SO AS BY FIRE

BY JEAN CONNOR

CHAPTER XIV

THE GLITTER AND THE "GAIN" seated in the heavily curtained Seated in the heavily curtained window of his son's library, Judge Randall was looking out at the winter storm. It had been snowing all day long, softly, steadily, silently, and now the tall gray houses across the street had taken on fairy pinnacles, and battlements, the sharp iron railings seemed hedgerows of May day bloom, while high above all, the towers and dome of the old eathedral rose white crowned against

the leaden sky.

But no such softened wintry touch But no such softened white; softened by the window. The Judge was falling sorely, as his best friends agreed. Yet he was making his last fight bravely. The sunken eyes were keen and clear, the thin, worn lace had lost nothing of its dignity; though he used a cane now he still held himself erect and proud as of

'I am undermined, the doctors tell me, Gilbert," he was saying to his son, "but I can stand for years yet, they say, for a round decade of years yet. I'd like to see my little girl settled in life before I go. You and Marian will be good to her, I am sure, marian will be good to her, I the stre, and I will leave her plenty, but for all that, I feel anxious about her, Gilbert, she is not like Milly, not like any Randall, I ever knew. With all I do and have done for her, I don't think she is hanny. Gilbert." hink she is happy, Gilbert."

"Not happy!" echoed the other, in nazement. "Not happy! My dear amazement. "Not happy! My dear sir, to me she seems absolutely

"Glitter, my boy, only glitter!
There's no real light or joy in it.
It's the rainbow spray of the waterfall, I tear, with the little stream breaking fiercely against the rocks beneath. This marriage with de Lausanne for instance. Of course didnt want to give her up to Of course l foreigner, though it was what is called a most brilliant match, and for a while she seemed to feel the triumph of it. Then one night, when he had sent her home a casket of beautiful jewels, she flung hersel down on her knees at my feet, and begged me to take her away before she sold herself to a man she loathed. And then—then about the Church, she is so strange, so contradictory. I have known her to spend hours before the altar, to attend retreats, sermons, until poor Madame Charrette felt all was right with her, and suddenly to plunge into a wild round of gayety and seemingly forget there

Oh, she will come out all right," said Gilbert, with his good humored cheerfulness. "I suppose her pretty head is a little turned just now, and I rather think you've spoiled her with over indulgence. But really, I can't blame you. She is as bewitching a little creature as I ever saw. And I don't think you need worry about settling her," the gentleman about settling her," the genuseur added, laughing. 'Already she could have her pick of the finest fellows in town. Here she comes now, and surely happy enough to ease all

The merry music of bells came gaily to the listener's ears, a sleigh filled with a pretty, fur-clad load dashed up to the door, and in a moment the wide old house echoed with glad voices and happy laughter, as Mildred, Nellie, Leonie Duval, Allston Leigh, and Dr. Vance came trooping up the wide polished stairs into the fire-lit library. They had all met at the Duval's country home for Inncheon and v the dinner which Mrs. Gilbert Randall was to give to a dozen or more guests to night. For the Judge had his wish, no anxiety for him had apparently marred the brightness of his little girl's return. The last month had been a round of hospitable entertainmeets, in her honor. And struggle against it as he might, Allston Leigh was drawn into the Allston Leign was drawn into the circle of her charms. For Madam Van was managing matters; that wise and wary old lady who usually saved her strength and her money during the winter season, had flung prudence to the winds and plunged recklessly into the swim, and Allston was called upon to uphold her. Madam Van had not ruled all her men folks for half a century to lose her grasp on this last of her line.

sipation she was attending a triduum at the Cathedral. "I took Nellie with me last night," she confided to her escort as their cab rolled through the darkened streets to the Randall dinner. "And, oh, All-ston, she was shaken, I could see her shaken to the soul! And really I never heard a more powerful ser-mon. Father Lane held his audience breathless. His text was 'What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' and he fairly scorched us poor worldlings with his flery eloquence. 'There are lost souls be-fore me now,' he said, 'souls that have bought the world, its wealth

must steer him into safe waters

before she crossed that dark sea

whose beacon lights, to do Aunt Van

justice, had always shone for her above all the glitter of earth. Even now in the midst of her unusual dis-

Marian and advised her to contrive a meeting with Father Lane. She said she would invite him for to-

night."

"My dear Aunt Van, you are the most delightful paradox," said the young man, laughing.

