TWO

SO AS BY FIRE

BY JEAN COMMOR

CHAPTER XVII

A DEATH HOUR

The lights burned low in the death chamber. In the high, old fashioned whose damask curtains were back to give the dying man Randall, his has ne old pinched and ashen, was propped mong his pillows, struggling for up a th

fully

-and now-

The small table beside him, with its crucifix, its tapers, its "fayre white clothe" told that the last sacred rites of that Church to which he and his

of that Church to which he and his forefathers had clung through all change and time had been adminis-tered to its loyal son. Dr. Vance stood gravely watchful at his patient's pillow. Father Lane, who had been kneeling by the bed whispering words of hope and comfort, rose as the newcomers en-tered, and made room for them by the dring man

the dying man. "Nellie !" the failing ear caught the sound of her coming. "My dear little girl, I can not see you, all is

dark. Nellie, are you here?" "Here-grandfather," the name came with a low, choked sob, as the speaker sank down and pressed the groping hand to her lips, the hand that had filled her life with all earth's gifts and blessings. How cold, how helpless it was to those lying lips now !

I am leaving you, my little girl, leaving you forever. Ah, my child, my poor Elinor's child, in this awful -you are my one thought-my one fear.'

Oh, I am not worth thought or tear, dear grandfather, best of frien

Do not think of me now," she sobbed, "I must," he gasped, "I-I must. Before God I will be held-accountable. My stubborn pride—my neg-lect—my—my years of—of," his breath failed. "Father," he whispered, "Father, speak for me. Tell her-what-what I would say."

"My child, the fear weighing upon this parting soul is for you." It was the voice that had followed her through all these lying years was speaking now-the voice that had blessed the little starveling of the Road House, that had roused the blinded girl at St. Barnabas', that had thundered God's judgment on the brilliant society queen scarcely two weeks ago. Its accents were olemn with pity and compassion.

"Your grandfather feels, too strongd, as I tell him, that he is re ly inde sponsible for your refusal of the ight of Faith that is your inheri-

'Oh, no, no !" she cried, desperate ly, as a picture of the true Elinor, clinging to her dead mother's faith with such pathetic trust, rose before her remorseful memory. "Grand-father, no, do not blame, do not reproach yourself. It is I who am weak, wicked, false. You have given me the Faith—you have given it to me. Let no remorse darken your peace, for oh, I beileve as you do. As God is my witness, I believe — I believe !

Then, then, my child," the icy hand seemed to tighten its dying hand seemed to tighten its dying grasp, "you will accept — you will confess—practice—that Faith ? You will turn to God—to the Church of your fathers—you will—live—die— in that —Faith — as — as — as I do ? Promise — promise, little girl, my little girl ?" God, my God !" she cried des-

pairingly. "Sweetheart," it was Allston Leigh's deep, tender voice in her ear, his love.

she se

-the old life !

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

r love's sa

Aunt Van.

depth beyond reach!

ater in the hall.

seen?

her despair."

its generous ellowance of po money were untouched. Only

roused, too, by Lottie's alarm.

"He has gone, dearest !" Allston Leigh was whispering tenderly, "gone, blessing your love with his last she had stolen name, home, love, as well as gold. Ab, the fire was burning with flercer power each moment, the fire

She looked up. Vance was rever-ently closing the sightless eyes, that must consume destiny, the glittering, mocking lie she had lived Father Lane signing the cross of the death damp brow. Outside the servants had burst, after the fashion -the fire that alone could save her shrinking soul.

