

Joseph Hocking

The Soul of Dominic Wildthorne



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The Soul of Dominic Wildthorne

By Joseph Hocking

AUTHOR OF "ALL FOR A SCRAP OF PAPER," "THE CURTAIN OF FIRE," ETC.

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Preface by Lutheran Librarian

In republishing this book, we seek to introduce this author to a new generation of those seeking authentic spirituality.

JOSEPH HOCKING (1860-1937), was a Cornish novelist and United Methodist Free Church minister. Like the American Presbyterian minister Edward Roe, Hocking's novels combine rich characters with gripping stories. Joseph Hocking published more than 101 books and was greatly respected as a fiction writer.

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A Note about Typos [Typographical Errors]

Please have patience with us when you come across typos. Over time we are revising the books to make them better and better. If you would like to send the errors you come across to us, we'll make sure they are corrected.

Foreword

IT IS POSSIBLE that many of my readers may claim to recognize, and to give another name to more than one of the institutions and characters mentioned in this story. Moreover, there are probably some who will urge that I have not given a correct description of the rules and usages of these institutions, or of the beliefs and teachings of those in authority.

It may be well, therefore, to say that I have not sought to give a description of any particular institution, nor have I sought to delineate the character of any living person. But while that is true, there is not, as far as I am aware, any statement concerning the usages, ritual, or teaching of the institutions and characters mentioned in the story, but what can be fully borne out by one or another of the many Orders now existing in the “Catholic branch” of the English Church. I have diligently read all the literature I have been able to obtain which bears upon the aims and ideals of those in the English Church who look upon the Reformation as “a dark and in some sense a damnable spot in our Church history,” and I can say with confidence that the anti-Protestantism of this section of our nation is under-rather than overstated.

In only one instance, as far as I am aware, can doubt be raised as to the accuracy of the descriptions I have given. Dominic Wildthorne, the chief character of this story, is said to have taken, as a member of “The Community of the Incarnation,” lifelong vows of Celibacy, Poverty, and Obedience. It may be said that this is not the custom in the English Church, but that such vows are only taken for a term of years, and are renewable at the expiration of that term. While this is, I believe, generally true, I have been informed on good authority that lifelong vows are taken in at least one of the “English Catholic Orders,” but concerning this I cannot speak with absolute certainty.

What I have tried to do is to give in the form of a story a picture of this phase of our English life, without particularizing any Order or person.

1. In Which Dominic Is Introduced

“I Thought nothing could be worse than a London fog, but this is.”

A LONDONER was once heard to make this remark when walking through the streets of a small manufacturing Yorkshire town, on a grim November day. That Londoner spoke the truth. In London, even on the foggiest day, you have the gaily lit shops, the surging crowds, and the busy life of a great metropolis. But in a Yorkshire manufacturing village there is, on those drear, foggy days of November and December, nothing to relieve the sordidness and the grimy desolation of the scene. Hundreds of chimneys pour out half-consumed coals, the air is leaden and clammy cold, the roads are badly lit, and covered with a layer of oily black slime which is repulsive both to sight and smell. If you pass near the great mills which stand at every street corner, you are met with the sickening odor of evil-smelling steam, and when you look around for some place of beauty and restfulness you look in vain. Gardens, as Southerners understand them, are almost unknown. The cottages are built often back to back, and the tiny asphalted yards which sometimes exist are made to look even less inviting than they were intended to look, by the clothes which the cottagers hang out in the vain hope that they will dry.

The people of Yorkshire are often spoken of as hard and stem and relentless. That is not true; but if people are affected by their associations, the people who live in the manufacturing towns and villages can hardly be blamed if they are lacking in the love for poetry and other beautiful things. If the Yorkshire cottager does not cultivate a garden — and the climate and general conditions would make this an impossibility even if he desired to do so — he knows how to make his home comfortable. Perhaps among all the cottage homes of England, you can find none where more comfort prevails. If smoke and grime and general ugliness are a concomitant of money made

by the manufacture of a large amount of the woolen goods of the land, the people do their best to counteract the outward ugliness by making the interior of their cottages homelike and attractive.

Of course, they have an occasional bright day even in winter, but from October to the end of March the valleys of manufacturing Yorkshire — and it is in the valleys that the “woolen mills” mostly exist — are enshrouded in a thick, black, moist, clammy atmosphere. In the main, moreover, the country is bare and desolate, and the cold northern air chills to the very bone.

It was on a drear November day in a Yorkshire manufacturing village that my story opens. Gas had been burning in the mills ever since the machinery had been set in motion that morning; the air was cold and clammy and smoke laden, the roads were made hideous by their covering of oily mud. The operatives, both men and women, had been very silent as they left their work at noon and went to their homes for dinner; they were just as silent when they returned at one o’clock. The draymen walked by their horses’ beads, silent and morose. But few of those terse, caustic jokes, so common among the people, were bandied. The day was too cruel, too oppressive.

Outside, on the northern side of the village, it was a little better. The air was less humid, it smelt less of the mills. Especially was this the case at the cemetery gates, where Maggie Yorke was passing with her father. Maggie had left her home about three o’clock in the afternoon, and was driven by her father’s groom to Bingley, where Fletcher Yorke had been the whole day. When she arrived at the Town Hall, she found him standing on the steps awaiting her.