"A paradox! Not at all," answered the old lady, bridling. "The girl ought to be a Catholio, as you know. The faith is in her blood, and in her heart too, as I firmly believe. But she is fighting against it, God only knows why. And I am out in all my old war paint this winter to settle things for both of you, dear settle things for both of you, dear boy. It will cost me my August fete and a spell of rheumatism, I know, but I'm in the battle, Allston, to conbut I'm in the battle, Aliston, to convert her, and to marry you. The Duke is out of the way, I understand, but there will be scores of others pressing for his place—for your place, Allston."

"My place!" he echoed in amaze-

Yes, yours. If you claim, hold

fight for it, Allston. Oh, she won't be won lightly, I warn you."

"She has no heart to win," was the hard answer. "She told me that plainly last summer at Biarritz when I pleaded with her like the madman that I was. She bewitched me from the first, Aunt Van, drew me across oceans and continents. But she is like the Undine of your fete, she has neither heart nor so

Nonsense," said Aunt sharply. "They may lie too deep down for your seeing, Allston, but if I know women, she has a double

They reached the Randall home as she spoke, and were ushered into its warmth and light.

The long drawing room was cheery and homelike, with its soft, shade and homelike, with its sort, shaded lamps and its open fires, and a pleas-ant company were already gathered. Leonie, Dr. Vance, and some half dozen of the older set. Judge Randall sat in his great armchair by the fire talking to Father Lane, who had just come in, bright eyed and ruddy, from his brisk walk through the snow. Aunt Van dropped her loose, fur lined pelerine and fleecy headwrap into the hands of the maid in the hall and joined the old folks. Allston Leigh, stepping forward to put hat and coat on the antiered rack at the bend of the winding stair, was startled by the sight of the slender, white robed figure, standing there breathless, hesitant, her eyes fixed on the group risible through the half parted tiéres of the drawing room. She turned at his footsteps, her gray eyes blazing with a fire he had never seen before.
"What is that priest doing here?"

she asked, fiercely.
"Father Lane?" he asked, in sur-

prise. "He has come to dinner with the rest, I suppose."
"They did not tell me," she said, excitedly. "Why did they not tell me? Why is he here like—like

Leigh looked at her in bewilderment. Her head was thrown back leflantly, her eyes glowing, her slender form quivering. She was like some wild thing at bay. Then sud-denly a seeming explanation flashed upon him. Miss Nellie, "shaken to the soul" as she had been the night before, had had no mind to meet the preacher who had so painfully im-

He is here by your aunt's invitation, no doubt, ar is too late to escape him. But you'll find Father Lane quite harmless, I

assure you. He only thunders in the pulpit," said Leigh, lightly. "I have heard him," she said. "And I heard him once before at—

I remember," Leigh continued in the same light vein, to sooth her strange excitement. "We went to strange excitement. "We went to church together. You were a pale bewildered little girl taking your first steps in a new world. How you have changed! Almost beyond recognition."

"Beyond recognition!" she re-peated, slowly. "You are both flat-tering and reassuring, Mr. Leigh. Let me see," and she lifted her eyes with the usual laughing light in hem to the tall mirror that stood between the antiers of the hat-rack. For a moment she stood facing the reflection, the slender, graceful figureein its rich sweeping draperies, the red gold hair dressed high over the delicate, mobile face, the exquis-ite taste and daintiness of every touch and line of the beautiful pic-

" I am a fool !" she said, and there was a note of triumph in her silvery laugh. "But preachers are my blackest of bete noirs and I felt vexed at confronting such a death's head through a charming dinner. But there is no escape, as you say. us go on and face the inevitable. Let

And lifting the velvet portiere she stepped into the drawing-room. The old Judge looked up with tender

"Ah, here she is at last. I was just wondering where you were, little girl. My granddaughter, Elinor, Father Lane." And as the unconscious lie passed the old man's lips, a swift flush she could not control. swift hush she sould hot collects swept over the young beauty's face and the gray eyes fell under the priest's clear quiet gaze. But only for a moment; then Madame Charrette's have bought the world, its wealth and power, at the price no finite mind can reckon. Souls whose fair seeming is a living lie.' Really, Allston, it was terrible. I began to look back into my own misdoings and to thank the Lord the west wing of the Manor was down and I had the safety of the impecunious. And Nellie, as I said, was shaken to the soul. She was trembling like a leaf beside me. I gave a hint of it to pupil recovered all her charming

dark eyed little romps when he left fifteen years ago, were charming signorinas now. She chatted gayly of them all. But all the while under the light play of their words, there sounded in the girl's soul the surge of deep waters, the grave blessing spoken at the Road House, the clear warning tone of the preacher at St. Barnabas,' the thunder that had echoed from the Cathedral pulpit only last night. Was it the voice of God calling her in ever deeping tone by this man's lips? this man who had stood at Elinor Kent's dying bed, who held so many secrets of the sorrow-ing, the sinful, buried in his priestly

