

some new articles of dress, he called her, and, after a severe rebuke, commanded her to go and leave this superfluous article in the middle of the street. The good Mary went instantly and obeyed the command, and then returned to speak to him: whereupon, he forbade her to go to communion that day, because of her pride, as he termed it. To this second trial she submitted without a murmur.

The wise director took care that self love might not find wherewith to feed itself in these occasions; for he persuaded his penitent that humiliations were particularly necessary for her, and not so much for trials of virtue, but as means to cure her pride. He but too well knew that many would bear to be mortified well enough, so that their vanity was flattered by the hope that it was only to try them instead of to cure them.

Being greatly annoyed by nocturnal fears, she got a little girl to sleep in her room; but the father having reproached her with thus showing a want of confidence in God, her Protector, she immediately dismissed the little one. The pious visits of which we above spoke, did not entirely meet his approbation, and he recommended Mary to keep her retreat more closely. She obeyed instantly (a single word sufficed for her) and absolutely forbade herself all such entertainments, though good in themselves, and productive of the spiritual advancement of others. Those persons complained bitterly of the man of God, and accused him of extreme severity. To a soul less humble than Mary, these murmurs would furnish a specious pretext to throw off the yoke of holy obedience; besides she had great zeal and charity, and strong fears of not employing the talent which God had given her

of benefitting others. Nevertheless she undertook his defence, and said would be unjust to blame Father Balthasar—"He has not absolutely commanded me not to receive or pay sins," said she to those ladies, "only advised me to be more solitary and retired—and is he not right? Would not such a coarse best suit my ignorance and rusticity?"

Notwithstanding such unlimited obedience, the Father became not more indulgent; whether it was that Mary might not contract for him too great an attachment, or for other reasons, he sometimes obliged her to confess to other clergymen; in which he no doubt evinced great prudence, as the contrary practice is subject to many inconveniences. The best founded confidence may be entirely lost or lessened for a time, and though it were only in one point, would it not be a great folly to expose one's self to tormenting anxiety in such an important matter as that of confession? Hence, in order to prevent abuses, and, perhaps, sacrilege, it is sometimes advisable not to be bound to one confessor, (not that we approve of the conduct of those who are continually changing directors, which is another abuse). Such was Father Balthasar's rule; and though Mary Diaz wished there might be an exception in her case, through the desire of increasing her merits, and of discharging his own duty, he would not depart therefrom.

Another time he forbade her to approach the holy communion (and her desire of it was very great, until the next time she made her confession to him. The following day she went early to the confessional, that she might not be disappointed. Several others came after, to whom, contrary to custom