And the old pagan nature, unsub-dued by long rejected grace, roused into a last fierce defiance at the pain. She could not bear it, she would not ! of their race, into unrestrained means and lamentations. "Nellie, dear child, all is over. Come away," said Aunt Van, tear-There was escape still, escape from the shame, the horror, the awful dearth and desolation before her-there was one escape still. She rose Not yet," was the gasping answer. "not yet. Close the door, Allston, There is something I must say-here

weight in gold from an

Never to wake ! The young face

Depart, Christian soul, from this

of Jesus Christ, the Son of

God's judgment seat came

now, all its

there was one escape still. She rose from her knees, holding to the carved bed to steady her trembling limbs and slowly made her way to her lace-draped table, scattered with dainty trinkets in pearl and ivory and silver, with costly perfame and jewel cashets and all the exquisite thilst personne of a migning help 'Not now, dear," he answered gently. "You have made the pro-mise and will keep it, I am sure. You are under too sharp a strain. You have made the protoilet accessories of a reigning belle Sheopenedahidden drawer and took from it a tiny box she had bought

You are under too samp in the come away." "No," she cried, quickly, "I must speak here and now. Speak in the presence of God, the presence of death. I must keep my promise to old French chemist last summer him who lies before me -and it can old French chemist last summer when her torturing doubts and fears prevented aatural sleep. He had sold these pilules de sommeil with a solemn warning. "No more than not hurt or shame him now. I must confess myself for what I am, a liv-ing lie. I am not Judge Randall's anddaughter. I am not Elinor solemn warning. "No mon two, never, never, madem

'Nellie !" interrupted Leigh, in ror. "Good God she is going mad. Three, four, and you would never wake.

terror. "Good God she is going mad. Nellie, dearest!" "Hear me out!" she panted. "Elinor Kent died in my wretched home nearly three years ago. You Never wake !" The words came back clearly as she stood there with the open box looking at the little "Never wake!" What a restful end to all the pain, the shame, the agony have heard of that home, Allston, you told me of it to night. For I am Barbara Graeme, the starving, the beggar the convict's daughter, the before her. Tosleep and never wake and it would be so simple, so easy girl whom poor Daffy Mills loved and It would quiet, hush all things, if mourned. Father Lane!" she tarted to her feet, and stood white, when they came to look for her nex morning they could find her asleep never to wake! Never to hear the breathless, desperate, before the priest. "You can bear witness to what I say. Look at me, Father, and old scorn or colder pity of the world's judgment, never to meet its curious remember the mission at Graystone Ridge—the messenger who led you ruel eyes! Never, oh, never again to see Allston Leigh's face wear the stern, set look it had worn for one moment to night before it had soft to Elinor Kent's death bed in the old house under the pines, the girl with ened into a manly compassion that could not be love, oh, never more the crow in her arms, the girl whom

you blessed-" "My God! Yes, yes, I see! I relove! member all-you are that strange girl-whom I blessed."

was very pale and cold "Elinor Kent died the next day, delicate outlines sharp and clear cut only the gray eyes burned with strange fire and light as the slender the young voice rose clearer, steadier now on the breathless silence; "died even as the letter reached her white fingers took up the silvery pellets; two, three, four! Ah, there should be no doubt, five, five ! calling her home to Rosecrofte. And I," there was no ples, no extenuation in the pitiless self-accusa-tion, "I stole her letters, her papers. I left her buried in a nameless grave in my own blighted, accursed home. And then she would lie down in the beautiful bed there and sleep never to wake, like the good man who had loved her. She paused a and came here in her uame, her place. How I could have done it I the thought of his last sleeping flashed before her mind. The struggle the pain, the darkness, and over it do not know, but the accident-the railroad wreck, made it easy for me all the clear, strong voice rising in at first, cruelly easy-and afterward, afterward," she paused, and for the solemn command : first time in her confession her eyes

world, in the name of God the Father Almighty, Who hath created thee, in were lifted to Allston Leigh's face The hard lines into which that fact had set vanished at the look. the living God Who suffered for thee, "Nellie," he said, hoarsely, "what in the name of the Holy Ghost, Who this mad, strange thing means, I do sanctified thee." not know. But-but, it changes nothing, nothing. I hold you to And as the solemn words with which the Church ushers the soul

your promise - nay, I claim it at oefore back to the wretched girl trembling Father, before any whisper of on the brink of everlasting perdition, the deadly pellets fell from her hand. She flung herself down upon the harm touches her, I would give her my name, home protection. I would make her my wife now and here." floor with the penitent cry at last upon her lips: "O God, have mercy upon her lips: "O God, have mer on me and forgive, forgive—" And as she lay there crushed an

