

doing all their work and going through all their devotions!

When the order for inflicting discipline for faults, whether real or imaginary, was given by the lady superioress, it was gone about with great exactness and coolness. The offending sister entered the apartment, and, at the clap of the superioress' hand, began, with a knotted cord, to inflict stripes on her own body as severe as possible—the severer the better, they were taught to believe. Often, in this way, the flesh is whipped till it blisters and bleeds. And when this is repeated, as it often is,—for great merit is attached to this method of mortification,—the old wounds, not yet healed, are opened afresh, and sometimes kept so for weeks and months together.

Still, as is well known, there is an air of great cheerfulness in the manners and conversation of those who give themselves up to this mode of life. I asked the subject of this narrative if it was not so, and how it was to be accounted for; and the answer was, that it was to be accounted for by the *firm faith* of the parties that by so acting they were doing a meritorious thing in the sight of God, and securing for themselves thereby, without fail, a place in heaven. At night this formed, very frequently, a part of the conversation, and only on this principle was life, on the conditions prescribed, endurable.

By all these influences this young woman came to see that she had been deceived in the promises which the system she had adopted made to her of peace and happiness. Toiling thus from day to day in the laundry; spending all these hours daily in repeating prayers and making confessions; inflicting all these stripes on her body for the good of her soul; giving up her own will and life, in the name of religion, to the will of another whom she believed in her soul to be no better than herself, and in some things a great deal worse,—she found she was spending her labour for that which satisfied not. The whole thing became unreal, hollow, false; and she resolved, wherever peace might be found, that she would cease to seek for it in a system of lies. The knowledge, besides, which she possessed of the word of God stood to her in good stead at this crisis of her being; and she was helped in her resolution to come out from the spiritual Babylon, by remembering the teaching she had listened to, in the first days of her perversion, from the lips of the priests, the thought of which often made her shudder.

An instance of this she gave, which is not out of place to quote. In a family with which she was intimate, a young girl of whom she was very fond was seized with

fatal illness, and, when sinking and dying she waited on her day and night. Her father was a staunch Roman Catholic, and as he knew his daughter was dying, he did not want wine and nourishing food to be given her, as it was only wasting money; and in so doing he had the approbation of the priest. On the last occasion on which the priest visited her, he said to her: 'Oh, happy child! you are dying, and you are going straight to heaven. You have got no sin—you never had any sin; you are perfectly pure. Think what a golden crown you will get, and what a beautiful white dress you will wear, and what a palm will be given you, and white lily in your hand!' The poor thing died in this belief, and went away into eternity with the idea that it was some ball or gay assembly she was going to. No mention made of judgment-seat or sight of God. She never had any sin! And was taught to look to no Saviour! No wonder that the remembrance of this and similar scenes should awaken horror and indignation in the mind.

I have sufficiently indicated the process of recovery in its leading features, and must bring my narrative to a close. When her eyes were opened, it looked like a long period of delusion and infatuation through which she had passed. And when she left the convent, and not long after gave up all connection with priest or chapel, it was with the feeling of the Psalmist: 'Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me a prey to their teeth. My soul is escaped, as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken, and I am escaped.' As may be supposed, her return to the faith in which she had been trained in her youth greatly delighted the heart of her sister, who had the greatest anxieties on her account; and of her father, whose heart had almost been broken by her perversion. When that sister died, as I have stated above, she had the words of eternal life whispered in her ear by her who had gone so far astray, but now was restored.

But great was the chagrin and anger of her Roman Catholic friends at the change she made. Their displeasure knew no bounds. A day or two before leaving the city, she was asked to dine with a family with which she had been intimate. After dinner, the conversation turned on religion, and then for the first time they learned that she had changed her views, and gone back to the Protestant faith. Whereupon the father said, that if he had known that, he would never have allowed her to enter his door; and the sooner she left the house the better, as he did not want to have the curse of God brought on his family by her; adding, 'I am willing to receive you as a con-