Was he holding her secret with the rest? And when at last, excusing himself on the plea of his nightly sermon, Father Lane took an early leave, Allston Leigh found Nellie in a new mood. She was standing alone in the deep, curtained window in the drawing room looking out at the in the deep, curtained window in the drawing room looking out at the storm, all the light and glow of the evening gone from her gray eyes and her voice hard and cold.

"Tired out?" he asked, gently,

pushing up a chair for her and drop ping on the window-seat beside her Considering your aversion for preachers you did nobly. But it was

"Yes," she answered. "I feel as if I had been climbing a mountain if I had been climbing a mountain top. And now there is going to be bridge until midnight. I hate bridge. Think of intelligent beings sitting for hours with the whole universe narrowed down to a pack of cards."
"Yet if I remember right you came
out a triumphant winner at the

Stuarts three nights ago."
"Of course. If I must play anything, I play to win. But it isn't worth the candle. Nothing is to-

Nothing!" he echoed. " Have you reached that point already? You!"
"Oh, it is only for the night, I supose," she said, with her little hard laugh. "But is the game worth the while, Mr. Leigh? Dressing, dining, ancing, riding the crestof the waves as we do ?"

"No, that is not worth while. as I think I told you when we stood on the cliffs of Biarritz last year, and you were dazzled by the glitter and sparkle of a ducal coronet."
"Dazzled!" she repeated. "Do

you think I was dazzled? Oh, no!
It was the solid anchorage, Mr.
Leigh, the anchorage of the ten generations that would hold safe, I knew, though the stars fell. It I could have stood it! But the chain pulled and I broke loose. And the old chateau, with the tombstone waiting for me, so solid and sure, and the good duke himself, so dull and slow. I had a letter from Madame Charrette to-day. He is still desole, she declares, and begs me to consider my madness."

"Marriage being entirely a matter o

cold consideration," he said, bitterly.

"Of cold consideration—yes," she

answered.
"And yet Aunt Van, who pretends

"And yet Aunt van, who precents
to know women, declares you have
both heart and soul."

"Dear Aunt Van!" the voice grew
soft for a moment; "she has been
my friend ever since she flung me her sweet-scented old shawl for my en-folding the first day we met. But she does not know me, Mr. Leigh. There is no one in all this wide world who knows me as I am. And that is—shall I call it my pride or my curse? I stand alone, alone apart from God and man."

"Not alone," he said, passionately.
"Never alone while I live. Reject them as you may, my life, my love will be yours and no other's. My heart, bitter, wounded, aching, is can not."

she said, in a low pained voice. "It hurts. I have tried to turn you from

You have indeed," he answered. "Then why do you torture me?" she asked, with sudden impatience, "Have I not told you I must stand alone—apart?" And you would want my heart and all its secrets, you would read my soul and all its needs, you would come into my life as lord and master. And then, then, then," she paused, "Oh no! If I ever marry it will be on cold considera

tion, Mr. Leigh."
"Nellie!" something in her tone,
her word, had made the dead hope in Leigh's breast start into quivering

"Aunt Van is looking for a part ner," she said, and she snatched the hand he had caught, and was gone to join the bridge players, leaving Leigh dazzled and bewildered. For one moment the mocking, veiling, rain-bow spray had parted, and he had caught sight of storm-lashed waves and depths beneath.

Aunt Van was right. He had fighting chance—and he would take it. All through the night, Nellie's strange words echoed through his mind like a strain of uncomprehended music. She would stand aloneapart. He would read her soul, her heart, be lord and master of her life. Ah, it was that from which she shrank like the free, glad, untamed little creature she was! He must show her how light and sweet would be

love's chain, how gentle his rule. And with these thoughts uppermost in his mind he returned to his Washington office next morning to find Mr. J. Dafton Mills (as his cards now announced that important gentleman, stretched out with Western ease in his biggest leather chair, awaiting his arrival.

