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## OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. A TRYST IN THE SACRED HEART.

Mrs. J. Sadlier, in Can. Mess. of the S. Heart.)

The pallid sun of early November was shining its brightest on the gray walls and vine-wreathed windows of a southern convent some years ago in the tender radiance of the fair Indian summer. The girls of the school were in the full enjoyment of holiday leisure, for it was Reverend Mother's feast, and everything that loving kindness could dictate was done by the dear Sisters of the community to make it a bright and happy day for their

Yet the light-hearted gaiety of the hour was not without a cloud to dim its brightness. That very day—nay, in a little while—the best loved of all the graduating class—HelenaWeston—was to leave the abode of four happy years for her far-off home away north in the old Granite State. And the cause of her going made it all the sadder. Early that morning had come a tele-gram announcing that her father had been suddenly stricken with apoplexy, and lay, it was feared, at the point of

At this sad news all her girlish ambition to win the honors of the school all her eager desire to attain proficiency in the several branches of study, all her bright hopes of success—all vanished like the morning dew. The one thought of her father's danger, the one fear that he might die without her seeing him, hearing his dying words, or receiving his last blessing, took entire possession of her loving heart. To get away—even from that peaceful convent home, so justly dear—to find convent home, so justly dear—to find herself on the way to that still dearer home where her beloved father might even then be passing away; where her mother and sister and brother were counting the hours till she should join the anxious group of watchers around the bed whereon the head of the family lay, perhaps unconscious, or, it might be, asking faintly for her, the absent

one ;—that was all she thought of.

Her few preparations were quickly made by the Sisters, and after a hasty meal—at which poor Helena could only be persuaded to take a biscuit and a cup of tea-the little convent rock away was brought round, and while her trunk was being carried out and her other little "belongings" disposed of in the carriage, the last farewells were exchanged with her fellow-pupils and then with her beloved teachers where they stood, a dark-robed sympathetic group, on the board verandah in front of the convent.

Helena was already descending the steps when the Mother Superior desteps when the Mother Superior de-tained her a moment while she said:
"Helena, my poor child, a word before you go! A thought has just come to me. It is a long and perilous A thought has just journey you have before you. You are going all alone, without any You earthly protector. Now, I want to place you specially under the loving care of the Sacred Heart, and this I do most earnestly and confidently. This evening, just before the Angelus, we here will say the Rosary of the Sacred Heart for your intention, and you will join us in it. Rememberbefore the Angelus!"

In a voice choked with tears Helena promised. She entered the carriage and was driven rapidly toward the

Meanwhile, the hours passed slowly and sadly in the northern home of Helena. The last sacraments had been administered to the father and husband of the Weston family-a man who but two days before was in the flower of his years, a successful merchant who had done well for his family, and a fervent convert from some one of the many sects to the Catholic faith. He was still conscious and fully resigned to die, but yearning for the sight of his oldest and best beloved daughter before he closed his eyes in death. His voice, but late so full and sonorous, was already growing faint and feeble, and it was only by leaning over him and listening intently that his sorrowstricken wife could catch his words:

stricken wife could catch his words:

"I am willing to die," he murmured,
"if God so pleases—I have tried to
serve Him—I leave you all to His holy
keeping—but I want to see—Helena—
I want to hear her voice."

"She is on her way your Bishere!

"She is on her way now, Richard she left in the 10 o'clock train, and it is now 2 o'clock. We may look for her

The sick man heaved a weary sigh
-"So long," he said, "so long—my God! let her come in time! Oh! if she

were-too late!" Oh! how earnestly the watchers looked and prayed for the absent one's speedy return! Many an anxious glance was cast at the clock on the mantel shelf and thence to the pallid face among the white pillows on the bed. He was holding out wonderfully, everyone said. God was dealing teneveryone said. God was dealing tenderly with him in giving him so many hours of life, contrary to all expectation. But as the time of Helena's arrival drew near, his anxiety seemed to increase and his failing eyes were ever and anon turned to the time-

7, and yet Helena came not. "There—it is 7 o'clock—and she is

not here. Must I go without seeing

her"
"Be patient, Rlchard, be patient!"
whispered his wife. "You know it
takes ten minutes to get here from the

Weston stepped softly to the door whence some one without had beck-oned to him. Before he could close the door after him his sister followed him door after him his sister followed him and heard him say to their own coachman who stood there with a scared look on his white face, "What did you say, Peter?—an accident to the Baltimore Express. Many people killed? My God! did you say that?"

