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NOT YET.

BY REV. T. HEMPSTEAD.

THE walls are charred, the oaks are scarred, the ground is torn and wet,
From every blood-pool baking round, a whisper comes, Not Yet;
The Voice from Calvary not yet hath drowned the noisy drum,
Nor spoiled the arsenal, nor made the cannon's black lips dumb;
Not yet the blessed lips that spake from Olivet have blown
Away the lurid cloud of War, the dying soldier's moan.
Much is to hope, the old drops off, good walks beside the new,
Nor plods the Saxon brain abreast of Hottentot or Sioux;
Click; down the Deep and through the fog; the armies, facing, wait;
Click; o'er the desert, through the drifts; your mother died at eight;
Click; voting o'er; the day is ours; how our opponents chafe!
Whiz, roar and shriek! the silks and shawls are at the station safe.
Some, hungry in the wilderness, the tempter have withstood,
And some from Murder's leprous red are whitened by the Blood;
And Homer would have stared across the vague Unborn to see
Our Iliads blaze from shop and forge, our Neptunes skim the sea.
Yet red Ambition, Crime and Lust, of men are gods, alone,
And Justice writhes along the dust, and Wrong is on the throne.

The whistle screams beyond the cut; stop for the latest news
That hell deep down on endless fires in her black cauldron brews;
The lightning blasts along Moselle, the vineyards of the Rhine
Give up their vats of purple must for foam of richer wine!
O there is sobbing by the Rhone and terror by the Seine,
And weeping from the Oder to the piny gates of Spain,
And every roar that tears the wind and rocks the mountain, rolls
Down, down from earth and love's embrace, a hecatomb of souls.
Each lurid volley down like wheat its mangled harvest brings—
Ah, this will drown the women's eyes, though it is sport for kings!

THE LAY SISTER.*

BY MRS. JULIA M'NAIR WRIGHT.

THE doctor looked at his patient; stood at the foot of the narrow, white-covered bed, and looked at him quizzically, as he looked at all the patients.

"You might have done better, Sir!"

"I could hardly have done worse," said Julius. His left arm was bandaged, he could move neither of his feet; something was the matter with his side; his head felt heavy. He could remember nothing since he had heard a tremendous crash, and had been spun suddenly up toward a great golden harvest moon. The moon may draw the tides, but had never been known to have any peculiar effect on Julius—now here he was in a narrow bed, and more than suspected that he was in a hospital.

"I have some advice for you," said the surgeon; "never go in a steamboat that is going to blow up."

"How long must I lie here?" asked Julius, feebly.

"If you are very tranquil, you may be out of this in three weeks. If you fuss and worry—say six."

"There never was such an unlucky dog," groaned the victim of the last explosion.

"My young friend," said the surgeon gravely, "there is many a stout fellow like yourself lying at the bottom of the river, or blown into fragments that may never be found."

The doctor had gone to another bed, and Julius, who had never been sick in his life, who like Dives had been "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously ever day," looked at the bare white walls and floor, the white sameness of the narrow beds, and the wretched sameness of suffer-

ing in all the faces lying on the small pillows in those beds which filled both sides of the long ward. There were some attendants in list slippers, common, dull looking men—there was the doctor, watched by weary eyes as he welked down the room like a fate. Farthest off of all were two women in black, bent forward by a bed in a corner. The women had not only black gowns, but black bonnets with dreary square black veils, and rosaries were at their girdles.

The doctor spoke to them as he passed, and nodded back toward Julius; that victim *felt* in all his ill-used body that they were speaking of him; and when the two women began to come toward the pallet where he lay, he whispered to himself, "Bah, nuns; it was bad enough before." He meant to be very sulky and not speak.

They came steadily on, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, exactly alike, until they stood at the bedside; then one showed a square, stolid, friendly German face, but when the fringed lids slowly lifted from the violet eyes of the other sister, it was as if the gate of paradise had swung slowly open before this foolish young man, who was lying stretched out like a mummy and doue up in some sixteen different bandages. It was not the violet eyes alone that made the dismal hospital grow paradisaic; Julius was sure such another nose had never been fashioned, and that not one of all the houries and Madonnas that had ever been painted, had been given such a mouth, such a chin, and such round, smooth, pink cheeks as were under the frightful black bonnet.

"You are suffering, Sir?" said the beauty.

