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A VICTIM TO THE SEAL OF CONFESSION.

A TRUE STORY BY THE REV. JOSEPH

CHAPTER XXIII. AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR. In the meantime Father Montmoulin and the trial that excited so much in

the trial that the trial trial that the trial tr clerical journals seemed to have con signed to oblivion the scandalous occur rence at Ste. Victoire.

nce at Ste. Victoire. On a cold stormy evening in Febru y, 1891, the solicitor Meunier was rking by lamplight in his office at a law suit concerning some right of way, a tedious and tiresome litigation, which he had to bring into court a few days later. After a glance at the window against which the wind was driving of snow and frozen rain, the solicitor was just putting together his papers, preparatory to leaving off work, when the office boy entered and an nounced that a stranger wanted to see

him on urgent business.

'' A stranger at this time and in this weather!'' Meunier exclaimed in surweather !' What is his name ?"

prise. "What is his name?"
"He would not tell his name, sir,"
the boy replied. Then he added, "If
I were you sir, I would not let him in. He is fairly well dressed, but there is ething so strange and wild in his

manner.

Mr. Meunier lighted a cigarette, and stood for a minute irresolute, without answering. Then he decided that it would be best to see the man. "Show him in," he said to the ser-

but do you stay within call, in I should want you." Then be bis back to the fire, awaiting his

stranger entered in an eviden state of excitement. As he advanced into the room, and the light fell upon involuntarily.

"I believe you are the lawyer wh defended the priest of Ste. Victoire in the law-courts three years ago, are you not?" the stranger inquired, as he stood twisting about a grey felt hat nervously in his hands.

I am, sir : at your service. And I fancy I know who you are, although, as far as I am aware, I have never seen you before," Mr. Meunier replied. "I daressy you do. The sabre-cut across my face makes me a marked man. Yes, I am the sacristan Loser,

n you vainly endeavored to trace." e solicitor did not utter a syllable. He looked at the pale, agitated face of the man before him, and saw from the working of his features the force of the struggle that was going on within his He guessed that he had come with the purpose of making a confes sion. For a few minutes not a soun heard but the crackling of the logs, the ticking of the clock, and the rattling of the hail upon the window At length Meunier broke the e. "You wish to tell me some Mr. Loser, I think," he said

gravely.
"Yes, that is what I have come for "Yes, that is what I have come for all the way from Valparaiso in South America. And now that I am here, I cannot bring myself to say it." The man stopped short, and wiped the perspiration from his temples. Then in a hoarse voice he jerked out the words:
"The priest is innocent. It was I that 'The priest is innocent. It was I that

It cost him an immense effort to utter these words; as soon as the strain was removed, he burst into convulsive sobs. Mr. Mennier pushed a chair towards him, and Loser dropped into it, utterly broken down; it was a long time before he could recover himself sufficiently to answer the questions addressed to him. In fact the solicitor felt some doubt to whether he was in his right mind.

"Have you come over from South America with the purpose of making this confession? What was the motive that induced you to do so?" he in-"To make reparation, to make atone-

groaned Loser. no peace !

The solicitor thought of the terrible

fate which he had been unable to avert from the innocent priest and the members of his family, merely through his inability to trace this man, who now sat before him, and who, as it appeared to him, had done his very utmost to cast the guilt of his bloody crime on one blameless. His heart swelled with just indignation. Then again he could not resist a feeling of sincere Then again he compassion for the wretched criminal, tormented by the stings of conscience who declared himself desirous to mak all the reparation within his power. These two feelings struggled for the mastery within his breast. At length he said, not unkindly, but with an accent of reproach: "Unfortunately you come rather late with your self-How will you atone for all the misery that you have brought upor the unhappy Father Montmoulin, and his aged mother?"

s aged mother? Loser sprang to his feet and wrung s hands. "Good God!" he ex aimed, "is not that what I say to claimed, myself by day and by night! Have pity on me sir. I know that I cannot ando the past, but I can expiate my crime by laying my head upon the

Compassion got the upper hand in the solictor's mind. He stretched out his hand to his visitor, and said: "Pardon me. I did not mean to wound you. Besides, you can make satisfaction in what is most important. Father Montmoulin was not executed, thank God! As far as I know, he is still alive in New Caledonia. His mother and sister also are both living. And the terrible scandal that the whole affair caused, the shame attaching to Father Montmoulin's name will be re-moved by your confession. If only you resolved to do this act o justice sooner, when the innocent man was undergoing his trial !"

