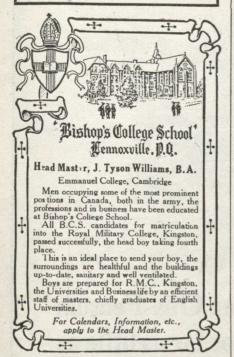
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selves have been all but dead for a hundred years!" He wiped the perspiration dred years!" He wiped the perspiration from under his mop of grey hair.

from under his mop of grey hair.

The young man smiled and put the argument aside. "Well, I suppose we can safely look at the thing again, anyway."

In an instant Eloise was again entreating him, but her father overbore her. "Why, daughter, he's already had the excitement of reading the letter. To handle the music can add nothing to it." He strode into the library, unlocked the safe, and brought out the satanic canon. They examined it for several minutes without speaking.

The grisly thongs which bound it, and the hideous outer covering, a sort of softer and more open fibered parchment, had in them now a new and more horrid

had in them now a new and more horrid power of repulsion. But the music when unfolded looked forth vacantly and harm-

power of repulsion. But the music when unfolded looked forth vacantly and harmlessly.

"And it's so simple," muttered Carrington breathlessly. "I can't see where — There aren't twenty bars of theme in the whole thing. It's only the repetitions in it that give it its length. I could play it now from memory without the slightest difficulty!"

"Oh, but dearest, you wouldn't, you surely——" Eloise had just laid down Keppel's letter. She was white to the lips and trembled violently. "I want you to swear to me that you'll never even let yourself think of the thing again, let alone play it!"

He looked at her with wan humour. "Well, I guess, dear, I needn't promise not to play it again, anyway. It seems to be a case of 'three strokes and out,' you know, and it came near enough to getting me the second time."

He slipped his hand over hers. The Colonel rose with the canon, and carried it back into the library. Left alone with her lover the frightened girl cuddled into his breast, and to coax his mind from the subject of her fears she began to

his breast, and to coax his mind from the subject of her fears she began to talk of a thousand trifles about the talk of a thousand trifles about the house. Across the greensward there came to them the last soft strains of vespers. Far away the heat had called up a thunderstorm; its growlings were becoming every moment more distinct. The girl ceased talking, and they sat long in silence. And when suddenly she realized that her weary-brained convalescent had let himself drop calmly off to sleep in her heart there was anything sleep in her heart there was anything but reproach. She rose noiselessly, hung over him for a moment in blissful brooding and then tiptoed away to see that all was ready for him in his room.

VI.

A FEW minutes later she returned. Carrington's chair was empty. She ran to the veranda steps and looked out. The heavy pall of thunder-clouds fast driving across the sky had brought down the darkness an hour before nightfall; but she could not mistake the figure passing uncertainly into the chapel door. He was walking in his sleep; that she divined, quaking. But whatever else was in her thought she dared not let the terror in her know. In an ague of shuddering she fled across the lawn, and stumbled weakly up the four stone steps. Carrington had already seated himself at the smaller organ. She started after him, then stopped. He had himself given full warning of what it would mean to awaken him in such a condition and in such surroundings while he was still weak from fever! And as she stood there, from the fingers of the somnambulist there came mockingly to her through the gloom the first demoniacal notes of the hell-born canon.

For a long minute she was as if frozen in a thick ice of horror. Her heart FEW minutes later she returned.

For a long minute she was as if frozen in a thick ice of horror. Her heart stopped, her limbs were dead, her open lips and staring eyes were like those of a Medusa carved in stone. And when once more she felt that she could move, once more instinctively she started once more she felt that she could move, once more, instinctively, she started toward her lover. And once more she stopped, gasping. She could not. If he was to die, some other hand than hers must deal the blow. Her tortured thoughts flung themselves from side to side like creatures in a cage of fire. The devil-music leaped forward, faster and faster. Over them, as swiftly, the storm was closing. A long roll of thunder came in to the girl like the trumpet of the day of doom. She could hold herself motionless no longer.

With a choking cry she fled down the chapel. A flash of lightning lit her steps, and in a kind of frenzy she flung herself up the stairs to the great oriel

Schools and Colleges

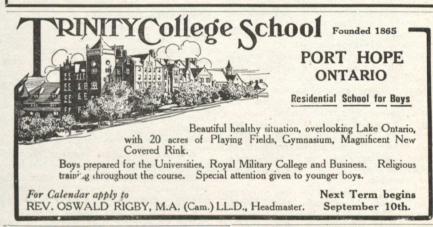
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