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"I never realized the good of a medicine so much as I have in the last few months, during which time I have suffered intensely from pneumonia, followed by bronchitis. After trying various remedies without benefit, I began the use of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, and the effect has been marvelous, a single dose relieving me of choking, and securing a good night's rest."—A. Higginbotham, Gen. Store, Long Mountain, Va.

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Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

BROTHERLY LOVE.

But the fruit of the spirit is charity. (Epistle of the Sunday.)

Mark these words, brethren; for they describe the Christian religion, at least as far as its practical effects are concerned. The presence of the Holy Ghost is known by a kindly disposition, a friendly feeling towards others, a longing to make others happy, an affectionate sympathy for their sufferings; and all this for the love of God. So St. John says: "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren." The necessary result of sanctifying grace is a deep attachment to our friends and a loving forgiveness towards our enemies.

"I give you a new commandment," said our Lord to His disciples, "that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you love one another." Again: "By this shall men know that you are My disciples if you have love for one another." He thus tells us what His law is—fraternal charity; that is the newness of life man got from heaven above; that is the torrent of heavenly influence rushing down upon us and bearing us away upon its billows; and that is the mark set upon us by which we know ourselves, and others may know us, to be the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

But somebody might say, How about the love of God? Is not the love of God the end of all religion? Is it not our first duty to love God so strongly that we prefer Him to all things else, even our nearest relatives? Is not the love of God the one absorbing duty of our lives? In answer, my brethren, I have only to say that that is but another way of looking at the same thing; for since the coming of our Lord among us God has become man, and we are born in holy baptism, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." When our Lord, true God as He was, took human nature, He took our poor nature just as it is, saving its sinfulness; and it is His blessed will that one by one every man, woman and child in the world should personally be joined to His divine nature by baptism, and, as St. Peter says, be made partakers of the divinity He possesses. And even the poor, unbaptized heathen, they are to be gifted with this divine privilege by our love for them and our loving efforts to give it to them. Now do you not see why our Lord, His Apostles and His Church made so much of the love of one's neighbor? And do you not see that, whether you begin to love with God or with man, if you do it along with Jesus Christ, you do it with the God-man, and therefore always in God and never out of man?

Yet another might say, But, Father, what about the sacraments, and what about the practice of prayer, and what about the laws of the Church? I answer by a comparison: Why do we plant and then reap a field of wheat? That they may in due time get the grain, make bread of part themselves and families, and sell the rest to their neighbors. Now, some may use the very old-fashioned way of thrashing it out by the beating of the flax, and others by the great, roaring thrashing-machine. The last way is the quickest and cleanest and best. So our Lord, when He became man, instituted the sacraments. He established His Church as the new and best way of obtaining the ripe fruit of the Holy Spirit, and that way He commands us to use. So the man who really loves his neighbor as himself learns to do it by using our Lord's methods, the sacraments; and he cannot get along without them.

So, brethren, cultivate more and more this sweet Christian virtue of fraternal love; and especially in your families. When the children cry, when they are sickly and peevish, when others are cross and exacting, when some are dull and stupid, when the meals are too late or the food is not cooked right, when the thousand and one annoyances of living with others vex and harass you, remember that you are a Christian, and that loving patience, great good nature, fondness for friends—to say nothing of zeal for the conversion of poor sinners—are virtues that will win you the kingdom of heaven.

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A CHILD OF THE FLOODS.

By MAURICE F. EGAN, LL. D.

III.

Helena's father had bought a plot of ground near the river. He was very well content with the profit it yielded him. Accustomed in his native country—where land is dear—to make, by constant industry, every inch of earth bear something useful, he farmed his small lot as if it were a garden. He raised vegetables and took them to market himself. His neighbors were astonished at the prices he got for his potatoes, cabbages and tomatoes.

"How do you do it?" they often asked. "Hard work and care do it," he would answer, with a laugh. Every Sunday and on the first Friday of every month, the family were seen at early Mass. And Casper never went to bed without saying the rosary, in the presence of his wife and children. The boys were as hard-working as their father. Casper always said that the reason he saved money was because his boys worked for him, while the sons of neighbors went into the city to seek places in offices.

Casper's house was comfortable and warm and clean. Helena was permitted to put her statue of the Blessed Virgin in a niche in the room prepared for her, and to surround it with candles and flowers. Helena was treated like a little lady for the first week. Then she went to work, and she found plenty to do. There were chickens to feed, potatoes to be washed—for Casper always sent his vegetables to market nicely cleaned and arranged in neat baskets—many things to be done. Helena was just the little maid to do all this. While her grandmother knitted endless stockings, sometimes sighing a little for the old home, Helena bustled about like a happy bee.

All went well. Casper built a big greenhouse, and his grapes were beautiful to behold. At Christmas Casper thinned them out somewhat, and so pleased was he with the amount he received for them, that he built more green-houses and spent all the money he had saved, in stocking them with rare varieties of grapes. The green-houses were delightful in the winter days. Leaves and tendrils hid the frosty landscape without from view.

Casper said that Frau Ida and Helena brought him good luck. And Frau Ida always replied that whatever God sends is good. February came. Constant rain fell. Heavy mists veiled the earth. The sunsets presaged damp weather. Gleanings of sunshine were once or twice reflected in the clouds; but they seemed to be rapidly quenched by the mist and rain.

The river began to rise; Casper laughed at the neighbors who said that if the rains continued, there would be a flood. Things had gone so well with him that he feared no evil. He smoked his pipe and went about his work as good-humoredly as usual. Frau Ida put on her spectacles, looked at the falling rain and misty river, and shook her head.