"Horribly," replied Julius, with a groan that drew tears to the violet eyes, and made them still more entrancing.

*This story is true in all its important points. The assertions of the Abbess to Adeline are from the highest R. C. authorities.

"I hope religion soothes your pains and sustains your heart," whispered the fair Sister.

"I dare say it might," said our young hypocrite, "but I have never paid any attention to it. I wish I had some one to teach me."

"I will bring you a prayer-book to read," said the elder Sister, delighted with the invalid's docility.

"Perhaps you could teach me a prayer, Miss?" pursued Julius, looking at the younger visitor.

"Sister Camilla" — suggested this charming person

"Sister Camilla, would you teach me a prayer?"

"Certainly. Shall it be one to your patron saint?"

"But, maybe, I haven't any patron saint." At this suggestion, Mother Mary Beata, who having been born in the Holy Church knew nothing of the devious ways of heretics, looked inexpressibly shocked; but Sister Camilla, being a convert, was equal to the emergency, and said eagerly, "O, but you could choose one."

"Will you choose one for me, Sister Camilla?"

"Suppose then that you choose St. Peter Damian? the faithful servant of our Holy Mother Mary, who, let us hope, will bring you soon to a devout worship of the blessed Virgin."

"Undoubtedly," said Julius the wicked; "and the prayer?"

"Great Saint, whose patronage I have invoked, protect and pray for me. Angel from heaven, guide all my actions! Divine heart of Mary, pray for me."

"Is that all? I can say that already," cried the neophyte.

"You must say it with your heart," replied his monitor, sweetly. "We will bring you a crucifix and a prayer-book," said Mother Mary Beata.

"Will you wear a scapular of Mount Carmel, if I bring it to you?" asked Sister Camilla.

"Yes. If you bring it, and tell me about it!"

"I will ask Father Munson if you may have it," said Sister Camilla, and turning away with her stolid compan-

ion, she faded out of Julius' day like a fair dream, when one awaketh.

"I think that poor young man will soon be converted," said Sister Camilla to Mother Mary Beata.

But Mother Mary Beata shrewdly suspected that a less charming instructress would have had a less ready proselyte.

The following day the black-robed Sisters found that Julius had been removed to a private room in the hospital, where the luxuries with which he was surrounded indicated a full purse.

He listened with apparent credulity to the history of the brown scapular, and when Sister Camilla asserted that no one wearing it could die a sudden death or be eventually lost, he requested that it should be fastened about his neck. We grieve to mention that he made a wry face when Mother Mary Beata, instead of Sister Camilla, hung the scrap of flannel in its place.

Now one would suppose that a youth with wounds and bruises, such as Julius could boast, would be ready to confine all his "spooning" to cordials and jellies; but having been always a devout admirer of women and convinced in his own mind that Sister Camilla was the fairest of her sex, he pleased himself by learning from her lips all sorts of nonsense about angels and scapulars; he found her voice music, even when it read the prayer-book; and it interested him immensely to make mistakes in saying his rosary, and having her soft, white fingers set him right with those slippery beads.

Julius was so much less amenable to instruction from Father Munson or the elder Sisters, that the facts of his case were soon patent to all but Sister Camilla. She, silly little soul, had set her heart on winning him as a convert to her own newly chosen creed; and just at present Sister Camilla must be humored. Accompanied first by one nun, and then by another, Sister Camilla visited her pupil. She had told Julius that she was a Lay Sister of the order of Franciscan Sisters; that in two years more she should fully enter the order. She was evidently an enthusiast in a creed which she

confessed she had but lately embraced. "But, oh," said this charming little dunce to Julius, "when you have felt the love of the Holy Virgin as I have, and know that from that moment, you can never be lost, then you will realize what is true happiness!"

Sister Camilla sitting near the foot of Julius' bed with her companion nun silent at her side, would read from De Soles' "Instruction to a Devout Life," or from "Nouet's Meditations," while Julius, heeding the reader more than the reading, would tell himself that Sister Camilla was just such a little docile, enthusiastic, effervescing creature as priests and superiors love to get hold of to fashion like clay in a potter's hands. "Who is she?" asked Julius of himself. "Has she friends, money? What is she, thus led on to be a sacrifice to their eternal greed?"

Just here, perhaps, Camilla would look up, and say of her reading, "That is very sweet."

