

And all the other children sat gloomily round and wiped away their fast-falling tears. Then into the midst of the scene came Nina.

'What is the good of going on like that?' she said.

'Going on like what?' asked Peach, raising her tear-stained face.

'Why, crying and groaning and making other people worse.'

'But we cannot help it; we have got some heart,' said Amy in an almost snappish voice.

'Don't you think that this is the time to act? Don't you think that this is the time to ask God to spare Rosaleen? Why don't you all kneel down and pray? That's the thing you ought to do. Why don't you all pray for Rosaleen instead of crying and groaning, and making yourselves quite useless?'

Nina's words had a stimulating effect. There was silence for a moment; then Prudence said in a humble tone:

'I seem to have no words; I feel quite choked with sorrow and misery. Will you pray for us, Nina?'

Nina was very shy with regard to her religious feelings; but this was not a moment to indulge in any frailty. She felt that she must act, and quickly. So she knelt down, and the other children knelt