"Allston," called Aunt Van, trem-ulouely, "oh, Allston, my dear boy. Not-- not yet." "Ah you need not fear, you need

not fear, Madame Van," and that grand dame, panoplied in worldly broken a memory came back to her of the one sweet spot she had known, visdom as she was, felt a sharp pain where the voice and gaze of the world did not reach, where all was peace pierce her heart at the dull despai of the young voice. "I will not marry him. I will not marry him, and pity and charity. Ah, if she might hide in that blessed shelter for a while, until she could find ladame Van, not if it were to save strength to keep on her desolate way. me all that I lose to night, even, even, The gray light of the early dawn

here, to ever present peril and shame THE TOLL OF WAR By A. M. Foley

And as the proud, lofty nature shock with its contending emotions, the words of that other lover came back to Allston Leigh. "You couldn't The old gray house looked sad and gloomy enough in the twilight. Even the last rays of the November sunset blame Weasel, no matter what she did, Judge, no matter what she did." Blame her! And then a great wave of conquering love overleaped all the stern barriers of pride, honor, bitter-ness. The lift of the red gold head, elanting on the tower served but to accentuate its grimness. The gaunt, bare trees with their leafless branches seemed sighing an eternal Requiem that evening. The extensive grounds, now bare and brown, stretched away the glance of those starry eyes, the fair hands outstretched at last to his at the back of the old, gray house at the back of the old, gray house until they sloped gently to the shore of the heaving, rushing sea — the ever changing sea that he loved to watch, that had called to him with appeal as he stood before her in the firelight glow last night—this had been truth, he knew, truth though all else were the blackest of lies. her siren voice since first he was able to toddle there, his tiny hand held close in his fair haired mother's— Truth-and he would hold to it and to her cost what it might. "There is but one thing to be done," he said, briefly. "She is my

the voice that had called to him all through life, until when the first promised wife. As my wife this story can be hushed forever. I am alarm of cruel war sounded through-out the land-his face glowing and Judge Randall's lawyer, his executor. All matters of unjust inheritance his eyes sparkling-he buckled on his sword, kissed his mother good bye, can be quietly arranged without publicity or scandal. I can give her never seeing the heart break in her eyes, clasped his father's hand, unmindful of his husky voice, and went off to join his comhonored name and home." "Allston," pleaded Aunt Van, "think, in God's name think. Think of her past—her father—her bold, daring, long lived lie." rades on the long, grim greyhounds of the sea, which were keeping watch

It has been confessed, atoned for, and ward in the waters, that England might still be mistress of the seas and forgiven," he answered. And from all that follows she must have And no word had come from him-the brave laddie with the eager the shelter of her husband's arms, her husband's heart. So to morrow she shall be my wife—and your niece eyes.

Up the gravelled path, in the chill Novembers sunset, an old man toiled, a bunch of letters in his hand And from the stern resolve of that that trembled as he held them. "If there be no news of Master Harry tone Aunt Van knew there could be no appeal. She went tearfully away this time, sure m'lady's heart'll break-I know it," he muttered to to her own room-good, worldly wise woman that she was, with neither himself, "Ay, he was the bonny laddie, may the Virgin Mother watch pity nor mercy for the girl she had loved in her heart to night. In all her sixty odd years good Madame Van had never had such a shock, and she over him," and the gaunt trees paused to whisper "Amen," ere they went wept helplessly, hopelessly, until she dropped at last into a fitful sleep. It

on with their Requiem. As the old man reached the steps leading to the wide verands, the door was Lottie's frightened voice that roused her. The little maid had was suddenly thrown open, and a fair haired woman rushed baregone into her young lady's room as usual this morning to find it vacant. headed to meet him.

