

than she embraces the Faith, detests her sins, and makes ready to die a Christian. Nothing fails her for this purpose but Baptism; but the devil was unwilling to give up so cheaply a soul which he had possessed from its birth. At this point, this poor languishing one's husband comes in abruptly. "Never [142] will I permit that my wife be baptized," he said; "I detest the Faith, and I curse the God of the believers. Begone from here, and say no more." "What then?" the Father answers him; "do you wish your wife to be forever unhappy in the flames of hell? Whatever you do, you cannot prevent her from believing; God will take pity on her, and your impiety does not render her guilty;—wait a moment, I beg you." This was too much, in the opinion of that infidel heart; he seized a large stick, for want of a hatchet, which he could not find. He mightily discharged his anger on the Father, giving no other response to all that he could say, except to redouble his blows; and although his stick was broken in two, after five or six good strokes, he continued with what was left in his hand. It was necessary to obey this wretch and leave, since the Father's presence served only to provoke him, and at that time could no longer be useful to this sick woman,—who, although able to cry out, found her husband as deaf toward her as toward him who came to instruct her. It would have been a very sharp blow for us if [143] this good soul had not found the grace of Baptism before her death; to attempt it in her husband's presence would have been a temerity. Marie Annetta, cousin of the dying one, undertakes to procure for her this charity, though it should cost her life. She then goes to visit her cousin once,