

"Not the prayers themselves, ma'am ; but the Lord did it, when I come to Him that way. I'd been quite careless in prayer afore this, and slipped along my beads as if themselves could save me ; and I went once a month to D. to mass, and odd times I went to confession. But such was my blindness at them times, that I could think of nothing to confess, but thought I was far better than most o' them. I thought if I didn't lie, nor steal, nor fight, I was holy ; yet I was unhappy.

"But when I went to my last place, my eyes were opened, and I saw that I was neither loving nor serving God or man as I ought, and that *that* was sin enough for a life's confession ; that it was breaking all the commandments in one. And I just longed so after a smile from God, and a word from Him in my heart, that for whole days and nights I was whisperin' to Him what I heard at the prayers—remindin' Him that He had promised to be a Father to the fatherless, and to take all poor souls that come unto Him into His peace and His love, just freely."

"Did you not tell your priest, and try to get help from him, Ellen ?" asked her mistress.

"Yes, ma'am, I did ; and he asked who put that in my head. But he was a kind pityin' man, and did all he could to comfort me. He bade me quit goin' to other people's prayers, and mind my own ; and said I could see, by my unhappiness, the ill effect of meddling with a religion I wasn't razed in ;—and he spoke very lovin' to me. 'Poor child,' says he, 'go to yer knees, and ask the Blessed Virgin to plade with her Son, and to bid Him plade with His Fayther that ye may have rest, and pace to yer soul. I can see no sin that nade trouble ye, and maybe yer a bit nervous and fidgety ; but ye are all right at heart. Double the number o' your prayers, and fast two days in place o' one in the wake, and come back to me in a while, child ; and tell me ye'se all bright again, as such an honest, good tempered gerl desarnes to be.'

"I knew that his business was to look after souls, ma'am, and^as he'd always been civil and kind when I went to him, I thought I'd take his advice. So I went

home, and I prayed and prayed to the Virgin (dear soul that she is), but never an answer came. So one midnight when I was shiverin' with the cold, on my knees, this thought just came all of a sudden into my heart : I'm needin' peace that only the Lord Himself can give me ; I said, 'I will arise and go to my Father ;' and I just felt that moment as if Christ came and took me by the hand, and led me to Him. I just felt in my soul that he had forgave all my sins, and made me one with Himself. And since then, dear lady, there has come nothing that could break my peace. My hard work is just a delight to me every day, and the world is more lovely than I can tell you."

"Have you told all this to your friends and the priests ?" asked her mistress.

"Ah, indeed I have, ma'am. My own folks say I'm no better than I ever was, and Father H. says, 'I'm glad ye are happy again, child ; but be sure you mind yer own religion, and let other people's alone.'"

"Have you left the Catholic Church, Ellen ?" asked the lady, who was greatly interested in her story.

"Left the Catholic Church, ma'am ?" asked the girl, looking up in surprise. "No. Why should I ?"

"You found no peace in penance, confession, nor prayers by your beads, but in going straight to Jesus, who came to take away the sin of the world," said the lady.

"Well, ma'am, but I'm done with them things, and gone to Christ. The Church, you know, trusts in his cross for mercy. Thousands of holy men an' women have been in that church and loved Christ, and I think they will all get the great light by and by. The Lord has them all in His heart, and can do for them, poor dears, as He did for me. Oh no ! I would never forsake them, just because of the greater blessin' I got from Him, above themselves."

Ellen remained two years in this family, attending prayers, and occasionally going to prayer-meetings ; but, except when she could ride five miles to mass, she remained at home and read her Bible on the Sabbath, as she said, "not to break the heart of her mother,