

A VICTIM TO THE SEAL OF CONFESSION.

A TRUE STORY. By REV. JOSEPH SPILLMAN, S.J.

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CHAPTER XI. THE EXAMINING MAGISTRATE.

Day broke at length. The first rays of the sun, rising in all its rosy splendor behind the heights of Brignolles, lit up a Spring landscape of rare loveliness. All the numerous villages and homesteads lying in the valleys between the hills, were encircled with plum and peach trees in full bloom, like a bridal wreath. Amongst the delicately tinted blossoms the bees were already busily at work, while thrush and blackbird filled the air with their song. Here and there a churchbell announced to the villagers the hour of Mass, and a few aged parishioners might be seen wending their way towards the church, the laboring population went in companies to their accustomed work in the gardens or vineyards.

Two thousand! Four thousand," one and another of the bystanders called out. "I tell you what," whispered the cobbler, "it is a fortunate thing for Loser, the sacristan, that he went off to Marseilles on Sunday evening, and had not come back. Had he been there, suspicion would certainly have fallen on him, not on the priest."

And th' emoney, the sum that was stolen, has that been found? "Unfortunately it has not been found. Our surmise is that the priest has concealed it in some part of this spacious structure."

ed me to open the door—and at that same moment his lamp went out." "Did he blow it out?" "No, at least I did not see him do so. I think it was the draught that extinguished it. But what struck us all was, that he at a single glance recognized the body, while we saw nothing more than that ghastly pall. Then before we could get another candle, he knelt down by the corpse there, and began to recite some prayers."



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