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"Dios Aprieta Pero No Ahorca."

That is a fine old Mexican proverb: "God bears down but does not choke you". It is a cryptic rendering of the solution to the so-called problem of evil, a solution which appears in other form on many, many pages of Holy Writ. Genesis explains the origin of physical evil and mental affliction, Job dramatizes it, and Christ, who bore our sins upon His shoulders, gave it its proper dignity as a Christian virtue:

"I am the true vine; and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit." -- John xv.

Among the students on probation there are quite a few who practiced daily Communion faithfully during Lent, some of them for the first time. They tried hard to make a good Lent and were faithful to their resolutions. But luck deserted them: the examinations went bad, and they are on probation. What's the answer?

Investigation of failures shows that they have many causes: poor high school training, lack of proper methods in study, poor eye-sight and poor health generally, undernourishment, an infinitude of worries (including love affairs, discord at home, financial stringency, hypochondria, sophomoritis), lack of exercise, lack of confidence, and no end of others. Sometimes it is even lack of work. It is possible for a student to pray a great deal (that is, to say a great many prayers) without becoming really spiritual; in such a case laziness is sometimes a glaring fault. He forgets that God intended us to work as well as pray.

However, failure may come when honest efforts have been made and the efforts have been wisely directed. In such cases one must needs have recourse to the Mexican proverb quoted above. Such a happening is a test of character and a refiner of character. The true Christian says with holy Job: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord;" the weakling cries, "God is picking on me." "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit," is our Lord's answer.

Everything has a purpose in God's loving Providence. While this is usually concealed from our earthly eyes, now and then He draws the veil to teach us a needed lesson. A story of such an event has just reached us. It concerns a father and mother and a little daughter, an attractive and beautiful child, a client of the Little Flower and endowed with something of her spirit, as the event proved.

The father was a good, practical Catholic; the mother was a recent convert who had not imbibed thoroughly the true spirit of Catholicity. A fair share of worldly success came to the man, and social distractions began to wean the couple away from the practices of religion which had meant much to them at another time. They seldom missed Sunday Mass, but they did little in addition to a fulfillment of this obligation. The child by this time had received her First Holy Communion, and in her prayers she made many strange reflections.

Suddenly she was stricken with infantile paralysis. The parents were distracted with grief; they summoned every medical attention, and found it hard to tear themselves from her bedside. Then one day the child called her father and whispered in his ear: "Daddy, I asked God to do something to me because you were not loving Him as you should." The lesson went home: a year later the father died of cancer, a model of resignation; the mother is now an inspiring example of true Catholic womanhood.

Prayers.

James Collins asks prayers for a very sick brother, Bob Dockweiler for his brother Tom, an alumnus, who has just undergone a serious operation; Father Meehan, and Bro. Hilarion, C.S.C., deceased; an uncle of Dan Cunningham ('26), very ill. Four special intentions.