

The noise of the little scholars; the singing and chanting of psalms by the Choir, in a closely crowded household; the din made on a plank floor by wooden sandals, which the Nuns used, the fire having robbed them of their other footwear; the smoke which invaded every nook and corner, and was not well suited for arresting her cough, or curing her lungs; and a thousand other inconveniences [192] which are met with in the houses of those who have lost everything in a great fire,—all these crosses, I say, never disturbed the serenity of her heart or altered the sweetness of her patience. All these hardships were as yet only roses; degrees of iron and of suffering were given her by Our Lord in proportion to his will to exalt her high in Heaven.

She dreaded an illness that should demand services burdensome alike to patient and to Nurses; she feared pains of too great severity, lest her weakness might bring shipwreck to her patience; and she wished to be free from the great spiritual destitution that she had formerly suffered, for fear that she should not render with love the fidelity which she had vowed to her Lord. Precisely these three trials she encountered; but he who subjected her to these conflicts made her win the victory gloriously.

She became so extremely dropsical that it was resolved to make openings in her legs, in order to draw off the water that threatened to burst her flesh. The Surgeon made large [193] and deep incisions in her living flesh, so that the membrane was visible, the pain causing her to utter the holy Name of JESUS. Then, becoming conscious of her very innocent murmur, "Alas!" she said, "I am very weak-spirited; forgive me the unedifying conduct I