"Indeed, it never occurred to me for a moment that the suspicion of murder would fall on Father Montmoulin.

Loser replied. "I was on board ship on the way to Buenos Ayres, while the case was being tried here. Besides I thought for certain, that he would at any rate, when it came to that, say that he had seen me, or even that I had been to confession to him; in fact I believed it most likely that he would not consider the seal of confess ing on him in regard to a penitent who had sought safety in flight. And for the matter of that, I persuaded myself that what the clergy preached about the secrecy of the confessional was all idle talk, and confession itself only in vented by them as a means of obtaining influence. I had read so much of that sort of thing in bad books and infidel papers. That is what I thought then, and I blamed myself for having been such a fool as to go to confession in the first access of terror and agitation produced by the fatal deed of which I

Then it was as Father Regent and I surmised. Father Montmoulin was made a victim to the seal of confession!"

Mr. Meunier exclaimed. "Yes, he was a victim to the seal of confession," Loser replied in a sorrow-ful tone. "It was the knowledge of ful tone. that fact that brought me to a better mind, and made me resolve to offer reparation and make amends for my will tell you how it cam about." about." Then Loser began a leng narrative, to which the lawyer lister with ever-increasing interest. He told how he had made good his escape, taking his passage on board a vessel bound for Buenos Ayres. On arriving at the port, he was sorely afraid of being recognized by the scar on his face, and arrested by the police; for he had little doubt that Father Montmoulin would, either directly or indirectly, have indicated him to the authorities as the probable murderer. But to his astonishment no one said a word to him, and he at once joined party of Italian emigrants, who were going across the Pampas to the silver-mines of Potosi in Bolivia. Phenomenal luck attended him; the funds where with he started were multiplied tenfold but no accession of wealth brought peace and content to his mind. After journeying to and fro he crossed the Andes, and purchased a hacienda near Valparaiso; for he felt satisfied that his crime, of which he had heard nothing more, was long ago passed out of mind, and thus he could under an assumed name, enjoy the proceeds of his theft without dread of a sword hanging over him. He was however mistaken blood he had shed cried aloud for vengeance, and gave him no rest Nothing afforded him any pleasure not the fine estate, charmingly situated with a view of the beautiful bay of Valparaiso and the snow-crowned mits of the Andes; nor the splendid horses reared on his pastures, nor the nor the large dividends he received on the sums he had invested in the salt petre mines of Tarapaca—in none of these things could he take real pleasure. After a time, he bethought himself of a plan whereby he could learn the truth concerning the consequences of his crime, in order, as he told himself, to set his mind at rest once for all. Ac-cordingly he wrote under a false name to a well known house of business in Aix, ordering a box of the dried plums for which Provence is famous, to be sent out to him, at the same time sent out to him, at the same time requesting that copies of the Provence Gazette for the last three years might be enclosed in the chest, and charged for with the goods. He wished, he wrote, while enjoying the delicious fruits of his native country in a distant land, to revive happy memories of the past, and learn what had occurred there during his three years of exile. The m he addressed the letter was pleased to comply with the request, as he believed he was doing a kindness to a fellow countryman on the other side of the Atlantic.

"Two days before Christmas," Loser went on, "the case arrived. I locked myself into my room with the bundle of old newspapers and soon looked out the momentous 20th February. In the next number there was the first report of the murder of Ste. Victoire, and the arrest of the parish priest. I laid down the paper in consternation. In the following issues column after column was filled with mockery and abuse of the zealous pastor of Ste. Victoire, the chief grounds of suspicion against him being enumerated. arrest of his mother and sister was also entioned. Presently I came upon the most important part of the proceedings the trial-it occupied twelve closely printed columns—with trembling eager-ness I looked for the verdict—there is was. Condemned to death! My head