“Cold, lass?” said Fletcher Yorke, as he gathered the reins in his hands and prepared to drive home.

“Not a bit, dad. Mother took care that I shouldn’t be.”

“Just like mother; but it’s a raw air, for all that.”

Fletcher Yorke was the most important man in the district. He was a large landowner, and in addition to his capacity of landlord, was the largest employer of labor for miles around. Indeed, Meremeadows, the town near which he lived, owed its existence largely to his enterprise. He owned the biggest mills, and thousands of the people in Meremeadows, when asked for whom they worked, would reply, “Fletcher Yorke.”

That is a characteristic of Yorkshire and Lancashire people: they call people by their Christian as well as their surnames. Almost invariably, too,

they drop the "Mister." They mean no disrespect by this; the habit simply springs from the independence of their characters, and the feeling that in the eyes of the Creator one man is as good as another.

Fletcher Yorke prided himself on being a Yorkshireman. He was proud of his name, and did not at all relish the letter "e" at the end of it. His father and his grandfather had been called Fletcher, and this man had given his eldest son the same name. His grandfather had come to Meremeadows fifty years before, and by his industry and keen business capacity had founded the fortunes of the house. The son had inherited his father's industry and business ability, while the Fletcher Yorke who sat by his daughter's side and drove towards Meremeadows, had by his almost imperial grasp of commerce extended his business until it had an almost world-wide connection.

Fletcher Yorke spoke correctly, but with a strong Yorkshire accent. He was proud of this, too. He had never received the advantage of a public-school and university training. His father did not believe in public schools or universities, and he had placed his son in the mill at fifteen years of age. Nevertheless, Fletcher Yorke, unlike his father and grandfather, was a traveled man. Partly for business purposes and partly for pleasure he had gone nearly all over the world. His knowledge of other countries and towns, however, did not lessen his esteem for Meremeadows.

"There's no country in the world like England," he would say earnestly, "no county in England like Yorkshire, and no town in Yorkshire like Meremeadows."

I have called Meremeadows a village, and in this I have perhaps made a mistake, for while it has all the appearance of a village, it nevertheless contains many thousands of people. It is long and straggling and ugly, consisting mainly of one long road, and of side roads, nearly every one of which is a *cul de sac*, but on which are built hundreds of cottages.

"Have you had many cases in the court today, father?" asked Maggie as they drove along.

"Ay, a good number."

"Any of special interest?"

"Nay."

"Doesn't Meremeadows look awfully miserable tonight?" said Maggie, nestling closer to her father's side.

"Well, it's November," said Fletcher Yorke; "you can't expect the sun to be shining all the year round. Besides, it'll be bright and warm when we get

home, eh, little lass?"

"Yes, dad."

Maggie Yorke, or as she was christened, Margaret Katherine, was the greatest joy of her father's life. She had three brothers, all older than herself, and although the father was proud of his sons, Maggie lay nearest to his heart. She was now over twelve years old, and although he was told that he ought to send her away to school, he could never bring his mind to do so. "The house would be as sad as a graveyard without my little Mags," he would say.

The horse dropped into a walk as they climbed the hill by which the cemetery stood, and as they passed the cemetery gate Maggie laid her hand on her father's arm.

"What's that, dad?" she said.

Fletcher Yorke tightened the rein.

"It sounds like some one sobbing," she continued.

It was now nearly dark, and they could see no one in the well-nigh deserted road.

"You must have been mistaken, Mags. Did you hear anything, Dixon?" And he turned to the groom who sat behind.

"Noa, aw've 'eard nowt."

"I'm sure I heard some one sobbing," persisted Maggie.

"Nay; who would be here by the cemetery gates in the dark?" And Fletcher Yorke lifted his hands to shake the reins.

"There, dad, don't you hear?"

It was not so much a sob that he heard as a moan, like the moan of some animal in pain.

"Can you see anything, Dixon?"

"Noa, I can see nowt."

"But I can, dad, it looks like a boy there by the gatepost."

Fletcher Yorke looked, and saw a human form leaning against the huge stone pillar on which the heavy iron gate was hung.

"What's the matter?"

There was no reply, and the moaning sound ceased.

"Come, I say, what are you up to?"

"I'm up to nowt."

The voice was hoarse. It was not the voice of a man, neither did it seem the voice of a child.

“Then what are you doing here? Why don’t you go home?”

At this there was a suppressed sob, but no word was spoken.

Fletcher Yorke rose in his seat, while the groom rushed to the horse’s head.

“I’ll come too,” said Maggie, as she saw her father descend. Like him, she had a great sympathy for sorrow and suffering.

The form at the cemetery gate did not move as they came up. It was almost as rigid as the piece of granite upon which the gate rested.

“Come, my lad,” said Fletcher Yorke, in a rough but kindly voice, “what’s the matter?”

“Aw’ve never said as owt was t’matter.”

“Yes, but what are you crying for?” asked Maggie, looking eagerly towards the speaker.

“I didn’t know as ’ow onybody could hear.”