"Yes it is sweet, sure enough." Julius would reply, looking squarely at the spring morning face in the black bonnet; and then Sister Camilla would drop her eyes, and read on aga in.

Four weeks, and Julius was well enough to leave the ho-pital. At her last visit he had Sister Camilla bring him a pocket prayer-book

"Write my name in it," he said, "and your wish for me if you have any; and sign your name so I can remember you."

She gave him the book having written—"May you become a true son of the Holy Church. Sister Camilla."

Away from the hospital and the city of C— went Julius, and gathering up the odds and ends of long neglected business found himself in M—, after some weeks, at No. 31 Vine Street, at Chalmers Bros.' Wholesale Shoe and Leather Store, a very humdrum place to name immediately after Sister Camilla, a spooney youth, scapulars, patron saints, and general romance.

Being like one restored from the dead, he was taken home to tea by the senior partner; Julius being a young man just come into his property, it

was worth while to be courteous to him.

John Chalmers, Senior, could only show a stiff, dreary sort of courtesy; his home was lonely and handsome; a sober-faced housekeeper presided at the tea-table, and then the host and his guest were left to the splendid solitude of the parlors. The evening being cool, there was a fire in the grate. Julius having looked at the fire, and seen nothing but a blaze, began to look at the photograph album. Presently he uttered such an exclamation of glad surprise that Mr. Chalmers looked over his shoulder.

"That is my daughter, my only child," the father spoke with a fond pride.

Despite the difference in dress, Julius had recognized "Sister Camilla."

"She is in the Franciscan Convent of Saint Margaret, ou Bellows Street, in C—," observed Mr. Chalmers, with a lonely sigh.

How angry Julius felt! He could have struck his polite host. Why had he sent that precious girl off to be a nun, when if he had kept her at home Julius could have found her and fallen properly in love with her.

Now she was a nun, and Julius quoted to himself the nonsense about the "bright particular star" as he gazed at that never-to-be-forgotten face. He pushed the book away, and stood near his friend on the hearth rug.

"I'm surprised, Sir, that you, a rich Protestant, should consent to have your only child a nun!"

"A nun!" cried Mr. Chalmers. "My dear Sir, there's nothing under heaven I should more heartily deplore To send her to a convent school is *not* to make her a nun."

"She's a nun, Sir—a Sister, Lay Sister, of the Order. I saw her in C—, and recognize the photo at once."

"You're mistaken," said Mr. Chalmers. "I visit her regularly, once in three months, and she tells me that her religion has been in no way tampered with. I shall bring her home next year. A nun! Why, my friend, do you think I am toiling and forecasting

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night and day to have a horde of priests or a convent for my heir? My wife is dead, and this one girl is the last spar left me from the shipwreck of my love and home. Where shall my age find solace, or my money heirs but in her household? God bless her! she is what her mother was—my idol; and you think I'd let her be a nun?"

"That convent is deceiving you, most egregiously," said Julius. "They have made the girl a nun behind your back. St Margaret's Convent of Franciscan Sisters on Bellows Street, that's the very place, and she's a 'Sister' there."

"I'll prove to you that that can not be," said Mr. Chalmers, rising and getting a paper from a writing case; "here, read for yourself. This is a paper which I had drawn up, and signed by the Mother Superior and the confessor of Saint Margaret's; a solemn promise never to tamper with her faith nor receive her to their Church, but to return her to me in religious views just what she was when I sent her to them. Why, my young friend, to believe that Mother Superior Andrews would *lie* to me is absurd. She is the very model of a lady. Devout, elegant, accomplished, deeply impressed with the responsibility of her position as an educator of youth; holding the most exalted views of filial duty; and when I have that woman's pledged word, do you ask me to doubt it? I have the priest's word, too, and he's a very pious man. I never saw a better Christian than Father Munson."

"I have, plenty of them," said Julius, sourly, "and I'm more certain than ever Father Munson is the very man; and your daughter, Sister Camilla, brought him to see me."

"Sister Camilla! That settles it, my girl's name is Adeline—Addie."

"She may have changed it; they all do, taking Orders!" persisted Julius, eagerly.

"Changed her name! without my consent," cried Mr. Chalmers angrily "no, my friend, I'll much sooner believe you mistaken in the face, than that *my child* would deceive me, take

Orders, and renounce her mother's name."