swam ; my senses seemed to desert me You cannot conceive, sir, how this sentence cut me to the quick. I do not know how long I paced up and down the room before I could collect mysel sufficiently to read through the trial Midnight struck before I laid the paper down. So it was actually true; Father Montmoulin had not uttered a syllable that might reveal what I confes him, he had not so much as let it be nown that I had been to confession to him, nay, he did not even own to have ing seen me that night! And all this because in his excessive conscientious ness, he feared lest he should in the slightest degree violate his duty as a priest. It appeared to me that he never attempted in any way to shift the suspicion from his own shoulders to nine. He kept silence, although silence entailed ignominy and death on himself, the cruellest grief on his mother, and would be the occasion of terrible scandal to untold numbers terrible scandal to untold numbers! All this forced itself upon me, as I read throu h the long account of the legal proceedings. When I had finished, I felt positively crushed with shame and remorse; I cried bitterly.

Presently I turned to the newspapers again, in order to read the end of the state. There were endless articles

natter. There were endless article about the trial, and a great deal that was uncomplimentary was said of you sir, as the counsel for the defence, and the failure of your attempt to exculpate your client by suggesting that he was probably pledged to secrecy by the obligations of the confessional, as had

been recently the case with a priest in Poland. And after all you were correct in your surmise! Other articles fol-lowed, making use of this affair at Ste. Victoire to serve the ends of the anticlerical party, casting contempt on the Church and her ministers. Finally in turning over the pages these words in large type caught my eye: The Ste. Victoire tragedy. Pardon of the murderer.

For a moment I breathed freely; but alas, on looking further I saw that the pardon only meant that the sentence of death was commuted to transportation for life. A description followed of the conduct of the prisoner, who had to exchange his priestly cassock for a convict's jacket, and of his embarcation convict's jacket, and of his embarcation on board the Durance for his life-long exile. I read it through to the end. By the time I had finished day was breaking, and I heard the cocks crowing in the grey dawn. I resolved to act promptly. I selected the newspapers which gave an account of the trial and the pardon, and folding them up carefully, I put them into an envelope and slipped them into the breast pocket of my coat. Then I took two thousand gold posetas out of my cash box, called the manager, as soon as I heard him stirring, gave him my orders, and without losing a moment mounted my horse and rode over to the Jesuits' house in Valparaiso. I aske for the rector, who I knew understood French, and to him I acknowledged my crime, begging him to assist me in expiating it. He entered into my feelings most kindly and compassionately elped me to examine my conscien and prepared me to make a general confession of my past life. This took long time, but it brought ease to my conscience, and the hope of forgiveness and this hope in the mercy of God en and this hope in the mercy of others.

couraged me to persevere in my determination to do all within my power to make amends for my dreadful crime. The priest of course made me prumise to spare no effort to get the unjust sentence reversed, and the innocent prisoner liberated and his name cleared; to restore the stolen money, and make compensation as far as pos-sible to the relatives of the priest for all they had suffered. Above all the sad scandal that had been given must be removed. Not until I made a formal deposition in writing concerning the murder in Ste. Victoire, and ing the murder in See. Victorie, and signed it in the presence of a notary, did he give me absolution. Immediate ly after the Christmas, which I passed in the House of the Fathers, I made my will, disposing of my property in case of my death, and started on my way home, choosing the overland route way home, choosing the overland rout as the quickest and safest. I reache Buenos Ayres just in time to catch the steamer which was leaving for Borde steamer which was leaving for Borde-aux. Yesterday we landed, and I came straight on here by train; my first in quiry was for your residence, sir, as I had seen your name as the Counsel for

the unhappy priest. So here I am ready to make amends and atonemen to the utmost of my power. Mr. Meunier had listened with rapt ttention to this lengthy narrative At its close, he pressed Loser's hand and said: "In spite of your past errors, and said: "In spite of your pasterrors, I cannot help respecting you for what you have done. 'I regard you now as my client, and I assure you your confession will be safe with me. You did well to ne to me first of all. We will cerpossible, but more need not be done than is necessary. You shake your than is necessary. You shake your head? Just hear me out. It will be quite easy to make restitution of the stolen money and compensate the Mont-moulin family for the pecuniary loss they have sustained, you have only to write a cheque on the Valparaiso bank and leave it in my hands. A reversal of the sentence can also be obtained, by means of which Father Montmoulin will regain his liberty, and be acquit-ted of all stain on his character, withsimply have to sign a confession of your crime, which I will draw up. As a precaution I will have your signature attested by two witnesses, but they need know nothing of the contents of the document to which you append your name. As soon as that is done, you can return to Chili by the next

