

CHAPTER I.

Mrs. Eastling, owner of a large estate in Winchester, England, is the mother of three sons, Barr, Spencer, and Clyde, aged respectively fourteen, twelve, and ten years. On an adjoining estate live Mr. and Mrs. Froome and their eleven-year-old daughter, Loraine. Spencer and Clyde have all the inclinations of youth and find their brother Barr a sorry companion in their sports. Barr and Loraine are deeply attached to each other and have a sympathetic bond in their mutual friendship for G. John Townsend, Benedictine.

Barr and Loraine are daily companions of the benedictine on his walks and many are the stories, mostly historic and pertaining to their beloved faith, that he tells them. On one particular morning Barr begs the benedictine for a story. The benedictine tells Barr the early history of the Brotherhood and the Nuns and of the origin of the rosary.

Stooping down the benedictine gathers a hand full of pebbles and from a nearby bush he gathers a handful of berries; placing his hand affectionately on Barr's head he says: "In the tenth century, Countess Godova left, by will, a circulet of precious stones, threaded on a cord to the statue of 'Our Lady' in a certain monastery in order that she might tell her prayers accurately. In the twelfth century the poor had to some extent adopted the rosary and theirs were made from pebbles, berries, and sometimes bones." These facts told in the beautiful language of simplicity, the benedictine tells Barr and so impressed is he that later, when Loraine joins them, he insists upon a repetition of the stories for her benefit. Loraine joins Barr in his pleas for stories and the benedictine tells them of the origin of the name rosary and the living rosary.

"Once upon a time a monk seeks the garden at eventide to recite his Hail Marys or evening prayers. The splendor of a perfect day is swiftly falling into the quiet restfulness of night; the scent of many flowers is in the air. The monk's head is sunk upon his breast; the figure of 'Our Lady' steals quietly into the garden and stands in silent benediction. As the beautiful words of prayer fall from the lips of the monk they are transformed into rosebuds, which drift lightly through the air towards 'Our Lady'; she reaches up, gathers the floating buds and weaves them into a garland,