

spirit, to an incessant round of gaiety and pleasures. She was naturally very lively and fond of society ; and this new life, coming after years of neglect and hardships, was well calculated to undermine her fervor and foster her natural inclination to vanity. Moreover, her very loving heart and sensitive nature were strongly appealed to, in the entreaties of her mother to make a home where she could spend her last days in peace, under her daughter's care, instead of being left in wretchedness in the old home. It would be difficult to imagine the misery Margaret suffered in the conflict between the love of all she held most dear, and to whom she was bound by every tie of duty and obedience on the one hand, and on the other, the strong, resistless vocation by which God was calling her to Himself. " I had," she said, " my vow constantly before my eyes, together with the thought that if I were unfaithful to it I should be eternally lost." And on the other hand she loved her mother so intensely, that " we could not live without seeing each other."

Not that she would not have given up all other love for His love, but that she shrank from the reproaches of those who would say she sacrificed her mother's happiness, and perhaps caused her death, as Madame Alacoque has already declared she could not live without her child.

Distracted with uncertainty as to the course she ought to pursue, without a friend or guide to seek counsel, doubting of everything especially the validity of her vow and of her power to persevere in the religious life, even if she embraced it, Margaret Mary for some time made a compromise. She yielded outwardly to her mother and brothers by going out into the world and entering into all its gaieties, while secretly she practised the utmost austerities.

However, this did not long continue. One evening as she was doffing a dress in which she had taken an unusual pleasure during the day, she suddenly beheld before her the figure of our Lord as He appeared after His scourging, all