headed to meet him. "Give them to me, Mark," she cried eagerly, "Oh, give them to me —My poor Harry, my son!" She almost snatched the letters from the old man, and feverishly ran "I've looked everywhar," said Lottie, tremulously, "up and down

and round de house and Miss Nellie ain't nowhar, Madame Van. De bed ain't been stirred and that ar medi-cine is spilled all over de floor." through them until she found one that bore the long-looked for sea Aunt Van started up, conscious of She held it up with a cry and dropped a sharp stab of remorse in her quick the others in her eagerness. But ere her quick fingers had broken the flap, alarm. The girl -- the wretched, guilty girl that she had left alone in a firm hand was laid over hers and her despair! The girl who, from deep voice cried :

such a dazzling height of pride and beauty and power had fallen into love, and November evenings are chilly. How could you rush out so Chilled with an awful fear, Aunt without your wraps ?" His voice was Van hurried to Nellie's beautiful room. The soft white robe she had gentle, but his eyes flashed as he the envelope in her hand. worn last evening lay in a snowy lenderly he drew her towards the heap upon the floor, but jewels trinkets, even the silver purse, with its generous sllowance of pocket door, and old Mark gathered up the scattered mail and handed it to the nead of the house. Lord Elvin the it mechanically and passed with his little box of pilules de sommeil lay Mark watched them wife indoors. open—its contents scattered. Aunt Van paled at the sight. It was a for a moment, then walked away slowly, shaking his head rembling, ashen faced old woman

that met Allston Leigh a few moments the door closed after them, " how could I think of myself, when there He had heer may be news of our boy.' handed him the letter. "It "She is not here, not in the house, you say ?" he cried. "Great heavens It is not she could not have gone out in this waste of snow. Aunt Van, what have you heard? What have you

They entered the low-beamed library and stood together in the great window as the day was dying. "These," whispered Aunt Van opening her shaking hand, and show The mother, many years younger than her husband, her blue eyes dim ng the little white pellets within. Allston, they are, if taken rashly with pain and tears, stood eagerly death-quick, painless death. And the box has been opened, the pellets and expectantly, longing for the news she had waited for until now, in vain scattered. Oh, God forgive me for leaving that wretched girl alone in er husband, a man broken in health. a semi invalid, in whose emanciated frame dwelt an indomitable spirit,

all I know, all I care, Robert. O Harry, Harry, why did you go, why did you leave me, Harry boy !" and she rocked herself back and forth,

moaning. "Margaret, love, Harry could do nothing else; he belongs to a race of soldiers. Could be stay home, like any frightened woman, when his country needed him? Sweetest, generations of soldier blood is strongthan a woman's arms, though it be his mother's.'

threw out her arms in a frantic ges-ture. "'His country needed him!" he mocked. thousands of men at her call-when I-I only had the one, my poor, poor Harry." Then seeing the look on Harry.' her husband's face, she sprang to her feet and clasped her arms around his neck

cried. "I never thought he could die. I was sure he would be back with us again

his eyes. Margaret lifted her tear stained face from his shoulder.

neck. "And you, love, are you not a soldier's wife and a soldier's mother?

Margaret, Margaret, 'tis not June,

Ab, dearest," cried Margaret, as his writing," she cried fearfully, "open it, Robert, I cannot bear to wait."

"No, no," sobbed Margaret. "No, no, Robert." Then half wildly she hings she said.