"Well, I'm here, according to your invite, Judge," he said, after they had exchanged cordial morning greet-

"My invite?" repeated the other. "I'm glad to see so good a client al-ways, Mills, but really I don't re-

member—"
"Not about Buck Graeme—poor little Wessel's dad?" interrupted Daffy, eagerly. "Him that was pu in for a lifer? You said if you could

do anything to help me—"

"Oh, yes, yes," and the new hope kindled in his own heart roused Allston Leigh into quick sympathy with this faithful, simple lover. "I remember now—and I'll be as good as my word. What can I do for you,

Well, first thing, Judge, look well, here thing, Juage, look straight into my eyes for a minute, will you? You don't see anything queer or nutty about me, do you?" Leigh looked into a pair of keen, clear orbs, that he would have trusted to see through any murk or gloom.
"No," he laughed. "I could swear to your being altogether straight, Mills."

"I did think of going to a doctor," said Mr. Mills, thoughtfully, "bu not being sure of your Eastern ways I was afeard they might clap me into a sanitarium or water cure, and give somebody charge of my wad. For I've been seeing things, Judge," he seeing dded, in a lower tone,

things, sure.' What sort of things?" asked

Leigh, lightly.
"I've been seeing Weasel, Judge!" the words came almost with a gasp "Your little sweetheart?' said the "Judge," softly, thinking of the gray eyes hunting him night and day. "Ah, Mills, when a face is graven like hers on a man's deepest heart one is apt to see it. It is only nat "I know that, Judge. But this

here ain't natural—it's unnatural. It's the sort of seeing that gives you a cold shaking— like you had the seven days' ague. The fust time was that day I saw you in the park, and talked to you bout her. Well, I was coming home from one of the big shows that night, and I passed a shows that night, and I passed a house where they were having some kind of a blow out, and crowds of grand folks were coming out and I got sort of jammed in the push. Sudden I looked up and saw her standing right above me in the doorway all in shimmering white, Judge, like an angel from the skies. It struck me sick and dizzy for a moment and when I looked again she ment, and when I looked again she was gone. The next time was worse still, Judge. I was in Baltimore. Spellman and Co. had wired me there was some kind of a hitch in their Graystone Grinder, and I went over to look into it. There was a sort of revival at one of the big churches, revival at one of the big churches, and I heard it was led by a preacher I knew at home for a A No. 1, so I dropped in to hear him one night. And I seen her again. Just for a moment under one of the stone pillars that were blazing with lights. She was all in black this time and

she was pale as the dead." Mills." said Leigh, kindly, nothing more.

Fancied!" echoed Daffy. Judge, do you think I could fancy anything about Weasel? I'd know her agin all the world—know her anywhere—in life or death. No, Judge, I don't believe in spook raisers Judge, I don't believe in spook raisers but I hev a sort of feeling that Weasel is restless 'bout her poor dad, a dying there in his prison cell, and is looking to me to help him out. And I'm ready to do it if it takes every cent I've got. Stand by me and you can have the whole darned

Graystone Grinder pile."
"My dear Mills, as I told you be fore, this isn't in my line, and I won't touch a cent from you. But—but there is a face, living or dead, that would haunt my dreams and Mills-and-I understand. I'll stand of Oh, do not say it again—again,"

Oh, do not say it again—again,"

said, in a low pained voice. "It papers you have and I'll do what I the tree tree to turn you from can."

TO BE CONTINUED

THE CHALICE OF BITTERNESS

TRUE STORY OF THE RELIG-IOUS PERSECUTION IN MEXICO

- is a very picturesque little fishing village near the Loire, on the western coast of France. Here, ly-ing within the shadow of the village church, was the snug farmhouse of Pierre Beauval, the father of Jacques a boy of fourteen, and Jean, a lad of twelve, whom the age curé playfully

ermed the "Sons of Thunder!"

Early in June, Marie, the mother stood in the doorway of her home engaged in an animated discussion engaged in an animated discussion with one of the village gossips.

"Impossible!" she exclaimed.

"Monseigneur l'Eveque in the procession here on the fête Dieu!"

"It is true, I tell you," reiterated her informant. "I met Nanette, the housekeeper of M. le Curé, at the market, and she told me so herself. His Lordship the Bishop was a class mate of our Curé at the Seminary and Corpus Christi will be their gol

den jubilee.' When the visitor had departed, to be the first to spread the news in other quarters, Marie hastened to the cure, who was in the garden, the cure, who was in the garden, bending over a bed of his favorite flowers. "Is it true, mon Père," she inquired, "that the Bishop will be here for the feast of Corpus Christi?"