They could see him more plainly now. It was a boy about fourteen years of age who spoke. Not a well-grown or attractive-looking boy by any means, but one who was lean and gaunt and almost ill-looking. As far as they could judge, his face was pale and haggard, his eyes were large and black, and had a haunted expression.

“Come, now,” said Fletcher Yorke, “something is the matter. Why are you staying here crying, instead of going home?”

“Not got ony ’ome.”

“No home? Where are your father and mother?”

“Deead.” And the boy’s voice was hoarse with sorrow.

“When did they die?”

“Mother deed w’en I wur a little ‘un. Feyther deed a Monda’.”

“What do they call you?”

“They call me Dominic.”

“Dominic? Dominic what?”

“Dominic Wildthorne.”

“Are you Wildthorne’s lad?”

“Ay.”

“Aid he’s been buried this afternoon?”

“Ay, aw’ve just come from t’fimeral.”

“Who was at the funeral?”

“Nobody but me.”

“But there was a minister?”

“Ay, Father Mullarney.”

“Was your father a Roman Catholic?”

“He wur nowt.”

“Then how did Father Mullarney come to bury your father?”

“Father Mullarney come to see feyther just afore he deed. He said as ‘aa mother were a Catholic, and ‘aa ‘ee christened me. Feyther told ‘im to go fell, as ‘ee did’n’ want no parsons frightenin’ ‘im. He said as ‘aa ‘ee wur noan religious, and that he would dee as ‘ee’d lived. Then, when feyther were deead, he said as ‘aa he would come to t’buryin’.”

“And who arranged for the funeral?”

“Father Mullarney.”

“Where is Father Mullarney now?”

“I doan’t knaw.”

“How is that? Didn’t he speak to you at the funeral?”

“Ay, he did, but I thow’t I tell ‘im what feyther towed him. I said I’d fend for mysen, and I didn’t want him.”

“And so he left you?”

“Ay, he did.”

“Well, where are you going now?”

“I doan’t knaw.”

“But you’ve still got the house where your father lived?”

“Nay, aw’ve nowt ut soart. Josh Ironhand, wot belongs to the ‘ouse, coom this mom, and he said as ‘aa the rent were noan paid for three week, and that he should lock dooar, and tak’ t’ key.”

“But what about the furniture?”

“There wur no furniture worth callin’.”

“Now, the best thing you can do is to go to Father Mullarney, and ask him to help you.”

“Nay, I sh’ll do nowt ut soart. Feyther always said as he’d ‘a nowt to do wi’ Father Mullarney, and he towed me afore he deed as ‘ow I must ‘a nowt to do wi’ him. Besides, ‘ee can do nowt. When Mike Sullivan’s feyther deed — and Jim Sullivan went to t’ Catholic church — Mike wur sent to Bingley workhouse. Father Mullarney didn’t help him.”

“But Bingley workhouse is a very good place.”

“I’ll noan go. I’ll dee first.”

“What are you going to do?”

“I doan’t knaw.”

“But you must know. I’m a magistrate, and I can’t allow you to stay out all night. Come now, you’d better walk to Bingley.”

“I sh’ll do nowt ut soart.”

The boy did not speak disrespectfully. He evidently belonged to the poorest class of people in Meremeadows, and answered Fletcher Yorke after the fashion of his class. Moreover, the lad gave evidence of a kind of stubborn resolution which the other admired.

“Have you any money?”

“Ninepence.”

“Well, you must do something. Have you ever been to work?”

“No, feyther wouldn’t let me. But now I must work, and I will.”

“But how, and where will you work?”

This question was asked by a newcomer, who had, unknown to Fletcher Yorke and Maggie, been listening to a part of the conversation. All three turned towards him as he spoke, and in the gathering darkness saw a man dressed not unlike a mediaeval monk.

“Excuse me, Mr. Yorke,” he said, turning towards the Yorkshireman, “but I think I can help this boy.”

“Are — are you Father Mullarney?” asked Fletcher Yorke.

“No, I am a member of the Community of the Incarnation. You may have heard of the Order to which I belong?”

“Oh, you are one of the Church of England monks?”

“I believe many of the Meremeadow people call us by that name,” replied the man. “Of course, we are nothing of the sort; we are simply a number of brothers who live together for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ. We live a life of prayer, study, and service. But that is not the point just now. I happened to be passing while you were questioning this boy, and I heard most of what took place. It so happens that the boy who did certain odd jobs for us left this morning, and I have no doubt but that I could make arrangements for this lad to take his place. He would be kindly treated, have good, plain, wholesome food, and not be by any means overworked. In addition to that, facilities would be offered to him for education, and thus he could improve himself generally.”

The man spoke very pleasantly, and was evidently of a kindly disposition. Fletcher Yorke had often heard of the Community of the Incarnation which had come to settle at Meremeadows. Indeed, its members were the talk of the whole countryside. In many quarters the Community had aroused

a great deal of antagonism. The great bulk of Yorkshire people were strongly Protestant in their opinions, and they resented what they called Popery under the banner of the Reformed Protestant Church of England. After a time, however, the opposition to the brotherhood largely died away. These men, who lived together like monks, were apparently honest and sincere, and although, according to the Yorkshire vernacular, their religion consisted of a "lot of falderals," they were devoted to their work, and were reported to do a great deal of good.