' his country-who has

You do not understand," she

Understand ?" interrupted her husband, "Understand, Margaret a Why, do you not think I love our boy as much as you, dear? Do you think my heart does not ache for his tragic death, that my life won't be empty without him ?" His voice shook and the tears gathered unheeded in

"But, oh, his lonely grave," she murmured brokenly, "his lonely,

lonely grave." "Dearest," the deep voice was say ing, "he is as I am, a soldier's son. It pleased God to will that never again would I hold a sword either for Him or my country, hence Harry went alone to the war." Margaret tightened her clasp around his

For Harry's sake, for the sake of all the broken-hearted mothers, can't

you, too, be brave ?' "Oh !" she sprang away from him "Oh ! You are hard and cold, Robert. What do I care for his brave death? What of it, that he may be called a

hero? Does it comfort my heart any to know that other mothers have lost their sons? That doesn't give me Harry's.' back my Harry." She threw out her arms passionately and her voice rang through the room. "How can I be brave?" she cried with blazing eyes

and flaming cheeks, "when my poor boy is dead—dead, do you hear that? Dead, my pretty son!" Her voice trailed off into a sob, "I can't be brave, Robert, I can't, I can't! It is nothing to me that I am and line's is nothing to me that I am a soldier's mother, nothing, dear, but sorrow and heartbreak! and dark, weary days, and darker, wearier nights."

Margaret, O Margeret !"

"Yes, yes, Robert, I mean it," an-swered his wife, sobbing, "Why did you let Harry go ? Tell me, why did you let him go to die-to die, away off there, without any mother near him !" Then spying the letter on the floor, she almost screamed : Look, look ! Why-why in the

name of a merciful heaven, was that man permitted to live, and my poor boy killed-killed, O Robert, killed !" Her sobs choked her, and she did not see the great pain in her husband' eyes. Killed | And he loved life so ! He was so beautiful, and now he is wounded and dead - Oh!" Then turning to her husband, who stood Then white faced and worn, in the shadow of the great window, she murmured, all her passion abated.

"O dear one, if all the riches, all the jewels in the great world were mine, I would give them all - everythingfor just one moment to hold my Harry in my arms and kiss him once-just And the harsh sobs burst **JANUARY 2, 1915**

had Robert, and he was suffering as much as she.

When she entered the library, the fire had died in the grate and the

coom seemed strangely lonely and cold. Lord Elvin sat in his customary place, his head bowed on his chest and his arms hanging listlessly at his sides. A sob broke from her, and in a moment she was kneeling at his side, begging him to forgive her, that she had been wicked and cruel and hadn't meant the wicked

But her husband did not answer Fearfully she lifted startled eyes to the drawn face. "Robert !" she al-most screamed. Quickly she placed her hand on his beart. A faint, un-steady beat rewarded her. She rang the bell sharply and when old Mark entered commanded him in a tone, cold and dead, to place his Master on the couch-he had one of his bad turns-and send immediately for the octor.

When the doctor had brought back consciousness, for a very little while, to the suffering man, Margaret was left with her husband. Dry eyed and pale she sat by his side, holding the cold hand in hers. There was no hysterical outburst now. The heart of her had been crushed at her son's death, it was dead now. He tried to talk, but she stopped him.

"Don't, dear," she whispered, and her voice sounded strange and faraway, " you will be with Harry soon ; pray that I, too, won't have to wait long, Robert." She thought she would strangle, but swallowed hard and pressed the hand that lay in hers. Her husband smiled wanly. "Kiss me, love," he whispered. "It won't me, love," he whispered. "It won't be long." She bent and kissed him, then sank on her knees and buried her face in his pillow. My brave little woman," murmured the dying man

'No! no!" Margaret lifted her head quickly, "I have been a coward, a selfish woman, I was not worthy of you two great men. But I will try, truly, Robert, I will try. I will try to be brave like the other women and do what I can to help the poor soldier . boys, for your sake and

Her husband could not speak now, but he smiled slightly. In his eyes she read farewell, and presently she stooped and kissed the cold pale lips and closed the wide, staring eyes, "Good-bye, beloved," she murmured, give Harry my love."