steamer, sell your estate and go off to North America or to Australia under an assumed name. I will see that you have time to get clear off, out of the reach of the law, before your deposi tion is laid before the authorities. The case will then be tried again, and the second hearing is certain to resul in Father Montmoulin's acquittal.' Loser smiled sadly, as he answered My confessor in Valparaiso said jus the same to me. He expressly told me that I was by no means bound to give myself up to justice, at the risk of being sentenced to death. It would be quite enough if I consented that my declaration, witnessed by the notary, were sent in to the judge. But that seemed rather a shabby thing to do. Tather Montmoulin acted most gener ously towards me, though he was only

fulfilling the obligations of his office. And then I thought the blood of the poor defenceless old lady, which I shed Public Prosecutor. in such a brutal way, called for a more complete expiation of my crime. Be "As the man went to confession sides, would not my personal evidence, given in public, do far more to obtain the acquittal of the prisoner who was so unjustly condemned, and by making a greater impression, contribute more to reinstate him in public opinion, than TO BE CONTINUED. any written confession could do? I said all this to my confessor, and he agreed with me. Therefore I begged him to keep my deposition, and in case

Mrs. Mary Anderson de Navarro has I should repent of my resolution, or any accident should happen to me

ented of your resolution ?" the solici tor inquired. "I cannot deny that I have wavere several times. But reading the trial over again always confirmed me in the

Then I set out on my journey hither.

" Have you never since that time re

etermination I had taken.' "There is very little doubt that th verdict against you will be wilful murder, and you will be sentenced to

"I expect nothing else."

could look for would condemn you to the hard lot of a convict — penal servi-tude for life."

"Through my sin Father Montmoulin has had to endure that lot for nearly three years; it is high time that [get his chains taken off, so we will if you please, not delay a single day longer."

"This is then your free deliberate determination?"

determination?" I had time enough and to spare, to think it all over on the voyage. I beg you not to put my constancy to a fresh and painful trial, nor to postpone Father Montmoulin's release for one

hour longer than can be helped."

"You are right. So let it be. May God give you strength to bear the weight of expiation, which you have voluntarily taken upon yourself."

Mr. Meunier himself accompanied the repentant criminal to the police station, where he gave himself up to the astonished Commissioner of police who was on duty at the time. By a curious coincidence, this man happened to be one of the police agents who had gone with the examining magistrate to institute the inquiry at Ste. Victoire and who had apprehended Father Montmoulin.

"Mr. Superintendant," Meunier said to him, "I am sure that you will treat this gentleman, who has come all the way from South America to deliver himself up to justice, with the utmos deniency that the law allows."
"Let me have the same treatmen

that the innocent priest had,' Loset said, in a voice of quiet resignation. Meunier took a friendly leave o

him, and hastened away to the residence of the President, Mr. Justice Peultier. "It is Wednesday," he said to himself, "so I shall find the Prosecutor Joubert and some other Jastices there. I know they meet on this evening every week for a game of cards. There is ten striking! I hope

shall not be too late.' He got there precisely at the right noment. The cards had been thrown moment. The cards had been thrown down, and the friends were about to disperse, when Meunier was announced. The gentlemen, who had risen to depart, looked at each other and at him in questioning surprise. The newcomer apologized for intruding upon the President at so unsuitable an hour; he did so, he said, because he had something of great importance to com-municate to them. The other gentlemen would perhaps kindly remain and hear what a singular thing had occur red. He then repeated the story he had just heard from Loser's lips. The lawyers listened with profound and lawyers listened with profound and growing interest, as was shown by the attention they paid to the narrator, and the averaged. and the questions which now and agai one or other of them addressed to him.

