



THE VIATICUM.



THE man lifted with both hands the heavy old-fashioned door-knocker and let it fall with all his might on the large headed nail serving it as an anvil. A loud noise resounded, vibrated in the corridors, was repeated for some time by the echo, gradually weakened and died away. Almost immediately, a light appeared behind the greenish shades of a window

on the first flat and a querulous voice asked :

" Who is there ? Who dares knock thus at such an hour ? "

" It is not you I want, Miss Victoire," calmly answered the cause of all this excitement.

" O, I see," replied Miss Victoire, peering into the darkness, " it's you, Anthony Favel."

At the same moment, the window on the first floor opened and the venerable form of the Curé of Montcermin with his crown of snow white hair showed itself lighted up by the dim light of a lamp.

" Who is there ? " he asked in surprise.

But Miss Victoire had already opened the door and admitted the visitor to the presbytery. The Curé throw-

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