

"Oh, Marie! Marie!" she sobbed in an under tone. "Ah, Madam! did you know the creature we have lost, you would not wonder at his sorrow—nor at his despair," she added, after a moment's pause, "for he is an infidel, without religion—without a God. He does not believe he has a soul, or that we shall ever behold our child again."

The poor woman looked upon me now as a friend—as a benefactor who had saved the remains of her child from profanation; and, by degrees, she told me the little history of her Marie. I cannot give it better than in her own words, as I heard it partly then, and partly at different visits I paid her afterwards.

"I have told you," she began, "that my husband is an infidel; he is also a man of most violent temper. His conversation is enough to contaminate the strongest Christian; you may believe it might destroy the rising principles of a child. My poor Marie! My life was passed in seeking to efface the impressions which her soul received, and to undo the harm that bad example and profane conversation were perpetually doing. For a time I hoped I had succeeded; but it pleased God to visit me with sickness, which confined me to my bed for several years.—When I rose from it, I no longer recognised my child; the evil doctrine had entered her soul, it had taken root and flourished there. Shall I ever forget the anguish of my heart, when first from the lips of my child I heard the blasphemous doctrines she had learned from her father? It was, indeed, too true. While I was helpless on the bed of pain, that father, who should have shielded his child from the very shadow of sin, had instilled into her's the poisonous creed of his own unhap-

py soul. She laughed in scorn at the name of God, scoffed at religion, mocked at the priests, and never went to church except to meet the gay companions of her folly. She was now surrounded by people well calculated to allure her into vice; she was beautiful, and endowed with a genius, which, if trained in a right direction, had been the pride and glory of her mother; but, perverted as it was, I declare to you I would have gladly renounced it to behold her a gibbering idiot at my feet, so that with the change had come the unstained innocence of an idiot soul. Marie had now attained her fourteenth year; in vain I raised my warning voice. I was a bigot in the eyes of my child, and at last I became passive, content to implore the Mother of God, to whom I had devoted Marie at her birth, that the sins of the father might not be visited on the head of the child. My prayer was in mercy heard, and gladly do I pass over her youthful errors, to tell you of her prompt repentance and heroic virtues. She conceived a strong desire to go on the stage; this awoke her father from his dream of security. Both were of vehement temper, and I will not describe the scenes that followed. While this contest was at its height, we went to a village fete; it was the first of May, and with the exception of my child, all the girls of the fete belonged to the association of the Month of Mary. They had been to communion that morning, and they came to the fete full of innocent and religious joy. Their Lord was reposing in their hearts;—alas! the passions of this world were in the breast of my child: the contrast wrung my soul with anguish. They looked like the birds of Heaven, in their white robes, and whiter wreaths; a little pic-