

Children's Department.

The Widow's Faith.

When, in 1812, the army of Napoleon I. was compelled to retreat from Moscow, their march was marked by terrible suffering from hunger and cold, and the hearts of the men were very bitter within them. Some, utterly despondent, dropped by hundreds upon the frozen ground, and died where they fell; others were filled with fury; they cursed the inhabitants of the country as they passed, and inflicted upon them as much suffering as they possibly could, even turning out of their way to do so, entering into wayside cottages, murdering the helpless inmates, and carrying off or destroying their property. It happened that on the roadside in the line of retreat, there stood a small cottage, inhabited by a poor widow with her young son and daughter. All three were much alarmed when it became known to them that the enemy were not many miles away, and that daily and hourly they were drawing nearer. Fugitives every now and then appeared at the cottage door, every one with his tale of rapine and blood, so that the widow's heart seemed to die within her for fear. But this poor woman believed that the Great God of Heaven had it in His power to save those who trusted in Him, however desperate their position might seem to be. As the danger drew nearer and nearer, the poor mother drew her boy and girl into her arms and prayed. "O Lord," she cried aloud, "be a wall unto us, even as the waters of the Red Sea were a wall unto Thy people on their right hand and on their left. . . ." She constantly repeated this prayer. But her children, though sharing in her danger, did not share in her faith. "What do you mean, mother," they said, "by a prayer such as that; it seems absurd! How can God be a wall to us?"

"I cannot tell you how, my children," the widow replied, "but I know it is true! He was as a wall to His

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wall of snow, she and her children had peacefully lain all night, while on the other side of the snowy defence fierce and furious men had marched past with hatred in their hearts and blood upon their hands. Ere that wall of snow had melted away all danger was over, every enemy passed. For years after this terrible time, the poor widow lived to recount to her children's children how the Great God of Heaven had answered her humble and believing prayer, and had raised up for her a wall of defence against all her enemies round about! "The waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."

Vivide; a Story of Normandy.

Winter had gone once more. Every heart was cheered by the flowers and the sunshine, and the soft warm wind which told that spring had come again to that pretty verdant corner of France called Normandy.

But sometimes at that season there is a sudden change. Clouds come over the blue sky and hide the fair face of the sun. The wind is no longer soft or gentle, but rough and cold, and it soon lashes the sea into waves which dash furiously against the shore of the little fishing villages of that coast. And at such times, the wives and children look anxiously out to sea, as they wait for the return of the boats which had put out before the rising of the storm.

On one such day, a small crowd had gathered round a large dog, which had reached the shore after a hard battle with the waves, and now looked back wistfully in the direction of a little storm-tossed boat, and leapt and jumped as though beseeching help. Then he would whine and run to the edge of the sea; then bark afresh—words could scarcely have told more plainly the poor animal's distress.

When ten of the men made ready to go off to the rescue, the dog accompanied them as if he would be their guide; but it seemed doubtful lest the small craft would sink before help could be given. There were two figures to be seen at first, but as a fresh wave broke over the little boat, only one remained. Another wave; it disappeared again and came up empty!

When after an hour or so it was dragged on shore, there was no one to tell the story of its owners, or why they were in those parts; but the boat had the name "Vivide" painted in bright red letters on the stern.

Next morning when the sun shone as brightly as if there had been no storm, no danger, no loss of life, two dead bodies were washed on shore. The stranger dog kept watch beside them, whining piteously. They were buried in the pretty hill-side cemetery, and the dog followed closely behind the two coffins.

When the grave was closed, and one of the kindly fishermen would have taken the poor desolate animal to his own home, it lay quietly by the tomb as though its place was by its master in life or in death.

Every one round about called the dog "Vivide," after the boat in which it had come to those shores of Normandy; every one felt pityingly and kindly towards it; but it would not be comforted.

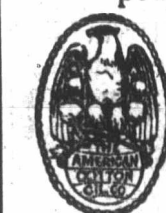
As days went on, by dint of much coaxing and persuasion, the faithful creature was taken from its post by the newly-made grave to find a good home with the inn-keeper of the vil-

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