Fletcher Yorke, with his strong, sturdy, Yorkshire hard-headedness, had a supreme contempt for what appeared to him a number of full-grown men who, having taken vows in the English Church, masqueraded as monks who had taken the vows of the celibate life; but as they did not in any way interfere with him, he paid them but little heed. Meanwhile, something had to be done for the lad. As a magistrate, it fell within his province to see that he was housed for the night; moreover, he had well-nigh determined, when the newcomer appeared, to tell him to call on one of his managers on the following morning, and ask for work. The proposition made by the ecclesiastic, however, might be worth considering, especially as the lad would in all probability be better taken care of than would be the case if he went to work in one of his mills.

"Well, Dominic Wildthorne," he said, "you've heard what this gentleman says?"

"Ay, aw've 'eeard."

"Are you willing to go with him?"

"I doan't knaw. I should like to see his faace afore I say."

The man in the monkish garb laughed pleasantly.

"That's good," he said, "and thoroughly Yorkshire, too. Eh, Mr. Yorke? You would like my references, I suppose? Well, I am afraid I cannot satisfy you in every respect, but I'll go as far as I can. My name is Edgar Trouville. I am twenty-seven years of age, and unmarried. The work you would have to do would be light and not unpleasant. Your food would be good, and you would be treated kindly. In your spare hours you would have plenty of good books to read."

The lad lifted his head at the last words.

"You've nowt to do with Father Mullarney?" he said

"Nothing at all."

“Not as ’ow I’ve owt agin him myself,” he said, “only feyther tow’d me afore he deed to have nowt to do wi’ ’im. That was because feyther were noan religious, and I doan’t want to do onything that feyther wouldn’t like.”

“Your father was very kind to you, I suppose?”

“My feyther wur my feyther, and I wur his lad. and when he wasn’t i’ drink he wur the strongest and cleverest man in Meremeadows,” was the reply.

“That’s right. Well, will you come with me? I can give you a bed for the night, anyhow, and when we have shown you the work you would have to do, you can decide whether you will stay.”

“I could coom away if I didn’t like it?”

“Certainly. You shall have a good supper tonight, a warm bed to lie on, and then, if you don’t like the place, you can leave tomorrow after having a good breakfast?”

“Wot do yo say?”

The lad turned, not towards the two men, but to Maggie.

“Oh!” said Maggie, who had been listening very intently, “I should think it would be very nice for you.”

“Then I’ll go,” said Dominic Wildthorne.

Fletcher Yorke waited a moment as if in doubt, then he said: “Ay, and if you are not suited there, you just come to the Boothroyd Mill, and tell the manager that I told you to come.”

“You are Mester Fletcher Yorke?”

“Yes; and you know where the Boothroyd Mill is?”

“Ay, I know, thank you.”

The lad turned towards the cemetery gates, and looked intently through the bars, as if he would take a last look at his father’s grave. Then he turned to the man who called himself Edgar Trouville.

“I’m ready to coom,” he said.

The two walked away side by side.

Fletcher Yorke and Maggie mounted the dogcart, and the two drove towards a large house which stood at some distance from the smoke-begrimed town.

2. The Community Of The Incarnation

DOMINIC WILDTHORNE walked some distance by his companion's side without speaking a word. Evidently he was not a talkative lad, and although he cast furtive glances towards Edgar Trouville, as though he were trying to judge what kind of man he was, he showed no inclination for conversation. The man who, by a section of the Meremeadows people, was called Father Trouville, also seemed to desire thought rather than speech.

Father Trouville had been at Meremeadows some years — in fact, ever since the Community had been started. He was one of the clergymen of the Church of England who was dissatisfied with the position which his Church occupied. While at Oxford he had come under the influence of a body of men who held very “High Church” views, and had so far yielded to their influence as to call the Reformation a mistake. He also believed in the many movements which had been set on foot “to reconcile the Anglican branch of the Catholic Church with the great Western Church,” and thus bring back to England those beliefs and usages which obtained before that great cleavage which tore the Christian Church in twain. Immediately after the formation of the brotherhood at Meremeadows, therefore, he joined it, and after years of labor he became more and more convinced that he was engaged in a movement which would in time heal the breach made at the Reformation, and bring the Church back to the position which it held in the pre-Reformation days.

Edgar Trouville was cast in the Sacerdotal mold. The Church to him was, and must be, a visible institution, whose existence could be traced from the time of its Founder. The dogma of Apostolic Succession was absolutely essential to the existence of the Church. Christ had ordained the first apostles, and St. Peter was the Chief Apostle. By the laying on of hands, those whom the apostles had ordained were admitted into the succession, and this succession had gone on through the ages until the present time.

