

AN AFTER-WORD

"The Escaped Nun," since its appearance in 1909, has had an extraordinary sale. The book has met with a mixed reception—sympathy with the sufferer and indignation at her treatment from ordinary people; abuse, persecution, vituperation from Roman Catholics.

The non-partisan reader may meanwhile ask himself: is this an exceptional experience? Was Miss Moulton the victim of unfortunate circumstances or temperament, which made her convent life the very reverse of the ideal which it should have been? Or is this the logical outcome of a system which secludes from the world the very people who might work out its salvation? This story of petty slander, tyranny, backbiting, and jealousy—is it the accident of good things gone wrong, or only what one might expect if you put the absolute power of body and soul into the hands of one woman, however good, without appeal, without inspection, without let or hindrance from public opinion? Is the state of an