

## **FORGIVENESS OF ENEMIES.**

An edifying illustration of FORGIVENESS from the time of the ancient Christians of Rome:

A rich man with hundreds of slaves had one by the name of Paulus, whom he trusted fully, making him steward over all his household. One day he went with Paulus to the slave market to buy some new men. Before bargaining, they examined the human merchandise, observing their musculature to see if they were worth their price. Paulus saw for sale a weak, old man. He implored his owner to buy this slave.

The rich man, Proculus, answered mockingly, "But he is good for nothing."

"Buy him," Paulus insisted. "He is cheap. And I promise that the work in your household will go as never before."

So the owner yielded. And it really was true that all the work went better than ever. But Proculus observed that Paulus now worked for two men. The old slave did nothing. Paulus tended him, gave him the best food, and made him rest the whole time.

Proculus asked Paulus, "You know I value you. I don't mind your protecting this old man. Only tell me who he is. Is it perhaps your father?" Paulus answered, "It is one to whom I owe more than to my father."

"Is it your teacher?"

"No. Somebody to whom I owe more."

"Who is it, then?"

"This is my enemy. He is the man who killed my father and sold us, the children, as slaves. As for me, I am a disciple of Christ, Who has taught us to love our enemies and to reward evil with good."