...hought of. Strife and discord ...e between his kindred and him-
...Better stay away from them for years than run the risk of dissension. No, he must give up Trouvaille. After all, what claim had the child upon him? Why should he go through all this anxiety of mind about a little creature who was a perfect stranger to him? The words "Am I my brother's keeper?" passed through his mind. He started. "Whose words were those?" he asked himself. "Cain's, the murderer." He sighed deeply. Poor Ambrose! the grace of God was pressing him very hard. A good inspiration is often a very troublesome thing. It will not leave a man alone. It is so unfair in its demands; so much more exacting than the sternest preacher.

The following day, when Ambrose entered the house where Trouvaille was harbored, he heard the boy using some very bad words. Such words, alas, as showed that, young as he was, he had learnt the language of vice before he could understand it. The soldier seized hold of his arm and gave him a box on the ear.

"Aye, you may well beat him," cried the woman in whose charge he was left. "It is shocking to hear that child talk—the dreadful things he sometimes says. He swears and curses like a little imb of Satan, and knows no more about the good God than a kitten or a puppy dog."

Ambrose took hold of the child's hand, and told the woman he was going to take him out with him. Trouvaille shrank back with a frightened look.

"Are you going to beat me?" he said.

"No, not now. But I must beat you another time if you say those wicked words again."

"I don't know what are wicked words," sobbed the child. "Nurse never beat me for that, only when I asked her to give me something to eat, or when I could not carry the heavy logs of wood into the house."

"Aye, that's it," muttered Ambrose.

"Whose fault is it that there are so many wicked people in the world? No wonder convicts are so numerous and prisons so full. The neglected child is the future criminal. What will a man say to the Almighty God on the day of judgment who could have rescued a young child from sin and ruin, and who did not do it."

Yes; inspirations are holy but terrible things! They clamor in a man's ear, and knock at his heart in a very importunate—a very irresistible manner.

Ambrose walked so fast that poor little Trouvaille could hardly keep up with him. At last they stopped before a church. The soldier led the child to the altar of the Blessed Virgin, and made him kneel down Then he said in a low voice:

"Now, sir, mind that you repeat after me the words that I tell you. "Holy Virgin, Mother of God, show Ambrose what he ought to do, and give him strength to do it, and make me a good boy."

The words were uttered by the child, and rose at the same time from the very depths of the soldier's heart. They then got up and left the church, and went to the school of the Christian Brothers.

"If I was to pay down 1,200 francs," Ambrose said to the superior, "would you take this child for good and all, and bring him up in the knowledge of God and the love of Jesus and his Blessed Mother?"

The superior took a few moments to reflect, and then gave his assent to the proposal.

"Keep him here, will you, for two or three hours?" Ambrose said, "and I will then call for him again, or leave him here for good."

The soldier walked out into the country as he had done the week before, and went over the very same ground. The red poppies and purple cornflowers were shining as brightly ... yellow stalks; the white, fleecy clouds careering as swiftly over the deep, blue sky, and throwing their graceful shadows on that sea of waving, undulating corn. The air was as balmy, and the thoughts of home as sweet, as they had been then; but a change had come over the spirit of that true-hearted man. He had heard the voice of God speaking to his soul. He had listened to it with the docility of one who, through the simplicity of faith and the plain logic of Christian principle, had unconsciously attained to heroic virtue. A change had also come over his countenance since the last day he had strolled through those fields in careless joyousness of heart. It was a calmer and deeper joy which, from the very depth of his soul where it was lying, now shone in his eyes and gave dignity to his brow—the joy of self-sacrifice; the joy of suffering something for Him who suffered so much for us; the joy that foreshadows, if it does not forstall heaven. He stood gazing at the setting sun with a calm, though wistful look. Perhaps he thought of its rays gilding at that hour with rosy light the highest of the Dauphine Alps. Perhaps he was parting with a still brighter vision; for his joy seemed to increase as he gazed longer on that sunset sky. At last he turned away and retraced his steps towards the town. It was no longer the warlike strain he had warbled the week before which rose to his lips, but the words of a hymn which the soldiers used to sing at the evening service of the confraternity, which the almoner had established amongst them.

"Oh, God of armies! hear our vow,
And make our purpose strong;
We vow to fight for Thee till death;
Our hearts to Thee belong.

He topped at the house of a gentleman who had lately advertised for a substitute for conscription. He offered himself, and the agreement was concluded. Not for love of woman, as the patriarch of old, but for the love of Him who has said, "Inasmuch as you do it to one of these little ones, you do it unto Me." Ambrose bound himself to seven more years of distasteful bondage, and received the pieces of silver, not the price of blood, blessed be God! but the price, as he fondly hoped of an immortal soul, the ransom of one of Christ's little ones. He hastened with his wealth to the home of the Christian Brothers. The infant school was now about to break up; but before the little day-scholars took their departure, they all knelt round our Lady's altar, decorated for the next day's festival, Corpus Christi, or God's Festival, as it is called in France. Flowers from the garden and fields were laid at Mary's feet, and infant voices sang:

Look down, O Mother Mary,
From Thy bright throne above;
Cast down upon Thy children
Only one glance of love.

Open to us Thy mantle;
There stay we without fear;
What evil can befall us,
If, Mother, Thou art near?

The little outcast Trouvaille was kneeling with the rest. When the bell rang he turned round, and seeing Ambrose standing at the door, he ran up to him and said, "I can say 'Jesus and Mary,' and I will not say wicked words again."

