



The Secret of God

ANNA T. SADLIER



THE New Year had just dawned, and the glory of its first sun fell upon a band of christians, gathered together to practice in secret that faith which was cruelly banned in the British Islands from the middle of the sixteenth century. It was their custom to assemble as often as possible, on Sundays and festivals, to hear Mass and receive the Sacraments, in the hidden recesses of a rocky cavern.

On that first morning of the year, the aged priest had collected his little flock as usual like those of old in the Catacombs. During Mass the old man delivered a short discourse to his people. He exhorted them, at that new milestone on the road of life, to redouble their fervor, to be faithful, in spite of persecution.

"For none may tell," he cried, "which one of us may be called upon to give testimony unto the shedding of his blood; upon a single individual the lot may fall, or this entire congregation may have that glorious privilege. But it is there, my children," and he pointed as he spoke to the humble tabernacle, "there behind those sacred veils that each may find courage for that supreme sacrifice."