Julius darted at the album, opened it, "mistaken in a face," he cried ardently; "are there two women in the world who look like that? You might as well tell me that I could forget my mother's face. Why, Sir, that Lay Sister came and read to me and instructed me in all manner of popish mummeries for a month, and I—why, I was to that extent infatuated with her," cried Julius, flushing scarlet, "that I made believe, except all the folly for fact, just to have her keep coming!"

Julius was so fiercely in earnest that that doting parent, John Chalmers, was a little staggered in his lately fixed opinion of his child, the Superior, the holy Father Munson, and the rest of the holy concourse at Saint Margaret's.

"If that could be so, if they have dealt me such a traitor's blow—"

Julius jerked out his prayer-book and like the ten brothers long ago holding out the coat as their testimony, he displayed the first page asking—"Is that her handwriting, or not?"

"It *does* look like it," said Mr. Chalmers turning pale; then dropping back into his chair he cried out, "Wretched fool that I am, I had rather see my girl in her coffin."

"Come, Sir," urged Julius, touched, "if that angel of a Sister Camilla belongs to you, get her away from those harpies."

This selfish lad was speaking two words for himself, and one for miserable John Chalmers.

"I'll tell you the facts of the case, and we'll see what can be done. But, my friend, you must keep this to yourself. I wouldn't have it known for a fortune," said the distressed father.

"All right," said Julius.

"You see, the child had no mother to advise and befriend her, and she was growing up uncommonly pretty, and all the young lads were falling in love with her." Julius sighed. "And she, silly little soul, fancied she was in love with each new aspirant, and there was no end of notes, and valentines,

boxes of candy, and bouquets of flowers." Julius groaned. Mr. Chalmers groaned also.

"She was fifteen; some of the girls of her set had turned out poorly; two had even eloped and made miserable matches. I heard of Saint Margaret's as a model school. The young ladies there are highly polished and accomplished, and like the place immensely. They take the best care of the pupils, health. Mother Superior Andrews is a mother to them all. I wanted my girl where she could not see a boy to fall in love with her, until her education was finished, and she had a mind of her own, and was ready to take her place in my home and in society. I got this pledge, this solemn promise to make sure. I visit her four or five times a year; my Addie writes every fortnight. She is perfectly happy, and the Superior loves her like her own child, so she assures me. I felt perfectly easy and contented and hopeful about my child until to-night and now you tell me—"

Moved beyond his wont, this unhappy parent covered his face with his hands.

"Contented you were, Sir!" roared Julius, furious at an infatuation which he felt convinced had robbed him of the idol of his soul. "Contented so you could not see the truth. Did you not know that this very pliability that made her fall in love with the lads that sent her notes and sugar plums, made her a ready victim to that crafty old Abbess? You may praise her, Sir, but I hate her already!" cried Julius, mixing his pronouns badly. "They have been spending their two years in making this innocent child a Lay Sister, in training her for a nun, and you've been paying a high price for having it done. O, it's a precious game! you pay for the weapons they use against you. You put a premium on the lies they tell you. Your child is rich and yielding, and they have a fine prize in her."

"I can't believe you," said Mr. Chalmers, "but I shall certainly look into it at once. I will set out for C— to-morrow, and visit my daughter, and

question her and the Abbess. If there is a mystery, I'll ferret it out."

"One word, Sir. They'll try and deceive you, and I want your solemn promise not to mention my name or hint at any circumstances connected with me. If you do, you cut me off from ever helping you. Just now I am in high favor at Saint Margaret's. I gave the old nun who accompanied Sister Camilla a *douceur* that enraptured her with my piety."

"I'll not mention you, depend upon it," said Mr. Chalmers. He slept little that night; his anxiety about his child increased with every hour, and early next morning he was on his way to C—, to satisfy himself of the truth of what he called "Julius' suspicions."

That Julius had fallen in love with his daughter would not have been an element of distress to this parent, had he not asserted that he had seen her in a nun's garb.

Julius was the very match Mr. John Chalmers would have chosen for his soft-hearted and—we might as well be honest—soft-headed Adeline.

Arrived at C—, and at the convent on Bellows Street, Mr. Chalmers, who was well known to the porters, was soon admitted to the parlor, and in a little time his daughter came running to his arms, as fondly delighted as ever to see her doting parent. Addie was closely followed by the Mother Superior, who volubly assured Mr. Chalmers of her pleasure at seeing him so unexpectedly, and followed her welcome by a fluent account of her dear girl's docility, progress in her studies, rare gift for song, and general goodness and happiness.