The aged priest smiled at the rapidity with which the news has spread and bowed his assent. The officious mother continued: "Then, mon Pere, you must let my Jacques and Jean serve His Lordship's Mass and be with him in the procession, one at supper.

his right hand and one at his left." The curé smiled at the maternal pride of Marie as she de-manded these coveted honors for manded these coveted honors for her sons, and playfully asked: "And what about the chalice of bitterness; will you drink that, too?" "Yes, mon Père, I will drink that too," said the mother, smiling, little real izing how literally her words were to be fulfilled.

be fulfilled.

The procession of Corpus Christi
in which the Bishop took part, is
still spoken of at each recurrence of
the festival; and the splendor of the occasion has never since been equalled at L—. Marie had washed and ironed the surplices for Jacques and Jean with much concern; and and Jean with much concern; and it was with pardonable pride that she gazed upon her boys, holding aside the cope of the venerable Bishop, as he carried the Sacred Host. When the procession was over, Marie came for the Bishop's blessing, and the curé presented her as the mother of his "Sons of Thunder mother of his "Sons of Thunder." The saintly Bishop placed his hand on the head of each of her boys, and

the happy mother was the envy of the parish that day.

Not long after this event, Louis, the brother of Marie, and Director of the Novitiate at N—, came to visit his sister, and when he departed, Jacques and Jean accompanied him, to be enrolled among the sons of St.

Busybodies, of course, censured Marie's heroic sacrifice in giving her two sons to the Lord, and the luck less critics who aired their opinions within her hearing brought a storm of abuse upon their heads from the caustic tongue of the generous

If the good God gave them to me. why should not I give them back, if He wants them? Perhaps you would have me like old Mariotte? He would not let his son go when the good God called him, and the boy was drowned, so that he has not even the consolation of praying at his grave." Nevertheless, the mother's heart was torn with grief at the separation. "It is the chalice of bitter ness, Marie," said the curé.

Then began the forebodings of the troublous time in France. The Superiors of the Brothers, anticipat ing the coming storm, organized new districts in Central America, and a the end of his novitiate, Jacques was assigned to labor there, under the direction of his uncle, who had been appointed Visitor. Letters came from eques at regular intervals, telling of his success and happiness, and the life of Marie went smoothly on until the day the Director of the Novitiate came to bring her sad tid-ings. With great gentleness the bighearted man prepared her for the ordeal, and then told her of the awfu affliction the Lord had placed upon her. Jacques had been shot by a bandit while at recreation in the mountains. The novice master gave her the letters her brother had for-warded, and a little brass crucifix that Jacques had received on taking the habit. The right hand of the figure was shattered where the bullet had grazed it. The chalice of bitter-

ness was filling up.

Then the storm against the religious orders in France broke out in all its fury. The novices and postu-lants were returned to their families but Jean pleaded not to be sent away He wanted to be a Brother; he would go anywhere the Superiors would send him. He wrote imploring letters to his uncle, the Visitor, and through his influence, Jean received Superior, and was ordered to America to make his novitiate. He returned home to bid a last good bye to his mother before going into voluntary axile and homed of her the works. of Jacques which hung around her

Jean, now Brother Pancratius of the Blessed Sacrament, was a general favorite with the American novices His fund of quaint and numerou tales during recreation was their de-light; his attitude of simple piety, as he knelt in prayer before the altar was a lesson to them of his sublime faith in the Holy Eucharist, while his mistakes in English were a con stant source of amusement. It was hard to tell which was the more ludicrous, the look of blank amaze ment on the face of an elderly novice who had come in from the world, or the look of questioning surprise on the face of Jean as, in translating faire (to make, to do), he asked: "Dear Brother Noah, why did God

His novitiate being ended. Jean was sent to Mexico, and there manito" (little Brother, as his loving pupils called him) Pancratius taught successfully until the revolution broke out.

Then came rumors of the outrages Then came rumors of the outrages the rebels were committing. Brother Director related, as the Brothers walked up and down the courtyard during recreation, some of the hor-rors he had heard of: priests im-prisoned to extort money from them; sacrilegious profanations of churches and sacred vessels; ribald soldiers donning the Mass vestments and dancing during wild orgies in the sanctuary.

