
CHILDHOOD, FIRST COMMUNION

said that "life is all chequered with sorrows and woes which chase one another like waves of the deep," and so the sunshine that flooded the cradle of the Dease children was soon followed by a dark cloud, and the happy home was shrouded in mourning for the well beloved father. What the loss of this father in early manhood signified to his family we can well imagine and the double bereavement of the little ones soon after, who lost both parents within a week of each other. But God is ever mindful of His own, the hairs of our heads are numbered, and not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge, so, in His loving Wisdom; what seemed a heavy blow to the orphans, was merely a closer clasping of them in His fatherly arms.

The care of the children now devolved on their Grandmother, and most nobly must she have acquitted herself of the charge; for while many instances are not recorded of her kindly concern for them, yet there are not wanting striking proofs, that she moulded their young lives to the love and worship of their Creator; for in the revolving years, two of the daughters became Religious and Saints. Her zeal for the spiritual welfare of her young charges may be noted in an incident in the childhood of Ellen, which, although looked on at the time, as simply amusing, may in a certain sense, regarded from the aftermath of that childhood, seem prophetic. The Grandmother's idea was that children should be brought to assist at Mass, before any penalty was incurred for not attending at the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and so taking her precious little darling with her, one hot