy, on her part, repaid these attentions of Madam de Linden by increased diligence in her service; she set no bounds to her attachment. It might be said, the two hearts were made for each other; and that although the worldly rank of the one removed her at a small distance from the other, yet the goodness and condescension of the noble lady removed this wall of separation; for she did not make Sophy feel her inferiority, except in the most becoming manner. The good child never abused the happy dispositions of her benefactress; she was still modest, submissive, and obedient to the smallest desire. She never sought to overbear the other servants by the confidence which her mistress reposed in her, and what is more remarkable, she had the discretion to avoid those little jealousies that often arise in houses between servants, and cause so much evil and scandal.

Whenever Sophy reflected on her condition in the house of Madam de Linden, tears of gratitude would run down her cheeks. She often contrasted the happy care she enjoyed, with the privations she would have had to endure in the world, and would then return fresh thanks to the Lord, who had brought her to the knowledge of this virtuous lady. Thus she spent many peaceful years, and her gratitude was always increasing.

But this happiness was not to last for ever, and Sophy was again doomed to taste the chalice of afflictions. Every thing cannot always go on according to our desires here below. The Lord in his goodness knows how to mingle our days with happiness and adversity, in order to remind us of our origin, and to wean us from the earth. These trials are to a faithful soul, what storms are to the natural world. Happy are they who know how to profit by them, and to receive them with due submission from the hands of God.

To be continued.

From MAXIMS and Examples of the Saints.

### PERFECTION.

Gratitude for reproof and being found fault with, is a mark that we love the virtues contrary to those failings for which we are corrected or reprov'd; and, therefore, it is a great sign of our making progress towards perfection.—S. FRANCIS SALES.

A MONK having once gone to visit the abbot Serapion, the latter begged of him that first of all they should pray together; but the monk, saying he was a sinner, and that he was not worthy to