

of seeing themselves mercilessly driven out of their house, and all their property seized and sold by auction overwhelmed them so much that they were on the point of losing their reason. The neighbours who ran in, attempted in vain, to console them. Their efforts were useless, for this poor family believed they were ruined for ever. The whole village on hearing their misfortune was very much grieved. Some of their decent neighbours even offered to intercede with the farmer in their behalf. They went and begged him to wait another year before he should resort to rigorous measures; but he was inexorable.

Their doom now appeared inevitable, all their hopes were blasted. On the evening of this sorrowful day Sophy shut herself up in her chamber to give free scope to her tears, and to reflect on her unfortunate condition. A thousand different thoughts crossed her mind, but she could fix her attention on none. Her agitation was extreme, she already saw in imagination, her house seized, her goods sold for the payment of the farmer, and her children reduced to beggary. She at first walked about her room for a long time. At length overcome by her grief, she sat down to rest for a while in an old chair. All on a sudden her tearful eyes fell on the little wooden cross which she had chosen amongst Madam de Linden's effects. The sight of this object awakened in her all at once the recollection of the virtues of that good lady and of the advice which she had formerly given her. With a trembling hand she took the cross, pressed it to her lips, and watered it with her tears. Then falling on her knees and looking up to heaven with a countenance warmed by fervour, she said with a voice half stifled with sighs :

"O Divine Saviour of mankind ! who said to your disciples, ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be open to you, behold me overwhelmed in a sea of trouble, and ready to fall under the weight of affliction that presses so heavily on me. You are acquainted with my sufferings, and it is unnecessary that I should recount them to you. Ah ! come to my aid : come to the assistance of an unhappy mother who here implores your succour in behalf of a disabled husband and two children who are in such danger of perishing from want ! Do not abandon us at this terrible moment. You are our only refuge, for men will do nothing to relieve us, O admirable Jesus ! who heretofore stretched out your hand in favour of your apostles when their bark was in danger of being engulfed in a stormy sea, and command the waves to be appeased—ah ! command, speak now, and this danger will be removed from us !" She stopped for a few seconds to take breath and to wipe away her tears. She tenderly fixed her eyes on the Cross which she held in her hand, and which was bathed in her tears, and she resumed.

"From the summit of your Cross you formerly proclaimed that all was consummated and that the

great work of human redemption was accomplished. Yes, you have redeemed us by your divine blood. You have made us frequently feel already the graces which we have obtained by your precious death. Oh, send us efficacious succour at this hour, and be always our protector and our father. The tears of Lazarus's sister touched your heart, and you restored her brother to life. Restore us hope also, and succour us in this extreme necessity.

This prayer pronounced with such humble confidence calmed Sophy's anxiety to a certain degree. She sat down with her head resting on one hand, whilst she held the little cross in the other. She remained motionless in this position for some minutes. The excitement which had so violently agitated her was succeeded by a calm, and she felt as if God had heard her prayer, but she could not tell how ; something indescribable took place in her interior. Her tears had ceased to flow ; the sun was darting his last rays into her chamber. Sophy feeling somewhat relieved, rose up to rejoin her family. She went over to the wall to put up the little cross in its place which was still wet with her tears. Whilst she was wiping it with her apron she perceived a bit of the wood had chipped off, no doubt from the heat of her hands. She tried to replace it, and in doing so, she saw something shining at the foot of the cross. Without attaching much importance to this, she examined the object more closely, and she found that the wooden cross was only a case that enclosed another cross. She turned it backwards and forwards several times, and at length she discovered the little joinings that kept the wood together. She then took a knife, and opened it with some difficulty, when to her great astonishment she found in the case a splendid gold cross set in diamonds. She went to the window and discovered that the diamonds were real.

She ran out of the room with the rapidity of lightning, and hastened to the shop where poor William was sitting on a bench with a child in his arms, she shewed him the cross with one hand and pointed to heaven with the other, as if to signify that she had just received an unexpected succour from God. At first he did not understand what she meant, but Sophy shewed him the valuable article, and relieved him from his embarrassment.

I will not attempt to describe the joy of this good family. William, in a kind of ecstasy, cried out with tears in his eyes, oh ! how good God has been to us ! This cross will enable us to pay the farmer, and I hope the children want be driven to beg their bread, and that our house wont be taken from us.

On the following day Sophy went to town to see the worthy Priest who had formerly given her such a warm recommendation to Madam de Linden, to tell him her painful situation, and the resource she had found in the cross, whose history she related to him. This venerable old man saw a special mark of the protection of Providence in the circumstance, and repeated to Sophy what he had said on the day