Only those in the succession had the right, except under very peculiar circumstances, to administer the sacraments, and the sacraments lay at the very heart of Christianity. It is true he had been greatly troubled about this succession. There was a time in the Middle Ages when two popes exercised their functions at the same time. Both of these ordained bishops, who, in their turn, ordained priests. One of these popes must have been a usurper; therefore some of the ordinations must have been invalid. Then, again, he remembered that the Church of England was Excommunicate, and the Mother Church with which he desired Union had declared the ministry of that Church to be invalid. This latter fact troubled him more than the former. He had no doubt but that the fact of two popes performing their functions at the same time could be satisfactorily explained; but the fact that the Church to which he belonged was declared excommunicate was a sore trial to him. Thus his great hope in life was that the Anglican Church should be restored to communion with the great Mother Church of Rome. How otherwise could they be sure that they were in the Church at all? Of course he believed the Anglican Church to be a branch of the one great Church, but the fact that succeeding popes had declared this to be false was a great sorrow. He had been greatly tempted to seek admission into the priesthood of the Roman Church, but he had been persuaded that he could best serve the Catholic Church by bringing the Anglican Church services into line with those of the older communion, and thus prepare the way for the glorious consummation of all his hopes, the restoration of the English Church to the Church of Rome.

Meanwhile, he was a sacramentarian of the strictest type. Baptism, Confirmation, Absolution, Holy Communion, Holy Orders, Marriage, and Anointing were integral to, nay the very life-blood of, Christianity. He also believed in Monasticism, and held that the monastic bodies had been among the greatest evangelizing forces in the Christian Church. Protestantism he scorned and ridiculed in the same breath. Indeed, he and his fellows designated certain Evangelical Clergymen who had been true to their ordination vows as "Prots"; and none of them could think of any title which carried greater contumely. To him the religious life of England was in a terrible condition. The Church of England did not minister to more than half the religious life of the nation, while the other half was associated with that terrible thing called Dissent. As one of their manuals had it, the Catholic Church might be likened to three sisters in a great house. The house had three sto-

ries: on the ground floor a large hall in which the three sisters lived, above this the sleeping apartments, and then a staircase led out to a flat roof, which was laid out as a flower garden. Unhappily, after a time the three sisters had a dreadful quarrel, and put up wooden partitions to divide the hall into three parts, and each lived by herself, not speaking to the others. During the quarrel some of the children ran away into the garden, and each built a little tabernacle for himself, and would not come back to the house. When their mother with tears besought them to return, they only threw mud at her. The hall was the Church on earth. The three sisters were the three great parts of the Holy Catholic Church, and the English Church, the Roman Church, and the Greek Church. Each believed in the same sacraments and the same creeds. The children who ran away were the Dissenters. These Dissenters were dreadful sinners.

But the Dissenters did not trouble Edgar Trouville as much as the condition of the English Church. He was not always quite sure that the English sister had not separated herself from the great Hall. In fact, the English Church was greatly divided. How could it be a part of the true Church when it denied the Headship of the Church, and remained in a state of schism? Besides, the English Church allowed private judgment on religious matters, while a large part of it denied all but two out of the seven sacraments.

Yes, doubtless the Reformation was a dreadful happening, but better times were coming. It is true the Pope had refused to sanction the validity of Anglican orders, and therefore struck a terrible blow at the whole fabric of the sacramental idea, but this difficulty would doubtless be overcome. It was for those who accepted the true idea of the Church, to endeavor to bring back the English Branch into communion with the Mother Church, and then, doubtless, means would be found for bringing "Prots" to their senses.

It was with this idea that the Community of the Incarnation was founded. Their work was to leaven the Church of England with Romish ideas, and then return as a body to the bosom of the Mother Church. It was for this reason that Edgar Trouville and others remained in the English Church. If he separated from it, he would lose his influence in it. What was wanted was a New Reformation in the Church, and it was for him and others to rest neither day nor night in order to bring about this "consummation most devoutly to be wished."

Edgar Trouville was a most devout man. In his way he was most sincere, and he was a gentleman. He had sympathy with the poor and suffering, he was generous to a fault, and in all matters outside ecclesiastical questions he was as honest as the day. No sacrifice was too great for him to make, no burden too heavy for him to bear; but he was essentially a priest. And, as a priest, he saw everything through the glasses of his order.

"I hope you don't feel cold?"

"I feel a bit nipped."

"Never mind, we shall soon be home now."

"Home?"

"Yes, I trust you'll find it home."

"But I'm going to work for you?"

"Yes, but that's no reason for not treating you as a brother, and giving you a home."

"I say, there's nowt up your sleeve, is there?"

"No, certainly not. Your father is dead, and you have no home. I want to give you one. I hope you may grow up a useful, happy, good man. How old are you?"

"Fifteen."

"You are not very big for fifteen. Have you good health?"

"Not so bad."

"Have you a good appetite?"

"Why?" asked the lad eagerly.

"Because I hope you'll enjoy your supper."

Dominic Wildthorne's eyes gleamed. Had it been light the priest would have seen the look of almost wolfish hunger in them.

"Do you ever go to church?" pursued the priest.

"Nay."

"Why?"

"I've tow'd yo as ow it wur noan in feyther's line, and it's noan in mine."

"Did your mother go to the Roman Catholic Church when she was alive? And were you baptized by one of her priests?"

"Feyther Mullarney said soa, but I know nowt about it."

"I daresay it's true."

"Well, what does it matter?"

Father Trouville sighed. The godlessness and ignorance of the age was very sad.

“It matters a great deal. If you are baptized into the Church, you are a child of the Church, and should enjoy her privileges.”

“What are they?”

Father Trouville did not reply. This lad’s nature was as yet too dark for such an explanation.

