



HIS HEART WAS TOUCHED.



HE young priest had celebrated his first Mass. The long procession of choristers and servers had wound into the sacristy. Presently the celebrant would come forth again that his hands might be kissed by the congregation, who sat meanwhile in a hush of expectancy, touched into unwonted stillness by the solemnity of the occasion. The clear, pure sunlight of a spring morning poured through the rose window above the altar, filling the little sanctuary with amber light. Although it was a parish chapel it belonged to a convent of Dominican nuns, and there was about the sanctuary and all its appointments that air of exquisite purity seen only where nuns have charge of the altar. On either side hung curtains of white and silver, against which palms and ferns were massed. The carven brass of the candlesticks and of the burnished doors of the tabernacle shone like gold in the clear lights. The snowy white of the marble altar breathed spotless chastity, the air was fragrant with the perfume of spring flowers, and with the faint odor of incense that still showed filmily in the shadow. Shut off by wrought-iron railings on the epistle side was the nuns' private chapel, and the foremost of the waiting congregation could see their kneeling forms, outlined in white serge robes against the dark carven oak of their stalls.

In the front seat in the nave sat the young priest's mother, clasping and unclasping her nervous fingers, dazed with unearthly happiness in this the supreme moment of her life. Like Simeon she could have sung joyfully "*Nunc Dimittis*," now that her eyes had seen the glorious consummation of a quarter of a century's hopes, labors, yearnings and desires. Her boy, her darling, the only child of her brief married life, had stood