

once more the miserable garret he called home, found his parent in a drunken sleep, and pulling part of an old quilt over himself, he lay down upon the floor. But what mattered such hard-ship at present ! He was happy. Did he not know for the first time that there was somebody to love him ?

The next day, and the next, and then every day, Richard took the road to his blessed church. His papers were very soon disposed of at its door ; and his mother, satisfied with the result of the sales, scarcely asked him how he employed his time. From the church he followed his new companions to the Sisters' school ; and, after careful instruction, the day came when, all tearful and repentant, he made his first confession. After that he felt very happy.

But the mission ended ; it had been a children's mission, and Sister Bridget no longer saw among her class the sad-faced and zealous little figure she had learned to love so soon.

What had become of Richard ? The boy had early begun a rough apprenticeship of life, but a still heavier cross was now laid on his feeble shoulders. He no longer sold papers on the streets : his mother had secured an engagement for him at a low saloon to wash glasses and sweep the floor. The harsh treatment he received from his new master was added to that with which his mother still continued to abuse him. His strength could not resist this usage. Soon his limbs, fragile and bruised, caused him violent pains ; yet never once from the child's lips came complaint or murmur. Nothing could trouble the serenity and calm which dwelt in those great eyes of his ; and when finally it was impossible for him to leave his poor couch, it was easy to believe from his fixed and ravished glance that he was listening to a beloved voice, whose accents, whispered low, were inaudible to other ears.

For the greater part of the day he remained all alone in the wretched garret, burning with fever, and without strength enough to drag himself about to secure even a drink of water. He knew that he was going to die : his mother had told him so with what seemed to be a sort of fierce and heartless joy. But ah ! Richard was not afraid to die ; for death meant heaven, and the Child Jesus and the Blessed Virgin, and the white wings of angels and