“You said your name was Dominic, didn’t you?”

“Ay.”

“It’s a very fine name. I hope you’ll be worthy of it. St. Dominic was a great and holy man.”

“What did he do?”

“He founded a great order of preachers.”

“He wur a praicher, wur he?”

“Yes, a very great preacher. He founded the Dominican Order.”

“What’s that?”

“An order of preachers who went around the world preaching the Gospel of Our Blessed Lord. Would not you like to become such a man?”

“The preaching business is nowt i’ my line,” replied the boy. “I say, mester, I’m fair clemmed.”

“Well, we are at the end of our journey now. I’ll take you to the Superior of our Order first, and tell him how you and I met; after that, you shall have some supper.”

“Ay, and I’m wantin’ it.”

The priest led the way through the grounds to a fairly large building, which they entered. A few minutes later they stood before a rather fine-looking man.

Father Trouville quickly told his story, while the Superior of the Community listened intently, all the while casting curious glances towards the boy. Evidently he was more interested in the boy himself than in the story which the priest told concerning him. There was little to wonder at in this, for Dominic Wildthorne, shabbily dressed, pale, gaunt, and hungry as he was, was not a lad to pass by without a second look. Two or three things impressed the Superior as he looked. First, the lad’s eyes attracted him. They were large, dark, and full of expression. But that was not all. The priest saw what he thought to be an expression of unutterable yearning in them. Unrealized possibilities, passion, daring self-sacrifice — all were suggested in those great dark orbs. The boy’s forehead was square and high; nevertheless, there was a large development of that part of the head which

phrenologists tell us is suggestive of reverence. His mouth also was large and expressive. It was a mouth which suggested strength, but it also told of sensitiveness, and possibly humor.

“At any rate, you did right to bring him here for the night,” said the Superior to Father Trouville. “Take him to the refectory, and let him have some supper, and let him sleep in Dixon’s bed. After you have done this, will you come back again?”

Dominic took but little notice of the conversation between the priests. He was looking intently around the room, as though he would take note of every detail. He had never seen such a room before. It was not only the working-room of a student, and possibly a scholar, but it was also the sanctum of a religious devotee. A *prie-Dieu* stood near one of the walls, above which was a crucifix. There were also several religious pictures, belonging mainly to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which depicted persecution and martyrdom.

But most of all Dominic was fascinated by a bronze representation of Christ hanging on the cross which stood on the Superior’s writing-desk. As it happened, the light fell especially strong upon this figure, so that the boy could see it in every detail. What impressed him most was the unutterable agony on the face of Christ, the agony of dire defeat and utter despair, as well as of indescribable physical suffering. He felt like crying out in anguish. He had shuddered that afternoon as he had heard the cold clods fall on his father’s coffin, but that did not seem so terrible as the crucifix on the writing-desk. He could not understand why any man should choose to have such an object constantly before his eyes.

“Do you think you would like to stay and work here?” asked the Superior, as Father Trouville prepared to lead him away.

“I doan’t knaw. I’d like to see it all in t’ daylight first.”

“That is right. Well, tomorrow morning you shall be shown what you would have to do, and the kind of life you would lead. Good-night.”

“I shall dream of yon,” said Dominic to Father Trouville, as he walked away.

“Of what?”

“Of yon thing on that chap’s desk. I shall see it in t’ dark. It’s fair terrible to think on.”

“It’s our Blessed Lord,” said Father Trouville, “Of course you know that He suffered like that, that we might be saved.”

Dominic made no further remark, but followed the priest to the refectory, where a simple but sufficient meal was placed before him.

When Father Trouville returned to the Superior's room again, he found that gentleman ready for conversation.

"I like your *protege*," he said.

"A rough diamond, I am afraid."

"Yes, but a diamond for all that. Did you notice his eyes, his mouth?"

"I can't quite make him out."

"No. And that shows he's no ordinary boy. I may be wrong, but I feel sure he's no ordinary boy. He's got the thinker's head, the mystic's eyes, the orator's mouth."

Father Trouville smiled. The Superior was noted for his impulsive judgments.

"Yes, I see you smile," replied the older man. "Perhaps, too, I see the Hand of God where others see only the ordinary happening of events. But I have a feeling that God led you by the cemetery gates tonight, and that He led you to bring that boy here. If you had not happened to come along when you did, doubtless Fletcher Yorke would have given him work at one of his mills, and then he would probably have been lost. He would either have drifted and become like other operatives, or he would possibly have risen in time to be a manager, saved up a little money, and become a mill owner himself. Possibly, too, he might have become a leading man at one of the chapels, perhaps a local preacher. But I had a vision of the boy while he was here. I saw him touched by grace; I saw him give himself to the Church. As you know, one of the chief works of our Community is to train young men in the principles of the Catholic Faith, and prepare them for the Holy Ministry. We exist to make an open door for the poorer classes to enter the priesthood. Candidates for Holy Orders are decreasing; young fellows leaving the Universities do not relish the idea of becoming priests. Even when they do, many of them have no true idea of the Church, her priesthood, or her sacraments. Up to the present, while we have gained ground, the "Prots" are constantly libeling us. But let us produce a St. Dominic, and we shall command respect."