The Public Prosecutor remembered how ruthlessly he had pilloried the unfortunate criminal, and regretted his sharp speeches. "You are quite con-vinced of the man's sanity?" he inuired, when Meunier had ended his

"As sure as I have ever been of any

man's," was the reply.
"Heaven be thanked," exclaimed the
President, "that I bestirred myself to get a pardon for Montmoulin. get a pardon for Montmoulin. We can now hope to be able to do something for him. That is to say if the poor fellow has not succumbed to the horrid climate, and the fearful hardships of a convict's life in the penal settlements. "At any rate the case must be tried

"At any rate the case must be tried over again on account of this confession," said one of the judges.
"Yes, of course," Joubert replied.
"To-morrow morning I shall cross-examine this fellow Loser, and in my

report recommend a revision of the after looking through it I

shall instantly apply to the Home Secretary, to have the man who was so wrongfully condemned cabled for to New Caledonia. In how long could we said the expect to get him back?"

"It would take several months, at any rate," Meunier answered.

dent.

"The telegraphic communication stops short at Brisbane in Australia The telegram would have to be carried to Port de France by the next steamer touching at that port, Our unhappy friend may be at one of the farthest stations on the larger island, and then the journey back would take five or six

"Well, that will give us abundance of time to get everything ready, so that the case may be brought for a second time into court immediately upon his arrival, and the wrong which has unfortunately been done him may as far as possible be set right. The fatal thing was that at the first judic ial inquiry circumstances all see point to him as the perpetrator of the crime, so that despite the able defence of our talented colleague here, there was from the outset little hope of an acquittal."

"If the unhappy priest had eithe when before the examining magistrate or in court, given the least hint that the sacristan had been with him after the crime was committed, he would not hove been condemned!" exclaimed the

him, he considered himself bound to deny having seen him." Meunier ans-wered. "Father Montmoulin is truly a victim to the seal of confession.

MARY ANDERSON TO ACT.

Mrs. Mary Anderson de Navarro has been prevailed upon by Father Bernard Vaughan, S. J., the famous castigator of the smart set, to emerge into the public gaze this winter but only for the ake of helping London orphans. She has consented to act three nights in es from Shakespeare. Although many years have passed since the ther beautiful young actress performed wha beautiful young actives person and impossible feat, namely that of playing Shake-speare's "Winter's Tale" at the old Lyceum for one hundred and sixty-four nights, doubling the parts of Hermoine and Perdita, she still retains sufficient charm to rouse a London audience to enthusiasm.

THE SHADOW PORTRAIT.

By Mary Catherine Crowley.

one had said, "the real heart of New York is the section between Four-teenth and Fortieth." Here are to be found the people who write our dramas, who make our songs, to whose wit we owe many bits of humor that brighten moments of our days, whose brains invent many of the ideas that other men utilize. Here are the haunts of the artists, the musicians, the literary workers, the journalists of the metropolis, and on the part of Broadway that forms the chief artery of this district one may frequently encounter men and women with whose names fame has con-

Jured the world over.

In a wide, red brick house at one ex treme verge of this representative arena, namely, the lower side of Washington Square, Maxwell Norton, the portrait painter, chose to erect his lares and Penates.

He might, indeed, have selected more

imposing quarters at the Beaux Arts, further uptown, and also facing a pleasant park—for success had rewarded his patient endeavor, and there was a repatient endeavor, and there was a respectful saying among younger votaries of the palate and brush that for years Norton had been "hard up"—but to the quiet, self constrained man of middle age, there was an enchantment about "the Square." There on its northern border, almost within the spade of the new Washington Arch. shade of the new Washington Arch, stand the mansions, ivy-crowned, as if by the tradition of half a century, to which still cling the descendants of the prosperous merchants who built them ; two blocks sacred to exclusiveness and two blocks sacred to exclusiveness and fashion. On the east loom up the hoary walls of the old University. And here, to the west and south, lies Bohemia, a colony of toilers with brain, pencil, baton, and pen, who in turn are being fast crowded out by the children to the country that of the country that o being fast crowded out by the children of sunny Italy. Once a dreary "Pot-ter's field," the Square was soon claimed by wealth, the paupers being left in situ, while under the gracetul nd along the walks between the green lawns, strolled the gallants and belles of the town, in days long before the trolley cars, that now incessantly clang by on Fourth street, were fore shadowed in the minds of the modern

electrician.

