

little thing, but she can't be everywhere at once, and Peter would need some one after him the whole time not to speak of Jeannie, the dear little lammie ! "

" True for you, Mrs. Allen," would her neighbor reply ; " but you see it's this way with me : I get three or four days' steady work every week at house-cleanin' and washin', and that's a great thing, you know, for a lone woman like me, for it helps me to pay the rent and to feed and clothe the little ones. So what can I do ? "

" But don't you be thinkin' all day long that somethin' bad might be happenin' at home—some terrible accident, you know ? If I was in your place I'd never have an easy hour when I'd be away from the children."

" Well ! I declare to you, Mrs. Allen," said the little woman with an easy smile, " that's not the way with me, at all, at all. I don't fret a bit about the children while I'm gone from them. You see, ma'am, when I go out in the mornin' to my work, I just put the children and even the little place we have under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, an' I ask Her to be a mother to them till I come back."

" Well ! an' what then ? " asked the other with an amused smile.

" Why, just this," said Mrs. Lanigan simply, " that I have no fear for my fatherless little ones when I'm out earnin' their livin', for I know they're better cared for than if I was with them."

A mocking laugh behind her startled the blithe little widow, and, turning, she beheld Sam Allen, who had entered, unperceived by her.

" What are you laughin' at, Sam Allen ? " she asked a little testily, for her.

" Why, what would I be laughin' at, Mrs. Lanigan, only at your simplicity ? How do you think your Virgin Mary, up in heaven, can hear what you say down here in the court, or take care of your children ? I always took