THE BISHOP'S SUBSTITUTE

A mule cart rattled up the one street of which Howchow could boast, and as it approached Father Labarge's aut the driver called " Nui-kai," two or three times in a voice loud enough to have been heard half a mile away. In an instant the priest and John, his Chinese catechist, were at the door. The postman came but rarely and irregularly. His arrival was a great event and a letter or even a newspaper a treat not scon to be forgotten. On this day there was but one letter. It was addressed to Father Labarge, but John, catching a glimpse of large, peculiar writing, smiled broadly as he went back to his work of cleaning the three little rooms which formed the whole of their domain. He thought that al-most immediately he would be called to hear the news, but minute after minute passed and Father Labarge said nothing, though as he pattered back and forth John could see he had finished reading. The hand that held the closely written sheets was hanging loosely at his side, and he

the promise he asks. I make it easy, blessed, to keep, dear

She lifted her bowed head and looked up at him. Oh, the awful mockery of those tender, trusting eyes that met her wild, hunted gaze ! He would make it easy, blessed, for

'My child," and again Father Lane spoke, "it is God who calls you by this dying voice. Surely, if you believe, you can not refuse this last re-

"Father, no, no, I can not. I can not, grandtather. I promise, I pro-mise, all, all you ask."

"And I promise, too, in her name, Allston Leigh said, in a moved voice. "Leave her heart and soul in my care without fear, dear old friend. She is to be my wife."

She is to be my wife." "Allston, my dear boy, Allston," the dying eyes brightened, and the Judge stretched out his stiffening hand to Leigh's grasp, "this is more than I asked. God bless you both for it, my children, my dear children.

'Vance, the pain again, the pain !' The cold hand loosened its grasp. The Judge fell back gasping among his pillows. Vance moistened th dying lips. Leigh, dropping on his knees, flung his arm about the trem. bling form of his betrothed, while clear and strong, above the shrick and moan of the wind, above the sobs of the servants gathered in the hall without, above all the storm and tumult, passion and pain of earth, arose the voice of the priest.

"Depart, Christian soul, from this world in the name of God, the Father Almighty, who created thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God who suffered for thee, in the name of the Holy Ghost, who sanctified thee-

And as those solemn words in all their surety of command fell upon her ear, it seemed to Barbara Graema that she, too, gave up all of life to Van's quic, which she had so madly, desperately, clung. The Light had flamed into her crime. fire at last-the consuming Fire into which she must fling all.

"I will go away, away from this world in which I have no right." "Nellie, Nellie!" pleaded her was stealing through her curtai window as she rose and looked out. The storm had ceased, all without her lover.

was a white pathless waste, a death scene, in which hope and life were "I am not Nellie," she said, and Rose bower and rose garden, lost. the sharpness of death's pang was in her voice. "Nellie lies dead under grassy slope and gleaming river were the old yew tree on the mountain. I am the convict's daughter of whom

shrouded alike. Yesterday Miss Randall of Rose-crofte, would have recoiled at the you told me to night. I am the Weasel whom poor Daffy Miles loved mere thought of braving this wintry wilderness, but this morning it was -I am Barbara Graeme." And she broke from the death bed group as the hardy little mountain maid of the Road House that doffing all her aid the words, and made her dainty finery, slipped into the black gown made for her Lenten days in blindly, somehow, through the wide hall, with its moaning, sobbing Italy, and stealing softly down through the back staircase of the old servants, into her own room, where locking the door, she threw herself wing, opened the door that led into the snow-wreathed rose arbor, and upon her knees, her face buried upon the bed. took her soft, silent way over the trackless wastes once again, the light,