It pleased Norton to paint mentally the portraits of the youth and beauty of the past who thus haunted the place, unseen save by the artist fancy. he loved also to sit here during a he loved also to sit here during a fai afternoon, or in the lingering light of a fair summer evening, making sketches of the life around him, the failures and waits and strays of humanity who lounged upon the benches; the black haired, bonnetiess Italian women, sturdy and Juno like, who walked through the park with babies in their arms or clinging to their skirts; the swarth-skinned men. Sicilians, Neapolitans, Piedmontess, who chattered and frolicked like school boys; the dark-eyed urchins playing in the fountain as though it were the de Trevi of Rome; the little girls, mother ing their rag puppets, even as the "eternal feminine" ever seeks some thing upon which to lavish love and tenderness. As for Norton's abiding place, if in the glare of day the some what shabby exterior showed that it had fallen from its high estate, not so the studio—the old time drawing-room. It had, at least, lost nothing of it space iousness. The great mirrors still adorned the walls; from the ceiling hung the antique crystal chandeliers, through which at night the gaslight soft radiance, while by day their many prisms sparkled like mamnoth clusters of jewels. Norton had gathered to ther some wellnigh priceless things Among the rugs that covered the floo were one or two that a millionaire col ector might have envied; the small tapestry opposite to the door was o period of the Italian renaissance the porcelains and the few armor were worth their weight in gold. But, above and more precious than all these treasures, the studio possessed that desideratum of the painter, splendid north light. Here, then wa an inspiring nook wherein to paint here Norton lived, a tranquil, indust-rious existence, breakfasting before he rose, according to the European custom, lunching and dining at a case where his confreres congregated, and, at home, being served by his Hindu servant, Ab salam, with a solicitude akin to that wherewith a mother watches over her first born.

It was an afternoon in October, when the trees of the Square were in full splendor of their crimson and golden glory, that a hansom cab stopped in the street on the south side. A voung voman alighted from the cab and after short search up and down the block made her way to the studio. She was closely followed by a typical negro mammy, who evidently acted in lieu of

Absalam answered the light tap of the door and reported to his master Norton laid aside his palatte, told the model she might rest—at this hour he had no regular sitting—and, with a regretful glance at the ideal picture of

"Coquetry" upon his easel, came forward, brush in hand.
"Mr. Norton," said the girl, advancing into the room with an ease of man ner that at once settled her socia status in his mind, "I hope my call in

not inopportune.
After a second a second glance at her face, the artist amiably accepted the interruption "N-no:" he said, nevertheless with

some hesitation.
"I am Elizabeth Van Ruyter, the daughter of Frederic Van Ruyter," she continued, taking the chair Absalam placed for her, while the imperturbable Mammy stood on guard behind it, "and I have come to ask you to paint my

portrait."

The name was that of a well-known banker. Norton smiled. No one's face was ever more changed by a smile than Norton's. When serious, he appeared cold and reserved, but when his features grew animated and his steel-grey eyes lighted up, either with pleasure or friendliness, he became like one who invited confidence and who could be

wish to hang the portrait in the diningwish to hang the portrait in the diningroom at home, so that father will not
be quite so lonesome after I have gone.
He has oeen both father and mother to
me, for I lost my mother when I was a
child." Her voice trembled and she
turned away her head.
Norton found himself wondering why

woman so often sheds tears when she

a woman so often sheds tears when she is happy.

"Yes, I see;" he said gently. "When would you like to begin the sittings?"

"Now, if you wish."

He glanced at her rich dress and shook his head. "Come to-morrow morning; the light will then be at its best—and—eh—wear something simple, a little home frock in which your father has often seen you."

as often seen you."
She nodded and went away; the old egress attending her with the air of a

Yes, yes; Norton paints charming portraits of women," admitted Tom Morley, Elizabeth's flance, that evening when she told him where she had been "He's a fine fellow, too, and a gentle-man; but eccentric, as no doubt, you will soon notice. It is said he has never recovered from his grief over the death of his wife, although it happened years

The next day the sittings began. Mammy, of course, accompanied her "little Missy" to the studio.