At last the rebels advanced upon the city where Jean was and captured it. It was Friday in June, the feast of the Sacred Heart. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed in the chapel above, and Jean, as sacristan, had outdone himself in decorating the altar for this reast of love. The firing had ceased, but the chaplain, who had gone out during the morning on a sick call to the hospital. who had gone out the hospital, had not returned; and Jean was fleft in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament while the others were at

Suddenly a band of soldiers burst into the house to place the Brothers under arrest, and a gang of looters following them, scattered through-out the house in search of articles of value. Jean heard the noise, and ran downstairs to discover the cause. He was motionless with terror as he stood at the refectory door and heard the officer give the command to place tho Brothers under arrest. The officer, looking toward the open door at the end of the refectory, saw at the end of the refectory, saw Jean's blanched face, and motioned to a soldier, "There is another." Then the young Brother thought of the Blessed Sacrament upstairs, and field, the soldier in hot pursuit. Jean reached the chapel first, and snapped the lock on the door. The soldier beat violently on the panel with the butt end of his gun, whilst Jean mounted but there was no escape. Already the door was swaying under the vigorous blows. Jean opened the lun-ette and swallowed the Sacred Host which was to be his Viaticum. The brutal soldier had battered down the door, and in rage at being outwitted, fired upon the defenceless Brother. With a cry Jean fell upon the altar, amid the crashing vases, pierced

through the heart.

Again the crucifix on Jean's breas was sent across the waters to the sorrowing Marie. This time the left hand was shattered. "The chalice of bitterness! I have drunk it," wailed the heartbroken mother, as she knelt at the feet of the aged cure and kissed the mutilated crucifix.

And now the lonely mother of martyrs sits in her quiet cottage near the church, and yearns for the day when her sorrow shall be changed into joy; and her joy, no one shall take from her. She shall sit with her sons, one on the right hand and one on the left, in the Kingdom of the Father. B. A. GABRIEL.

THROUGH ENTREATY OF ST. JOSEPH

The robins in the tall locust tree that lined either side of the drive way tried to outrival the happy mea dcw larks in a neighboring field. As the joyous birds calls echoed back and forth Mary smiled while she loving and carefully loosened the soft, dark earth about each tender crocus plant. Perhaps it was the same en-chanting breath of spring that had coaxed the crocuses to open their purple and yellow flower cups and that filled the birds with such sies of happiness which caused the smile to scamper over her sweet face and hide itself in the depths of her dark blue eyes. Or it might have peen the warm sunshine in her own

girlish heart.
Whatever had been the source of
the smile it still caressed Mary's lips
as the shrill whistle of the mail carrier caused her to abandon her pleasant task and to go after the mail.

Among the dozen or so letters that the mail man handed her Mary found two that were addressed to herself, one of which received a little loving squeeze and the other on which the girl recognized her father's hand-writing, changed the smile into a Iook of anxious expectancy. As Mary entered the front hall she called in

the direction of the kitchen :

"Aunt Eleanor, here is the mail." "Bring it out here, dear," was the answer wafted from the kitchen door along with the delicious odor of fresh doughnuts. Mary entered the kitchen, laid the letters on the table and with an if you please smile took a warm doughnut from the dish. "Did you get any letters, Mary?" asked Mrs. Barton, otherwise Aunt

Elegnor as she dropped a fresh ply of dough into the skillet. "Yes, auntie, dear, I got two;" re-plied Mary between bites, "one is

plied Mary between bites, "one is from Matilda and the other is from Matilda was your chum last year at school, I believe ?"
"You are a right believer, she was

my best friend and is yet."
"Take another doughnut and go unstairs to read your letters, for you stay here I won't have one left in that dish. Scat." Mary helped herself to two and escaped through the door just in time to avoid a tea towel that her aunt in pretended anger had

thrown. Aunt Eleanor is just like a girl," mused Mary as she mounted the stairs and entered the room. She went over to the window where the went over to the window where the morning sunshine came pouring in with all its gracious warmth, and drawing the dainty scrim curtains aside, sat down to read her letters. Before opening them, however, she looked up to the little statue of St. Joseph, at whose feet she had placed bowel of fresh crocuses from the

garden.
"Dear St. Joseph, I don't know which to open first. I am a little anxious about papa's and yet I wonder what Matilda can be doing at Hilton Crest. I didn't know she had friends so pear the convent in the conv friends so near the convent," she said not addressing the statue, but her favorite saint whose image it was.
"Wouldn't it be delightful if papa

would consent to my becoming a Sister while she is there? Wouldn't she be surprised?" With this Mary opened her friend's letter and started to read it.