In the excitement of his journey Mr. Chalmers had been ready to carry his child home at once, but seeing her as lively as ever, in her usual dress, and the words and presence of the plausible and wily Abbess, rebuked his fears and calmed his anxieties. Suddenly he noticed a change in his daughter.

"Where is your hair, Addie?" he asked, sharply.

"It is the fashion to wear it short

now, pa," said Adeline, smoothing her golden waves of short hair uneasily, and flushing as she spoke.

"Fashion would not have prevailed," said the Abbess, gently; "at least not without consulting you, but the dear child had several headaches, and our physician advised having that mass of hair shortened. It will soon grow again."

Mr. Chalmers questioned Adeline of her studies, her health, her improvement, her amusements. The Abbess had something agreeable to say about all. But the father wanted the girl to himself a while. He said stiffly, "Excuse me, Madam, but seeing my child so seldom, it would be a gratification to see her by herself a short time."

The hesitation of the Superioress was scarcely perceptible. If she did not humor this man he could take his child away instantly. She rose, speaking cordially, "Surely, Sir—certainly, Mr Chalmers, with pleasure."

Then stooping to kiss Adeline as she passed her, she said: "I am so glad you have the pleasure of seeing your dear, good papa!" and kissing, whispered in her ear, "Be cautious! be *very* cautious!"

The Abbess gone, Mr. Chalmers seated himself by his child, and clasped her closely in his arms.

She shrunk uneasily.

"Do you not love your father, Adie?" he asked.

"Yes, surely, dear papa, but—you come at such long intervals that—it seems strange to me." The girl blushed and laughed restlessly.

Mr. Chalmers talked some time to her of home, of her dead mother, of his hopes for the future.

"Tell me, my dear, do they talk to you about their religion as different from ours?"

"O no, papa."

"Never ask you to embrace their faith? never urge it as safer and better?"

"No, father." Adeline's head bent low.

"You remember their written pledge? Do they keep it, one and all, like honest Christians?"

"Yes, dear father." The girl's voice trembled.

"Do you ever put on the nun's dress, daughter?"

Adeline shivered. "That dress is sacred, papa."

"And they never ask you to wear it—never ask you to be a nun—never try to make a Lay Sister of you?"

Adeline wept violently. "You ask me such strange questions, papa! They are good and—true—and will do right—if you trust them."

"Yes, I dare say, of course. Don't cry. I did not mean to hurt your feelings. And you will be ready to come home, and be my own girl again, and we'll marry you some of these days, my dear?"

"It shall be as you say—as is right, papa," said Adeline, still crying.

Mr. Chalmers' fears were nearly gone. He put his hand under the daintily-molded chin, and lifted the tearful face.

"Tell me once more—look me in the eye and tell me if they try to make a nun of you."

"No, papa," faltered Adeline, trembling painfully.

"And you will never deceive me, nor leave your parents' religion?"

"I will do as—I ought, as you say—as is right," sobbed Adeline, wildly.

"There, there; I am cruel to persecute you so," said Mr. Chalmers, wiping the tears from the fair babyish cheeks, and kissing the weeping violet eyes. Under these caresses Adeline's face cleared up, and was as sunny as a babe's whose cry has ended, and whose swift joy has returned—the woe forgotten as soon as gone.

Leaving his child with many tender words and many anxious cautions, Mr. Chalmers met the Superioress in the hall.

"Will you be in again soon, Sir?"

"I return home to-day. I confide my girl to your motherly goodness." He took her hand. "I trust her to you." He dropped the cold, quiet hand, and was turning away. "Stop one moment! Have you here a lay sister—one Sister Camilla?"

The Abbess never flinched; she

would not have faltered before the discharge of a battery of guns, if the Holy Church had called on her to face them. "There is no such person in our house, Sir."

"None? A Lay Sister, diligent in works of mercy. I had heard there was!"

"There may be in some other convent in the city. If you desire to find such a Sister, Sir, I shall have pleasure in making inquiries."

"Thank you. Good day. One moment more. It is needless that I remind you of our solemn agreement about the religious training of my child?"

"Quite needless," said the tranquil Abbess. "My word, Sir, is given, and will ever be held sacred."

The reverend Mother bowed a grave, rebuking bow, to the sinner who could suspect the transparent truthfulness of her sacred character.