"And you saw another St. Dominic in this boy?"

"I had a vision of him swaying thousands. I tell you, he has the mystic's eyes, and the preacher's mouth. I shall see to it that he has special attention. Let him do Dixon's work if he will, but I am sure he is destined for great

things. His mind is at present in a state of chaos; that makes our work all the easier. I tell you Catholic Truth will find root in his heart without difficulty, and then, if he does not prove to be a man of no ordinary caliber, I am no judge of character.”

“He seemed to be intensely influenced by the thought of having advantages for study,” said Father Trouville, like one musing.

“Exactly. Don’t you see, Trouville, that our great weakness is the want of men of commanding power and ability? Up to the present our success has not been with the intellectual laymen. In the main the High Church Movement has been a priest’s movement, not a layman’s movement. Up to now the layman has not been convinced. Take Yorkshire as an example. The man of your Fletcher Yorke order has no sympathy with us. We have a strong hold on a certain class of women, but we fail with the men. That is why the Church wants men who are fully equipped; and we want preachers of commanding personality, men like Savonarola, and St. Dominic.”

“But with all due deference to you,” said Trouville, “you have very little foundation for believing that this boy will prove of any service to us.”

“Little or none at all, from the standpoint of the world’s judgments; no, but I had a vision concerning him. I felt he was destined to become a great power. His very name is prophetic. Dominic Wildthorne. Perhaps I am somewhat of a visionary. But what then? God knows the power of seeing visions is not too common in this mammon-worshipping age. In any case we risk nothing. You have brought him here to take Dixon’s place. I never had any vision concerning Dixon. He was only fit to do the work of a handy boy. But this lad is different. I can’t forget the look in his eyes as they fell upon the crucifix. But we shall see.”

“Yes, we shall see. Father, I want to tell you about something which has been troubling me greatly.”

“Yes, my son, speak on.”

“It’s about my orders.”

“Ah, the old question.”

“Yes, the old question if you like. But I cannot convince myself — that — that — will —”

“Yes, I understand what you mean.”

“You see, in spite of all we say our Church is excommunicate. The Holy Father does not admit of the validity of our orders. What is the use of bringing back the full Roman Ritual when we are wrong at the fountain-head?

What is the use of our saying we are a branch of the true Church, when the Head of the true Church declares us to be separatists? We claim that one of the marks of the true Church is an allegiance to the Church's doctrines, and that we believe in those doctrines, while all the while the one whom we admit to be the rightful Head of the Church makes certain demands with which we do not comply. Don't you see the anomaly? Of course, we aim at bringing back the Church of England into communion with the Roman Church. But if the Roman Church receives us, it will be on her own terms; and one of those terms is the recognition of the Authority and Infallibility of the Holy Father. How can we be true Catholics while we remain in a state of schism, and while the validity of our orders is denied by the Holy Father?"

The Superior was silent a few seconds. Then he said slowly, "And what do you suggest?"

"My mind is in a state of chaos," said Trouville. "I went out for a walk this afternoon in the hope that I might see the light."

"Yes, and brought back that boy, Dominic."

"Yes, but my difficulty remains."

"You see that if you left the Anglican Church, your influence within her borders would be gone?"

"Yes, I see that."

"And you see, too, that since the days of Newman we have been slowly accustoming the English mind to communion with Rome?"

Father Trouville was silent.

"Therefore we are not laboring in vain."

"But meanwhile we are out of communion with the true Church, our orders are — well, irregular. You see, we either accept the Authority of the Roman Church, or we don't. If we don't, we are not Catholics, but schismatics. If we do, then the decision of the Holy Father concerning our orders is final. We are not true priests at all, but usurpers of the holy office."

"And you desire to be in the true priesthood?"

"Supremely. Of course I hope, and sometimes I believe, that my orders are valid; only I want to be certain."

"Of course you know that provision is made for cases like yours, my son."

Trouville was silent.

“Does not that throw a terrible reflection upon the whole position of the Anglican Church?” he said presently.

“At present,” said the Superior, “our position is doubtless difficult. It is our great work to bring our Church into communion with our great Mother; but we can do that only by remaining within her borders. That is recognized, not only by the faithful here, but in Rome. In the meanwhile, there is nothing to hinder you from receiving the ordination concerning which there can be no doubt. You would then be certain that the sacraments would be efficacious at your hands. You would also be able to continue the work we all have so much at heart.”

“You mean re-ordination at the hands of—”

The Father Superior nodded.

“But what allegiance do I owe to my Bishops, when I am not sure that they are duly ordained?”

“That is not your question just now, my son. You have promised obedience to your Superior in this Community; that is sufficient for you at present. Remember, too, that of old Nicodemus was a secret disciple of our Lord, and our Lord did not condemn that secret discipleship. One of the penances which we have to suffer today because of that terrible schism called the Reformation, is that we must be secret disciples. But if you are in doubt about your orders, my son — well, you need not remain in doubt. I will arrange for you to go to —, and then your last vestige of fear will go. You will not be the first, nor the second who has done this. How many it is not for me to say. Perhaps it would surprise me as well as you, if we knew how many, and who have been troubled as you have been troubled, and who have taken the step I advise you to take. Go in peace, my son.