As she read the sun changed each one of her Titian locks into of purest gold and when she raised her head it turned the tears in her eyes into sparkling diamonds. Wiping them away on the corner of her apron she began to reread the letter aloud.

"Dear Mary, I am writing for the first time from my new home, where
I have come in obedience to our
novice embraced a blue eyed postul-

Divine Master's call. I know you will be surprised to learn that He has chosen me to become the spouse of His Sacred Heart, overlooking in His wonderful love and mercy all my unworthiness. I nevertold you, dear for we never had a talk on this subject while at school. I am so happy here in my convent home." Mary could read no farther, for her eyes were full of tears of joy and thank-

Perhaps if you had been near enough and had listened very atten-tively you would have heard the per the name at the end of the letter.

Sister Mary Dorothy.

Mary put the letter back in the en-This time, as she read, a look of trouble came into her blue eyes. Just as she finished reading the letter Mrs. Barton entered the room and seeing the look on her piece's

What did your father say, dear? Is he willing that you should enter the convent the 1st of August?"

"He isn't willing I should enter at all, Auntie. Listen to this: 'My dear daughter. I was both surprised and displeased to learn the trend of your childish fancies. I perceive that childish fancies. I perceive that your head has been crammed full of these ideas by the nuns where you attended school last year, but I wish you to understand that no child of mine shall ever become a nun. Your dear mother, on her death bed, five years ago, asked me to educate you done, but the best is not found in a community of nuns. I know my daughter will be obedience itself in regard to this matter. Your loving father.' What am I going to do?" exclaimed the girl with a sob in her

You poor child, just put on your hat and go down and have a talk with Father Curtis. He will help you if any one can," answered her Mary did as her aunt advised and soon the kind hearted priest, who

had known the girl from infancy, was tactfully finding out the trouble. "Perhaps, my dear child, God has sent you this cross to try your vocation. The only thing to be done is to submit to His holy will. Why don't you make a novena to Saint Joseph, your favorite saint? You know the feast of his patronage is just two

weeks from to morrow. " I will, Father, and will you please say a prayer for the same intention?

asked Mary.
"I will remember you every morning in Holy Mass and I'm sure all will come out right," answered Father

It was with a light heart that Mary thanked her kind director and re-turned home. Next morning she posted a letter to her friend, Sister Dorothy at Holy Ghost convent, Hil-ton Crest asking her to make a novena to Saint Joseph for her in

tention. The sunny April days passed and each morning found Mary kneeling at Saint Joseph's shrine in the little church two blocks from her home. She did not answer her father's letter for he was expected home within a

On the day her novena ended, Mary received into her heart the King of Kings, whom she knew was calling her to a life of closer union with Himself. As she asked Him to grant her prayers in union with those of Saint Joseph, a feeling of confi-

the troubled waters of her soul. Mass her aunt, Mrs. Barton, met her at the door wifh a smile.

"If you're not too hungry, Mary, I we something to tell you." "What is it, Auntie? Has papa come home shead of time?" ques-

tioned the girl, for she dreaded to meet her father so soon. "You're a poor guesser! Come inside and I'll tell you, while we have

breakfast." As they seated themselves at the table, Mary asked, "What is it you have to tell me? Nothing bad I

"No, not very bad. Just after you had left for Mass a messenger boy brought me a letter by special delivery. It was from your father. He said to tell you that he had changed his mind and you have his consent to enter the convent as soon as you please. You needn't squeeze me so, I didn't have anything to do with it."

"How did he happen to change it so suddenly?" asked Mary, with her arms about her aunt's neck.

He said he was going by train to Haysville. As the train was cross-ing a bridge it broke and the coach your father was in and two others crashed into the stream below. As he felt himself falling he said a prayer that he might be saved and h promised to make any sacrifice he thought God would require, in thanks giving. How he ever managed to hurl himself free of the car he doesn't know. He remembered striking the water and that was all until he became conscious that he was being cared for by a Sister in a hospital ward. As he lay there thinking, he remembered his promise, and seeing the gentle Sister bending over him he took it as a sign and so has given his consent for you to consecrate your life to God. He left the hospital life to God. yesterday, for the only injury he received was a good wetting and the shock caused by the falling. The water saved his life."

No one, not even Mary herself, could have described her feelings of mingled joy and thanksgiving to Saint Joseph, through whose inter-cession this had happened.