She had flung away all things-she was crushed, ruined, broken-hearted, homeless-friendless, pennisure footed Weasel of old. less, but at last-at last she could cry to God for mercy. At last she was free—she was free ! But even while Allston Leigh had paced his room almost until day. After that strange death-bed scene, there had been a her long prisoned soul felt the thrill long, agitated discussion in the lib-rary. The truth of that startling conof release, the woman's heart knew all the anguish of its sacrifice. Her fession stood out now in clear, re-vealing light. Dr. Vance, who had clear vision, sharpened by suffering, saw the way opening before her in sent the telegram from Bixby Creek all its hopeless desolation-a desert path-lit by fire-lit by fire! She must go back-back to the old home Father Lane, whose confused re-membrance of the girl had always

been a perplexing mystery to him, Leigh himself, with poor Mills' story The old life, after all that she had The old life, after all that she had known, after these years of dazzling queendom! She must go back humbled, beggared, disgraced, her story perhaps blazoned through the length and breadth of the land. She must go back, but where, how? The old Bord Horne stord black and echoing in his ears, could not doubt The girl whom he had loved was the beggar, the starveling, the convict's daughter, the pitiful little creature "who never had a chance." And when that chance had come to her

she had seized at it with daring, reckless grasp, and held it. Doubtold Road House stood black and drear under its sheltering pines a ing, fearing, trembling, his quickened thoughts recalled a thousand things thousand miles away, and she was here, here with all doors, all paths, that had bewildered and perplexed all hearts closed against her-she was here without home or friend or him in her changing moods, her mocking coquetries. place. Allston Leigh! The fire burned into her woman's pride as she thought of him, of his manly plea to shield and save her, of Aunt

False, false, his whole soul seemed to cry out in anguish and bitterness, false to the heart's core !

Van's quick protest, that voiced already the world's sentence upon for crime! Ay, that was what he had called a lesser wrong years ago-for

An icy terror gripped her listener's heart, as a vivid memory flashed back to him—a white robed girl, seated in a skiff, and looking with dreamy eyes into the shining river. What was it she had said to him on that summer day long ago? "If I am ever missed, Mr. Leigh, look for

me in some such depths as these It would be such a quick escape from poverty and chame." Oh, how cruelly the words came back to him—the words that even in that glad sunshine had struck a chill to his heart That shining river was closed against her despair now, but a darker river stood open-a river on which

here was no gleam of sun or star. "And with heaven and earth shut against her," he thought in his agony, "with no friends, no home, no God—"

"Beg pardon, Marse Allston "--old Scip had been standing for fully five minutes beside Leigh, unseen, unheard. "Don't like to be obtrusive

sah, but a boy just come over with dis hyah note, and I though it mout be consequential, sah," concluded Scip, feeling that the solemnity of the time demanded polysyllables. And Allston Leigh broke open the

hastily folded missive and read in trembling, wavering lines : "Nellie is here, safe with me

Leave her in peace, poor, sorrowing shild, at the feet of her God. "SISTER CELESTIA."

TO BE CONTINUED

READ THE BIBLE

In these days when those outside the Church are told by preachers and teachers of bigotry and misinforma-tion on Catholic subjects that Catholics are forbidden to read the Bible, no pronouncement could be more opportune than the recommendation of the new Pope that the practice o ortune than the recommendation

rushed from the room

as piercing and as steady as of old, though his hair was turning very grey now, fingered the precious en hand pressed hard against his side. velope with hands that trembled slightly. . . It might contain—so many things ! "Hurry dearest," breathed Margaret. Sharp pain twisted his lips and dark ened his eyes. "Poor Margaret !" he murmured, "I did not think she murmured, "I did no would take it like this."

Slowly Lord Elvin opened the letter, as though he feared what the He raised his eyes to a large picture of his son that hung on the op posite wall. It was a picture of a contents might reveal. "Wait, Margaret," he urged, and

fair haired, eager eyed boy, who seemed to be looking forever and formoved nearer the window that the last shafts of light might fall on the over into some beautiful land whence no one else could follow. "You are sheet. When he opened the letter Lord here now, Harry," his father mur-

Elvin ran his eye quickly down the mured. "my brave, brave son. sheet-then his hand shook so the knew, I knew I could trust you, lad, paper nearly fell to the floor. He bit his lip to stay its trembling. Lady you would not fail." Margaret, watching his face, screamed sharply, and gripped her husband's

arms. "What is it, Robert. Oh, what is it? Is he hurt?"