"Lors a massy, of it ain't a queer chiny shop, wif sarpents, an' fishes, an' strange folk a lookin' out from de bowls an' jugs," she commented in a whis pered aside to the young lady. "Bnt, Lawdee, ef de queerest sight o' all ain't dat fool nigger wif de tea-cosey on his haid an' breeches big ernuff for two o' his size!'

Nor could she ever be persuaded that the turbanned East Indian was other than "jest an 'onery black man.'

Absalam, a waif from the St. Louis Exposition, returned her aversion with an oriental scorn, which anyone but a comfortable "colored pusson" of adi-pose and assertiveness would have found withering. Mammy, however, only chuckled over it to herself until her fat sides shook, and often, while Norton painted, his eyes twinkled with amusepainted, his eyes twinkied with amuse-ment as, straying from his pretty sitter, they noted the little comedy enacted in the background by the serio-comic representative of the African and Aryan

Although so pleasing to look at, Miss Van Ruyter could not be called a beauty. Her features, though fairly good, were irregular. The fascination of her face pression that reflected a charming perconsisted in a certain sweetness of exsociety, yet was not of it; she had been educated in a convent, and her tastes were simple. Naturally cheerful, at conscientious and effectually devout. During the hours when she sat for her portrait, she had many people and things to think about—her father, her lover, the care free life of her girlhood, the new sphere of duty of which her wedding-day would be the threshold. And sometimes, too, soaring higher, her thoughts, perhaps, dwelt upon "the

peauty of things unseen. On the occasions of the sitting, however, she was not always silent or absorbed; she liked to talk to Norton, and they became friends. He was as old as her father; frequently there old as her lather; requestly there was something paternal in his tone as he conversed with her. Of the eccentricity of which Tom Morley had spoken Elizabeth saw no sign for several weeks. By December the portrait was

early finished. One morning Miss Van Ruyter came to the studio unexpected. After sending Mr. Norton word that she could not give him a sitting, she suddenly changed per mind. It was a "grav day," and model. As Elizabeth entered the room he hastily drew a curtain half way across his canvas, but upon recognizing his visitor, and, as if on second thought, salam had disappeared. Mammy took her accustomed place on the corner settle. The artist discovered long ago that she could not see well without the pectacles she was too amusingly vain to wear, and that she was also a

"I was able to come after all," began Miss Van Ruyter cheerily. Then she broke off with a little cry of admiration as her eyes tell upon the picture on the painter's easel. Norton again started torward as if to cover it; but, deterred this time perhaps by her interest, he again drew back, and Elizabeth noticed that he sighed, as if involuntarily. The picture was the portrait of a woman, no longer young, but still beautiful. Clear, frank and true the dark eyes looked from the canvas into the girl's very heart, yet in them there seemed to be a mystery of an infinite longing, as of a spirit not quite at peace. The lovely mouth was so sweet, however, that Elizabeth wished that she could kiss it, as she had often wished she might caress her mother, whom she had scarcely known. The hair, once brown —as could be seen—was now touched with silver. The face was still a perfect oval; but over the sparkling eyes, and the broad, low forehead, time had passed a gentle hand. About the sweet mouth, too, were lines that, to herself, Elizabeth, called, not wrinkles, but "the record of many smiles.

" Miss Van Ruyter, you have unintentionally learnt my secret," said Norton as, enthralled, she continued to gaze upon the canvas. "This is the gaze upon the canvas. "This i twenty years ago, when she was about your age, I should judge. You are sur-prised I know the question you would like to ask. This is not, you the face of a young woman. Dear child you have a nature that glows with huyou have a nature that glows with man kindliness; you are simpatica as my neighbors around the corner in Little Italy say."

"When my wife was taken from me,

my grief was so great that it threatened my reason. When I grew calmer, I resolved to keep her likeness with me all the time. In order to do this I decided that year by year I would "You see, I am going to be married,"
Miss Van Ruyter chatted on naively—
she was very young, after all—" and I