
OLD LETTERS

proached the Cardinal. "Aunt Hawkins has unearthed a golden jewel!"

There was consternation written on Gracia and Jerome's faces. It had been a busy time of surprises and they hardly knew what to expect now. Sister Benita was experiencing one of the greatest joys in life.

The Cardinal's eyes scanned the strange letter. A smile stole to his face, and he read, in tones of gladness:

"The Place o' Pines,
August 13, 18—

"Dear Mr. Gravenor,—Months have passed since the arrival of your letter of inquiry concerning Mrs. Lescot's other child—Jerome. A severe siege of illness has prevented my writing you until now. It would have been very good of you to have taken charge of Constance's brother, but I am afraid the plan is not practicable. Immediately after Mrs. Lescot's death the boy was taken to England by one Sidney Chelsea, who was holidaying at the Place o' Pines at the time of the tragedy. Since then I have never seen or heard of the boy.

"You will no doubt be surprised to learn that Jerome is only a brother by adoption to Constance. When Lawrence Lescot commanded the *El Dorado*, a woman, who was a stranger to everyone on board, died rather