The soldier's heart was too full to allow him to speak. He laid his hand on the child's head and consigned the price of his liberty and the charge of the orphan to the good Brothers.

...time
...Heard the sweet
...only tho' mouldering towers,
...and bouquets of pretty, wild fl...
...lowers, flowers—
...eautiful flowers!
...nery youth's happy h...
...t, or nursed among ...wers,
...ction, ye
Beautiful flowers!
...I stood at the gate,
...sang a sweet song to its mate,
...love's magnetic powers
...the perfume of flowers.
...flowers—
...l flowers!
...ining 'round bowers.
...m this bleak world of ours,
...like the scent of sweet
...that loves not to hear
...he pure atmosphere;
...eans not the powers
...l flowers.
D. A.

...tory.

...soldier was strolling one ...ing through the fields of waving corn which surrounds the town of ——, on his way back to the barracks where his regiment was quartered; his plain good humored face the picture of contentment; his thoughts evidently dwelling on some agreeable subject. Now and then he rubbed his hands together, and gave vent to his feelings by singing a stanza of some very warlike song about cannons, glory, France and the Alps; in character, indeed, with his uniform but scarcely so with the very gentle and peaceful expression of his countenance. Fierce and defiant as were the words which Ambrose warbled as he walked along, his mind was nevertheless very differently occupied than in hoping to scale mountain heights at the heels of the "Petit Caporal," or adjuring Bellona, the goddess of war, to conduct her votaries once more to the fields of Marengo and Wagram. He was, in fact, rejoicing from the bottom of his heart, congratulating himself with the greatest fervor that his term of millitary service was at last drawing to an end seven long, weary years of duties strictly fulfilled; for Ambrose was a thorough Christian, and made, as he called it, "a certain little monthly review of his conscience," with the almoner of the regiment, which tended to a very faithful discharge of his duties, as a soldier, as well as of those incumbent on every good Catholic. But he had never the least taste for the military profession. The life at the barracks was distasteful to him, and the tone of thought which prevailed amongst his companions quite uncongenial to his own.

The remembrance of his native village of the gable-ended house over-topped by huge walnut trees and surrounded by peaceful and fragrant meadows; of the furrows which he had trod for many an hour by the side of his father's plough; of the woods where he had played with his brothers in the quivering shade of the birch and the mountain ash; of all those sights and sounds which speak of rural life at early morn and sultry noon, "and weary labor set free at eve, and wending to its home," had haunted him throughout that seven years' servitude even as dreams of clear fountains and running streams torment the traveller in the desert. Silently, quietly, but intensely he had longed for the day which was to set him free from the yoke which the conscription binds on every Frenchman, and which is often a source of keen suffering to the inhabitants of her remote and pastoral provinces. For the last few months, like a home-sick schoolboy, he had counted the days that were yet to intervene before that much-desired release took place.

Ambrose was not endowed with a very vivid imagination, and he had nevertheless conjured up many a dream about his return to the little hamlet embowered in chestnut groves and lying in a quiet valley amidst the purple hills of Dauphine. There was a maiden, too, whom he had sometimes fancied would make a tidy housewife to a hard-working laboring man. She was only fourteen when he left home; but if she had happened not yet to have found a husband, who could tell that before Michaelmas-day a small cottage on the outskirts of the village, half way up the hill where the church stood—he remembered it well; there was a field of clover at its back, and a tall, lime tree in front—might not be fitted up for the reception of a newly-married pair? To be sure he did not exactly know where the money to furnish it would come from, for Ambrose had nothing in the world but his pay, and the few pennies he could spare had been oftener put out at interest in the poor-box than in the savings-bank: but still it was something to think about on a summer's evening as the sun went down behind the hills, and the moon rose in silent beauty, gilding with her silvery light the wall of the town and the quaint old towers of the Church of St. Martin. Vision upon vision rose in the soldier's mind. No wonder that a smile hovered on his lips, and that Bellona was once more invoked with unconscious ardor as he passed under the archway of those gates which he hoped in another fortnight forever to take leave of.

As he passed a little shop in which cakes and buns were sold, he felt his hand gently touched, and turning round he saw a pale, thin, little boy, of about four years of age, who was trying to attract his notice.

"What is the matter, my man?" he said, stooping down to the child.

"I am very hungry," was the answer.

"To whom do you belong?" the soldier asked.

"I belong to my nurse; but she brought me here this morning and told me to stand still where she left me, and that if I went back to her house she would kill me."

"Where does she live?"

"A great way off; up in the hills. We came in a cart. Don't take me back to her. She is always beating me."

The soldier pulled down the ragged dress which covered the poor little back, ... saw many bruises and the marks of ... blows. The little fellow looked ... his face with a wistful look and ...

"Take me with you; I am so hungry." ... took hold of the child's hand, ... the little fingers tightly grasping ... afraid to let them go. He ... the shop and bought a bun, ... boy eagerly devoured. They ... towards the barracks, ... as to the course ...

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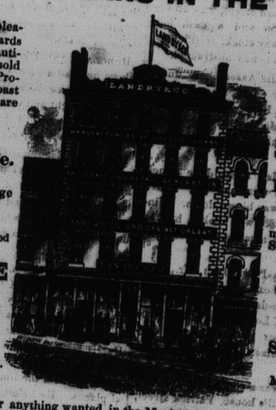
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