"I did, sir, and waited till after 7, but there was no train there, only crowds of people waiting, everyone wondering at the delay. Then news wondering at the delay. came in all of a sudden that the bridge at N— was open and no lights up and—and—"

"And what - can't you go on? cried the young man, excitedly. "And then — the cars went right down in the middle of the river."

Is the carriage at the door?"

"It is, sir, it is!"
"Well! I'll go at once to the depot and see what can be done. Not a word now, Carrie, not a word! and mind! - no screaming or crying if you would not kill father instantly Say nothing to mother - if - if the worst has happened, she will know it too soon. Go in now, and try to look as if nothing were wrong. If mother

asks why I came out, say I went to meet Helena. That's all!"
"Oh! William, is there any hope?—
do you think there is?" and the poor grasped her brother's arm looked up into his face with a look

that wrung his heart.
"How can I tell, Carrie?—You have heard what Peter said. We can say that God is good, and pray that—that we may still have a sister! Go in now to poor mother." And he hurried to poor mother. to poor mother." And he hurried away after the faithful Irish servant who had already gone back to his

Within the room there was solemn silence. The shadow of the death-angel's wing seemed already falling over the sick bed and its scarcely breathing occupant. Even the one last lingering trouble, the one last feverish desire, had well-nigh disappeared at the near approach of death. The mother raised her head as her daughter entered and cast a look of eager enquiry on her face ; startled by what she saw there she could hardly repress the cry of terror that rose to her blanched lips. But knowing well what the consequence of any sudden alarm might be, she mastered her emotion, bent her head again over her husband's face, and said within herself: "Thy will, not ours be done! Her hope now was that he might die without knowing.

III.

Two hours later while the desolate nother and daughter were prostrate in silent prayer beside the bed whereon lay the motionless form of him who seemed already dead to all the world, steps were heard on the stairs, the door was gently opened, and young Weston entered. He glanced at the bed, then inquiringly at his mother, who shook her head sorrowfully."
"Oh mother is he gone?" broke

from the young man's lips in a halfstiffled cry. At the sound, the father opened his languid eyes and looked up at his son. His lips moved, and he spoke more audibly than before.

"Is she dead?"—he faintly articulated—"I know what—happened?"

"No father, not dead—but safe and well!" cried Helena herself, who, left railway, station some two miles away. Many a loving prayer went up for her at that sad moment from those she left behind—for how long, no one knew. ible danger to him of the sudden sh and rushing in she threw herself on her knees beside the bed, and seizing the cold, clammy hand her father tried to hold out, she bedewed it with her The others waited in silence, fearing the worst result from Helena's indiscretion. It was very different from what they sadly expected. Mr. Weston's eyes grew brighter and his voice stronger, while words of joy and gratitude came from his lips, so lately colorless. "Thank God! oh thank God!"

Just then the priest entered the room. Having so lately prepared Mr Weston for death, his first glance was at him, whom he expected to find dead, then his eyes fell on Helena, and he exclaimed:

"How is this?—Mr. Weston still alive and better, I see, than when I left him; and you here, Helena! I heard of the terrible accident to the Baltimore Express, and, knowing that you were coming by this train, I feared the worst, and—in fact, I came here expressly to break the news to some of the family and keep it from your father, in case he still lived."
"Accident! — what accident?

thought something—had happened!"

