

would have told more of my miseries, if it could have served any good purpose ; and I would not tell less, because I would encourage those who have suffered, and groped, and wandered, and sinned like me, to seek pardon and peace, where I have found them.

I have lived over again in these pages the follies of my life, and dwelt upon frivolities, upon which with God's grace I have turned my back forever, to lead others through them, as I have been led myself, to the knowledge of the truth and the love of the only life that is worth living. May it please God to make such portions of my history effective warnings to those of my readers who have not yet found by their own experience the bitterness of sin and the emptiness of the world ; so that of no one of them may it ever be said with truth : "It is thy own history,"—"*de te fabula narratur.*" Let none presume to imitate my follies, for God is just ; but let those who have erred, still hope, for He is merciful.

I have erred much, but I have learned to pray. I have prayed, and God could not resist me ; for as the nun Madam Xavier once said to me, "Prayer is stronger than God, since He cannot resist it ;" by prayer we as it were conquer God, and we force Him to grant us that of which we are most undeserving.

One simple prayer rising from a heart filled with faith, hope, and charity, can effect more good in a day than the efforts of an industrious and intellectual mind can accomplish by human prudence alone in years. If we pray, it is God who acts in us ; and without prayer it is merely the creature who toils. But prayer is not merely a repetition of words pronounced by the lips alone ; prayer is that outburst of interior devotion which comes from a heart and soul raised to God, and purified by His presence and communion.

Prayer need not interfere with any other duty. Work of every kind, when it is in the line of duty, if referred to God, is the most acceptable kind of worshipful prayer. It is an offering not merely of the soul, but of the entire person to God. We ought to ask God to teach us how to pray ; for He will never refuse that gift to whoever asks it with a view to His glory.

How I wish that this book would speak to the hearts of those women who consider themselves strong-minded, and whom the world ironically designates by that epithet. Could they only see themselves as they are in the sight of God, they would find themselves to be the weakest of their weak sex. For the truly strong-