

but when he became gentle she listened to him, and let off being obstinate and sullen. So their pilgrimage became exactly like the spiritual advancement of the soul. Every day brought them nearer to their goal, and trained them to a better frame of mind. Sometimes other pilgrims joined them, very pious and holy persons, who talked with them, and helped them on; and sometimes they were able to help others who were sick or lame, so that a blessing came upon them for their charity. At length they came into the Swiss mountains, the Alps, which are covered with snow all the year round; and it began to be very cold, and hard work to travel, for it was late in the year, and a severe winter. The children felt the cold bitterly, and walking could not warm them. Margaret gave them her wrapper, and the cold made her ill. Miles was in despair. They struggled on up the roots of St Bernard, over which the road (such as it was) lay. It was only a track, which could not be seen at night without a guide. Suddenly a howling wind was heard, sweeping like thunder up the mountain; and while they stood still under a rock, not able to stand against the hurricane, and shaking for fear, it began to snow so fast that they were almost blinded. In a few minutes Miles went out to try to face the storm, but, behold! the track was entirely swept away! it was one dazzling blank of snow! It was an awful moment—huge rocks stood on either side the way, and the snow, gathered on them, fell down now and then in great masses, which would bury a man alive. There was no shelter—no sound (for the wind was lulled) save the distant voice of those rolling snow-heaps, called Avalanches, and the face of heaven was quite hid by the fast-falling silent flakes. Miles felt an ice-cold chill sink on his heart as he stood there and thought of his wife and little ones about to perish. He recurred again to his favourite psalm, and thought it was indeed the 'valley of the shadow of death,' where, however, the 'rod and staff of God' could still give comfort. 'I deserve Thy rod and Thy chastisements, O my God,' he murmured, 'yet send me thy staff, that we may yet serve Thee, for we are friendless and houseless strangers in the land;' and as he so said, he felt a renewal of faith and hope within him. He went back, and bidding his wife and children creep under the rock as far as they possibly could, he covered them up and left them, resolving to pursue with his utmost caution the upward path, to try to obtain some human shelter. He toiled on, using his pilgrim's staff as a feeler, lest he should be led into precipices and holes, struggling through the deep snow, and at times almost losing hope and going back to die with them. At last he came to a dead stop; his staff warned him that he was wrong. On every side there were precipices of unknown depth, except one, which was a perpendicular wall of rock; he could neither go backwards nor forwards, and death stared him in the face. Miles was a brave man, and stout of heart, but the tears gushed from

his eyes as he saw the hopelessness of his position. He sunk down on his knees, preparing to depart when across the death-like air came a distant sound of a convent bell! O joy! there may still be hope! Miles raised himself up, and shouted with all his strength the shrill cry which he had learnt in that wild region. Again he heard the bell, louder, quicker—they have heard him! Again he shouted, till he was exhausted, and sunk down on the snow. He heard voices—he saw lights—he felt friendly hands lifting him up, and pouring wine down his throat—he revived, and saw friendly faces of monks, the monks of the Benedictine abbey of St Bernard, which had been built upon the mountain to give shelter to the wandering stranger. In a little time he was able to explain his condition to the brethren, and to implore them to save his wife and children. He himself, though they urged him not, led them back to the spot where he had left them. A large heap of snow had covered them entirely, and they were sleeping what would have become the sleep of death, if God did not send them timely succour. Before long they were welcomed into the hall of the monastery; and when they saw the blazing fire, were refreshed with food, and taken to rest by the charitable monks, they could only wonder and weep at being restored so unexpectedly to life, and at finding a home in the wilderness. The monks kept them several days with brotherly hospitality, and then speeded them on their way with food, and wine, and many blessings.

Miles performed the rest of his pilgrimage in safety. He stayed some time at Rome, and became a solid and spiritual Catholic; and leaving one of the boys there by his own desire to be educated, he came back to England, and lived honoured and respected to a ripe old age, with his wife and youngest boy.

If you, my dear friends, say, we cannot do like this, nor in any way follow such an example, because no pilgrims come to our island, and not many strangers, I shall say, that in every age, and time, and country, something like this can be followed. Many a poor wretch lies down houseless at night, and exposed to many dangers, from the want of a house, especially in towns. Look at harvest time, at all events many a poor Irish brother may then claim his share in our Lord's words, and beg you to take in the stranger, and receive a blessing. Many a time, if you watch closely, you will find opportunities, if not of literally following our Lord's commands, yet of performing them in spirit; and He who regards the heart and intention, will bestow upon you a corresponding reward.

FUTILITY OF PRIDE.—Alexander the Great seeing Diogenes looking attentively at a large collection of human bones piled upon one another, asked the philosopher what he was looking at? "I am searching," said Diogenes "for the bones of your father, but I cannot distinguish them from those of his slaves."