The father was gone, and the revered Mother hastened to her protegee, who lay weeping miserably on the sofa.

"What has he discovered? What is wrong, my daughter?"

"He has discovered nothing; but all is wrong. O holy Mother! I have lied to my poor, dear papa this morning again and again, and he always taught me that to lie was so wicked! Oh, he would hate and despise me!"

"But the Church would love and honor you, my dear child. In misleading your father you have sought to please and obey your mother the Holy Church, whose claim over you is first of all. What you call a lie, my child, is not a sin in itself; it can be pure as the songs of the angels in heaven."

"My father taught me that a lie was a sin, and you have made me tell them—oh! so many!" sobbed Adeline.

"Only one thing can be a sin *per se*—that is disobedience to the Church. Other things are sins or virtues, as the Church holds them, as she inculcates or forbids them. You have told your father what is not true: you did it to save your soul and obey the Church,

and you have done *right*. Weep no more, child of Mary. Beloved of the Holy Virgin, whom you serve, take courage."

"But he trusts me and I deceived him, and he is my own father, and loves me so; and has no one but me in all the world. Dearest Mother, why may I not be honest with my father?"

"Because he would take you from us, wreck your faith, and ruin your soul. Does not the Church say, 'Who-so loveth *father* or mother more than me is not worthy of me?' My dear daughter Camilla, you have to-day won a high place in the Sacred Heart of Mary!"

"Oh, dear Mother! are you sure? are you sure?"

"Listen, my daughter Camilla," said the reverend Mother, seating herself by the weeping girl, and softly smoothing her hair; "the greatest claim, the highest right, must first be honored—all other claims must yield to this. And this high right over you is not held by your parent, Catholic or Protestant, but by the Holy Church, the mother of us all. This Holy Church, founded in the Virgin by God, before he made the world, and set among men to be his ark of covenant mercy, the door of refuge for souls, claims the entire supervision of the sacrament of marriage. From this she holds the first right not only over husbands and wives in their married estate, but over children; for on the offspring of marriage the Church, which is as perfect and as eternally necessary as God, depends for her perpetuity on earth and her representation in heaven. The Church claims *all* children at their birth, follows them through life; does not relax her grasp at death, nor beyond the grave, but holds the disembodied soul, her tortured enemy, or her exultant and triumphant benefactor forever. Before such a claim as this, Daughter Camilla, how less than nothing is the claim of your unbelieving parent! Your safety and *his* safety depend on the Church, which you must placate. To that mighty power yield and be happy: what good

to resist. You would be like a dead leaf resisting the whirlwind!"

The Superioress understood her pupil. In the overwhelming power of this determined woman Adeline Chalmers was helpless; the exceeding strength of the Abbess absorbed all the girl's power of resistance. Thus it had ever been; desirous of this rich and yielding proselyte, for two years the Abbess had trained her in lying to her fond father; in enthusiastic services of a sensuous creed; had amused her with the occupations of a Lay Sister, and secure in her own power, looked buoyantly forward to a year more, when Adeline, being of age, would be free from her father, and taking the irrevocable vows, be the hapless victim of the Superioress and Father Munson forever.

The Abbess was secure, but here Julius crossed her path.

Julius would not believe a word of the protestations made to Mr. Chalmers. "Give me the picture. I will go to Saint Margaret's and compare it, line by line, with 'Sister Camilla.'"

"There is no Sister Camilla there," said Mr. Chalmers.

"Not for you; there will be for me," replied Julius.

Julius went armed with gifts, and asked for the Abbess. "This is for your poor, reverend Mother;" he slipped a hundred dollar bill into her hand. "This for the Virgin's image;" he gave a chain of gold. "Now, reverend Mother, let me see Sister Camilla, and thank her again for her instructions, her scapular, and her prayer-book."

Sister Camilla came behind the grate. Julius thanked her. Sister Camilla instructed him in the devout worship of the Queen of Angels. Julius covertly compared Sister Camilla and the photograph of Miss Adeline Chalmers.

Julius returned to M—, and rushed furiously to John Chalmers'. "Your daughter is a Lay Sister—she is Sister Camilla!"

They talked until eleven o'clock. At two in the morning there was a violent rapping of John Chalmers' door-

bell. The master of the house thrust his head out from the upper window. "Let me in!" cried Julius, "I have something to tell you!"