"We have no floods at home," she said, "when the snow melts under late winter rain, because we have the forests; but where are your forests?" For the first time Casper looked seriously at the river. It had risen much; there was no doubt of that. Farmer Brown dropped in to tell him that there was great alarm in the city, and that many people had deserted their houses and gone to higher ground. If the rain kept up, he said, there would be awful times, for the flood would be worse than even last year's.

The last year's flood had not hurt Casper, so he was still indifferent. But that night, sitting beside his hearth and smoking his pipe, he was more silent than usual. The rain fell drip, drip, drip on the roof. The river's flow made an ominous and unusual sound. What if the flood should rise? Casper knew that if it once reached the level of the terrace on which his lot was situated it would cover all he possessed. He thought of the heavy bunches of grapes in the green-house for which an owner of one of the city hotels had promised to pay him a snug sum. Suppose the flood should come and the result of his labor be swept away.

Frau Ida read her son's thoughts. "What God sends," she said, "is well sent, my son." Casper tried to say the rosary with a tranquil mind. The next day dawned through mist and rain. The water still continued to rise. Boats began to move over farms, and here and there a chimney, a telegraph pole, or the top of a high tree showing above the water, bore testimony that the river had swept far beyond its banks. The family gathered together their household goods. To-morrow, if the rain did not cease, they would move to higher ground, and take lodging with Farmer Brown.

That night was an anxious one. But Casper's family were all too industrious during the day to keep awake long at night. About twelve o'clock there was a loud crash against the walls of the house. And then the glass of Frau Ida's window was broken violently.

"If you don't want to be drowned in your beds," said Farmer Brown, "come out at once." Farmer Brown sat in a boat about a foot below the sill of the window of the second story. He held a lantern high above his head. "You'll have to come quick, too," he cried, "for the floating timber will dash me to pieces if I stay here!"

Another crash. A huge tree, torn up by the flood had struck the corner of the house. Casper and his sons dressed hastily. The women of the family had not changed their clothes. They quickly seized such bundles of necessary articles as they could get, and then they were huddled into the boat. It almost broke Frau Ida's heart to have to leave her old carved chest in the house, but of course Farmer Brown would not take it.

The scene, with the house and greenhouse half buried in the flood, was a strange one. It was dark, but here and there, from passing boats, flashed lights. A tall spar broke the quiet of the night. To step into the boat from the window required unusual courage on the part of Helena. All was dark below her. As she dropped into the boat, it seemed as if she were to fall into a black pit. Helena saw her grandmother and mother get into the boat. The boys were already at the oars. The father stood, with his arms upraised, to catch her when she jumped. She hesitated. "Come!" cried her father. There was a sudden blast of wind; a louder roar of waters. Farmer Brown lost his grasp on the wall of the house, his lantern fell into the water, and Helena jumped.

At that instant the boat was wheeled away in a huge mass of drift-wood, and Helena fell into the rushing stream. When she came to the surface, darkness and cold were around her. She kept her hand under water, and saw at a glance that she was not far from the lighted window of her father's house. She could not reach it; it was too far away. She was not frightened. How troubled they would all feel about her, she thought. And then, if her mother could never find her body!

Then the weight of her clothes seemed to drag her down again. She grasped the little medal of Lourdes that hung around her neck, and Lourdes the Act of Contrition—

"O my God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins— And she went down. Before she had quite realized it, she found herself tightly grasping the window-sill of her father's house. Helena had strong arms. In an instant she had drawn herself up and climbed in through the open window. Once in, she faintly. She was almost frozen when she recovered. It did not take her long to get warm clothes on. It happened that the only change of clothes she had was the gala costume she had worn on the Feast of the Church in her native village. She knelt before the image of the Help of Christians, who had saved her when death seemed to be near; her best friends had been carried away with the flood, but her Mother was always near. Helena thanked the dear Child Jesus for giving her such a mother.

Until daylight the storm raged and the flood rose. Helena was driven up into the attic. There, like an imprisoned dove, she sat on the wide window-seat watching the flood beneath her, and praying that the dear ones might be safe.

When daylight came, Helena saw strange objects float past; a baby's cradle empty, a horse struggling with the flood, a raft with a whole family upon it, and lastly a table turned upside down was pushed against the house and jammed there by drift-wood. And in this table, wrapped in a shawl, was a little child. Helena bent out at the window and seized it with both hands. The little waif, quite warm in its wrap, smiled and caught Helena around the neck.

Helena recognized at once the shawl upon this little child. It was the one her grandmother had given to Mrs. Schwartz at Castle Garden. Helena hugged the little creature very tight, and prayed now that somebody might come to save her and her charge. The little girl was the same blue-eyed, golden-haired little creature, and she seemed to know Helena.

"Ach, mein Liechen!" It was Frau Ida who spoke. Helena and the baby were kissed and embraced by about a hundred people, grouped in Farmer Brown's high and dry barn.

The boat had been unable to approach the house during the hours of darkness, on account of the rushing drift and the need of rescuing others, who, like Casper's family, had been surprised by the flood. But at last it had reached the house. Shall I tell you how happy Casper was when he saw Helena's face at the window? Shall I tell you how the boys yelled? Shall I tell you how the mother and grandmother wept and thanked God? But I cannot. Put yourself in Helena's place and fancy it all.

So far, the mother of the little baby has not yet appeared to claim it. If she is dead, Helena will take care of it. She asked her father if she might, and he said "Yes." I can tell you, however, that when the flood went down Casper had much to be thankful for. Some of his green-houses, built on a high knoll, had not been touched by the rising water. The grapes were safe, although the green-house near the dwelling was destroyed. Kind people helped him; and, with strong hands and willing hearts and trust in God, they are getting ready to build up all that the flood tore down.

As for Helena, she grasps tight her "child of the flood." It is due to the Mother who saved her that she should be a mother to this little one. And her father, poor as he is, says she is right.

THE END

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