

encourage virtuous efforts, to warm with its sympathy hearts that are fainting for want of a smile, or a kind word. Sympathy costs so little ; yet how many souls bowed down by sorrow, failing to find it, allow themselves to be overcome by the assaults of the temper !

What countless advantages may be derived from the habitual practice of kindness. Acts of benevolence will aid us in overcoming selfishness, a great obstacle in the spiritual life, and serve as a safeguard to humility ; for a haughty spirit is rarely benevolent. Kindness in pious persons reconciles worldly people with religion, and attracts and wins all hearts.

Kindness should exist in the inmost recesses of our hearts. Under its influence, we will think of others without criticizing, which is uncommon. Thus will the bitterness of our judgments disappear, and good and charitable thoughts will lead us to the truth ; for the true nature of man lies hidden beneath the surface.

The double recompense of kind words is the good which they do to others, and the happiness which they procure for ourselves.

How many souls have been saved through the practice of this virtue ? To what are we not indebted through its manifestations in the past ? Favors have come to us from all sides. What would have become of us, had not God showered on us the waters of His benedictions, if thousands and thousands of times, the kindness of our fellow-beings had not prepared our souls for graces ; if, in a word, we had not encountered kindness on our pathway !

Considering the kindness that we have received at the hands of others, should we not feel the obligation of surrounding our fellow-beings with a like series of blessings ? The occasions are abundant. Scarcely once in twenty times does it require an act of self-denial ; and even in this particular case, the kindness will be ennobled by sacrifice.

Let us, therefore, practice benevolence, and endeavor to imitate our Amiable Saviour.