Down came John Chalmers in wrapper and slippers.

"I have thought how we can settle this case about Sister Camilla."

Four days after Julius called on the Abbess.

"Reverend Mother, I have a friend—an old man—lying at the hospital. He has been hurt in his heart. I want Sister Camilla. She would impress him as she has me. My friend is rich—alone; he should be seen to, reverend Mother."

And as nothing else would do, and Julius urged the Abbess to accompany Sister Camilla, she at last agreed, and the three set out for the hospital, Julius walking first, the two nuns following afar off.

They entered a private room. The "friend" lay on the bed, his face turned to the wall, and covered with a fine kerchief.

"Uncover his face," whispered Sister Camilla.

"It's expression might alarm you," replied the deceitful Julius; and then he spoke to his friend, and touched him, but the sick man did not stir.

"Is he dead or insensible?" asked the Abbess.

"Not dead," replied the guileful Julius. "Sister Camilla, read some prayers, I beseech you!"

Sister Camilla opening her book, read, "Hail, Holy Queen! Mother of Mercy, our Life, our Sweetness, and our Hope. To THEE do we cry, poor banished children of Eve!" etc.

While she was speaking the figure on the bed shook and trembled a little.

"He hears you, I think," quoth Julius.

The Abbess read a prayer.

"Sister Camilla, have you a crucifix you could put in his hand?" asked Julius.

Sister Camilla drew from her pocket a carved wooden crucifix, precious, probably, because it was so ugly. The doctor and the hospital superintendent-

ent had come in and stood as in solemn expectation. Sister Camilla approached the bed, moved the sheet gently, pressed the crucifix into the hand she had laid bare. Her own hand was grasped as in a vice; the handkerchief slid from the covered face, and her father's eyes gazed sternly up into the pallid face of the guilty Adeline!

"My child! can this be true?" He leaped from the bed where he had hidden, with only his coat laid aside of his ordinary dress. He faced the thunder-struck Abbess, shouting, "This your honor! this your sacred word! You would have denied it until the last moment of your life, but I have proved it! Off! off, my daughter, with those garments of shame! Child, come back to the father you have deceived!" But poor Adeline had fainted on the disordered bed.

The Abbess shrunk away to find Father Munson, tell her story of defeat, and, doubtless, to draw her coils closer about some other victim.

Mr. Chalmers sent for the wife of his friend, the superintendent, through whose help he had executed the plot of the subtle Julius, borrowed clothing for Adeline, and that very evening started home with his deluded and repenting child. It seemed a wonderful

relief to Adeline to be able to tell the truth at last, and reveal the whole tale of her defection. Under the clear light of her father's words the past appeared in all its sinful blackness.

Our three friends ask three questions, Julius *loquitur*: "Can a man marry a woman who has thus once been beguiled by a priest? Will she who was false to her father be true to her husband? Will not she, who was urged into giving herself once to Rome be likely at some future time surreptitiously to dedicate her children to the Moloch of to-day?"

Mr. John Chalmers *indignantly to the public*: "If a man were not safe, holding a written pledge, verbally renewed again and again, as was mine, who of you, having a child in a convent, is safe? How do any of you know surely that your convent-school-ed daughters are not Lay Sisters?"

Adeline *appealing to everybody*: "When they are so cunning, so wise, so strong, so persistent, and take these winning ways, what can you expect of such simple girls as I, but to be proselyted and deceived, and made false to ourselves and everybody else, and turned, whether we will or not, each one into a Lay Sister?"

THE GREAT TROUBLE.

BY EEL HUDSON.

IT was the night before Thanksgiving; a stormy night. The wind surged and rushed furiously down the valley, whistled through the leafless trees, and rumbled in the chimneys. It spitefully pelted the little window panes with sleet, and rattled the half-frozen particles against the kitchen door, until one might have fancied that a myriad of storm-demons were without and knocking for admission. But a cheerful fire danced on the hearth—it was an old-fashioned house you see—and the storm served only to render more

bright and comfortable the neat room where sat old Josecelyn and the wife whom he had married almost half a century before. People said that the journey of this old couple had been as prosperous as long. Love had been theirs and children; friends had never failed them in time of need, and ample competency, if not wealth, had come at their solicitation. Why then did the old man sit cowering over the fire in so abject an attitude, knitting his furrowed brow, and muttering brokenly to himself?