

none. There happened to be on this journey a pregnant woman, who also carried a heavy burden and a little child. As they came to cross a small stream, very deep and very swift, [103] and which had no other bridge than a tree thrown across, this woman, swayed by her burden, fell into the torrent. The Father, who was following her,—seeing that the rope about her bundle had slipped to her neck, and that this burden was dragging her to the bottom,—plunges into the water, overtakes her by swimming, disengages her from her burden, and takes her to the shore, saving her life and that of her little child, which he baptized at once, seeing it very ill; in fact, it took its flight, two days later, to Paradise. I leave you to think whether the cold made itself felt by that poor worn-out body. The fire which was made for that revived woman preserved their lives, which they would have lost without this help.

Having arrived at the village, he had no leisure to refresh and rest himself,—they command him to carry a great sack full of corn to those hunters. This burden astounds him; they throw it on his shoulders, but he does not go far,—his weakness and the sleet, which caused him to fall at each step, make him turn back. Those who had sent him, seeing him return, overwhelmed him with insults,—calling him a dog, a misshapen fellow, who knew nothing but to eat. Then, by way of punishment, they put him in the cabin of a man who is all putrid through a loathsome and [104] vile disease,—a cruel man, who had torn out his nails at his entrance into the country; and who, moreover, in his filthiness, had no other comfort than a little corn boiled in water. The Father serves him as a menial during fifteen days, with an