It was Mr. Worten and happened!" It was Mr. Weston who spoke, and the others shrank from telling him— all but Father Casey, who said

cheerily: "You may tell him, Helena!—joy will not kill him—I verily believe it has brought him back to life. But let your father rest a little while—he will be all the better for it, and when you say yet, and he will keep quiet and try to sleep while I say it No, thank you, Mrs. Weston," in answer to a whispered request from that lady to go At last the hand on the dial reached and have tea with the family; she would remain with her husband— "No, thank you, I have had tea hours Do not mind me! I will wait, ago. Do not mind me! I will wait, for I want to hear about the accident

and how Helena escaped unhurt.

and still she came not. Then young Father Casey read his breviary, the light of the lamp carefully shaded from

the patient's eyes.

A very little while and the small family were again assembled round Mr. Weston's bed. All were eager to hear what Helena had to tell, and when she said to Father Casey in a hesitating voice, "Do you think it will do father any harm to hear it?" the patient smiled as he looked at his daughter, saying in a whisper-"Good, not harm, my child." priest nodded encouragingly, and Helena began her account. She told of her departure from the convent in the early afternoon, of what the Mother Superior had said to her the last thing, and how her fear of the long railroad journey all alone and its possible dangers all disappered from her mind, and she began to look forward hope fully to reaching home in time to see her father alive and perhaps not so low after all.

The dear Sisters had provided her with a book, in case she felt inclined to read, and in her more hopeful state of mind she gladly beguiled the tedium of the way by reading. It was Miss Starr's beautiful volume, "Patron Saints," and she soon became so deeply interested in its pages that the hours passed almost unnoticed. The short November day passed—night fell, and the lamps were lit in the Pullman car laying down her book, Helena began to think of her sick father and all the dear ones at home whom she was so soon to see. Then her thoughts went back to the scarcely less dear ones she had left behind, and the parting words of Mother Augusta stood out in strong relief from all the rest: "We will say the Rosary of the Sacred Heart for you just before the Angelus-and you will join us in it.

She looked at her watch, and started to find that it wanted but twenty minutes of the time. Instantly taking out her beads she crossed herself with them, to the evident amusement of the few other passengers in the drawing room car who were chatting away merrily at the other end. Helena, little heeding their derisive remarks or amused glances, began low to her self the beautiful prayer of St. Ignatius, usually prefixed to the Rosary of the Sacred Heart—"O good Jesus, hear me; within Thy wounds, hide me!" She had reached the last invocations of the Rosary—"Sacred Heart of Jesus! have mercy on us!—Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!" when a tremendous crash was heard; it seemed, as Helena described it, as though heaven and earth were coming together-a sound of crashing timbers, -the roof above was rent asunder as were both sides of the car, and in the twinkling of an eye that half in which the merry party of travellers were seated disappeared from Helena's horror-stricken gaze, while their despairing cries made her heart stand still.
Wonderful to relate, the portion of the car in which Helena sat remained firm on the edge of the yawning chasm where the black river rolled far be-

On the instant, and while Helena stunned and bewildered, could scarcely articulate a prayer, and unable to realize what had happened, the Angelus rang out from the tower of a neighboring church. The Sacred Heart, whose tryst she had kept with her far-off teachers, had saved her from fearful death where so many others

had perished ! Helena could tell nothing more, and never knew how she found herself in her father's carriage supported by the strong arm of her delighted brother, who had just reached the scene of the

But the Sacred Heart had done more than save Helena. From that happy hour Mr. Weston began to recover. and was soon restored to his former health and strength.

Next day a telegram from the Mary land convent asked — "Was Helena saved? "Saved by a miracle," was the

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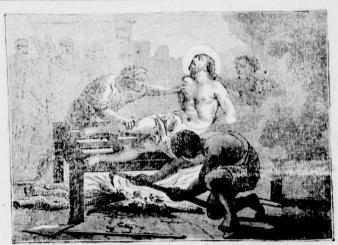
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leg was entirely healed up; pieces of loose
bone had worked out of it and the cords
came back to their natural places again.
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