Tenderly Lord Robert placed his arm around her and drew her to "Be brave, little woman," he whispered huskily, " it was to be ex-

whispered hearty, 'I was to be be pected you know." "Not-not-" Margaret's face grew white, and her eyes dilated. "What is it ? O Robert, what-is-it?"

"Dearest," very gently the fire in his own eyes dim now, "dearest, Harry, our Harry, is a hero, as we knew he would be. His ship went

down, but it was a glorious fight—he died bravely, our little son. See, this letter is from his officer, who will have to go just as soon. Brave lad ! Poor, poor Margaret. Dear, where are you ? Margaret !" His head fell forward a little, and his lips was among the few saved. Shall I read it, dear ?"

But Margaret was standing with her hands clasped tightly before her, an unseeing look in her eyes. Suddoubled in with pain. Up in her darkened chamber. Margaret lay prostrate on her bed. Her denly she broke from his protecting arms and threw herself with a low cry first passionate outburst had spent itself now, and she lay there sobbing

on a couch. "My little son," she cried, "my little, little son,"-and her brave husband covered his face with his hands, and the officer's let

ter fell unbeeded to the floor. "He was a soldier's son," he murmured, and Margaret straightened

"O Robert," she moaned, "that unfeeling one—" She rose hurried and the missionaries. We are among unfeeling one—" She rose hurried and the missionaries. We are among the few who have no woman to help is my little son, and he is gone—he like her son's, and once more hur. has been killed, my poor baby—that's ried over the stairs. After all she Sisters nearby; that is why he is

was leaning wearily against the fran Lord Elvin sank into his chair, his

account of this tiresome pain."

of the door, staring with troubled eyes at the dilapidated hut nearest their own. At last the boy could bear it no longer. He sidled over to Father Labarge and peered question. ingly into his face. The priest smiled.

Well, what is it ?" he asked, mischievously pretending not to under-stand that John was eager to hear the contents of the Bishop's letter. Is-is he coming soon ?" John

asked. "Who?" Father Labarge inquired,

still wilfully stupid. "Oh, you know, Father ; the Bishop, of course. Is he coming soon to Howchow ?"

John was an orphan whom the The pain caught him again in his Bishop had taken from the Sisters' side and his lips turned gray. When asylum when he was a little fellow the spasm had passed he raised his and had kept until at sixteen years

the space had been by spicture. "It's of age, he had given him to Father really too bad, Harry," he said with a slight smile, much as though the boy was there listening to him, "It is too bad that after nearly losing my you must be disappointed, and so am you must be disappointed. He is unyou must be disappointed, and so am I, but it can't be helped. He is unlife a half hundred times on the usually busy, and it will be a month or more before he can reach us at battlefield, I must go forth at last on He rose and walked unsteadily to a little Howchow. He asks about you, and says that he still misses you cabinet in the wall, and poured him-

John looked very sad when he self out a small glass of brandy, and heard that the Bishop's next visit then sank slowly into his chair again. "I might just as well have gone with you, Harry," he muttered, "I was postponed ; then grinned happily over what came next.

"A month isn't long. I can wait,' he said.

Father Labarge said no more for a few moments, and when he did speak it was in so troubled a way that even John, too care-free and easy-going himself often to be conscious of the trials of others, even John perceived that he was worried.

"The bishop is not coming soon, quietly. Presently, the thought of Robert caused her sobs to cease. but some one else is," he announc Her husband, she knew, must feel his son's death keenly—he was the idol of man's life—the breath of his existence—"Dear Robert," she mur-mured, "and I called him hard and cold. Ah, I have been the selfish. He writes that he is sending a substitute-an old woman, John, who cannot speak a word of anything but French. She has lately come from Europe and wishes to devote the remainder of her life to the missions and the missionaries. We are among

reading the scriptures daily in the home should be maintained in every

up quickly. "O Robert," she moaned, " that