Father Trouville prayed long and earnestly after he left the Father Superior, but before he went to bed he found his way to the little apartment where Dominic Wildthorne lay asleep.

The boy’s sorrows had not left him even in sleep. His long eyelashes were wet with tears, and his lips trembled as he moaned.

“I wonder if the Father Superior is right or not?” queried Father Trouville, as he looked at him. “He may have the strange look in his eyes which suggests the mystic, and he certainly has what might be called the orator’s mouth, but he also looks as though he might be a wild, turbulent fellow. I wonder what God has in store for him — and for us all?”

Father Trouville left the apartment with a sigh.

3. Dominic And Maggie Yorke

DOMINIC WILDTHORNE decided to stay and work at the Community of the Incarnation. As far as he could judge, the work would be pleasant and easy; while the priests in residence were very kindly disposed towards him. Indeed, as far as he could judge, he was treated as a favorite. No one assumed a masterful attitude towards him, and his duties were not so numerous but that he found time for reading. For that matter, Father Trouville encouraged him to study. He took pains to find out the extent of the boy's knowledge, and then offered to help him to obtain an education.

Dominic Wildthorne had never been a favorite with the boys in the district. He had been regarded as sullen and unfriendly; he did not take part in their games, nor had he "chums" like other boys had. Doubtless this was because of his father's wish. For Barnaby Wildthorne, drunkard and wastrel though he was, had a certain pride. Even while he prejudiced the lad's prospects by his behavior, he had dreams and visions concerning him. He had insisted on his going to the day school longer than the law demanded, and forbade his making friends among the rougher lads of the district. Sometimes, when he was sober, he encouraged the boy to study good books, and spoke to him on the power of knowledge. He also informed him that the Wildthornes were not of the common horde, and that if he had his rights, he would be the possessor of a fine old manor house and a valuable estate up in Cumberland. He even went so far as to tell him that when he grew older he would put into his, Dominic's, hands proofs of the fact that he belonged to one of the oldest families in England. Before his death, indeed, he did give him a packet of papers, which he told him to guard carefully. It is to be doubted whether Dominic placed implicit faith in these stories; nevertheless, they made an impression on him. They gave him a certain pride of birth and race, and they gave him a distaste for the companionship of the rougher lads, whom in the ordinary course of things he would associate with. On the other hand, Barnaby's atheism and drunkenness caused the boy to be a kind of Ishmaelite among the more respectable of the

artisan class. Barnaby was looked upon as a notoriously evil liver, and the boy was supposed to be tainted by his father's nature. All these things tended to cause Dominic to live a lonely life, and thus the solitude of his existence as the boy who did odd jobs for the brothers of the Community of the Incarnation was not hard to bear. Rather he liked the solitude, and he eagerly read the books which were placed in his way.

During the first few weeks he refused to attend any of the many religious services at the Community, however. Indeed, he had a kind of scorn for the life the brothers lived. As far as he could see, their days were made up of participating in religious rites and observances. These were somewhat as follows: They rose at half-past five, and at six went to a service called Matins, which, with two others, called Laud and Prime, would occupy them till about half-past seven. They would then retire to their rooms and pass the time in meditation and prayer. At nine another service would follow, and then at eleven another service was often held. If it was Sunday or a Holy Day the Communion would be celebrated. Not until this was over, if it were a Communion day, would they eat any food whatever, as fasting Communion was binding upon their Community. In the afternoon they walked, but in the early evening another service was held. After dinner again, one or two more services would be held.

Remembering his father's views, all this was so much foolishness to Dominic, but as no one pressed him to attend the services, he was not troubled. As far as he could judge, all the members of the Community were good, holy men. They lived simply, they prayed much, they studied often, and they were very kind to him.

Presently curiosity led him to attend some of the services, but they left but little distinct impression on him. In a way he was influenced by the chanting of the prayers, the genuflections before the altar, the smell of incense, and the general solemnity. But he was not attracted. In a vague way he supposed that these "learned men" were doing what was right and good, but it had nothing whatever to do with him. A few of the younger men, he noticed, went away in the morning to a neighboring town, and did not return until the evening. What they did he had no idea, but it was none of his business, and after a time he ceased to take any notice. He read with eagerness the books which came in his way, and when Father Trouville offered to teach him Latin and French he accepted the offer with avidity.

After he had been there a few months the Superior gave him a letter, telling him to take it to the house of Fletcher Yorke, and to wait for an answer. Dominic had neither seen nor heard of Fletcher Yorke or his daughter since the night of his father's funeral, and while he had thought but little about them, he was more than ordinarily interested in his mission. He hoped he would see and speak to the great man again, and he vaguely wondered if he would meet the little girl who had been kind to him. He therefore donned his best clothes, and made his way towards Barstone, the house where Fletcher Yorke lived, of which he had heard many wonderful stories.

It was now March, and while spring had by no means come, the days had lengthened, and the keen winds had dried the mud on the roads. His orders were to reach Barstone about five o'clock, which was the time Fletcher Yorke generally came home from business. Consequently daylight was not yet gone when, leaving Meremeadows behind him, he neared the lodge gates of the great house.

"I've heerd as 'ow Fletcher Yorke's grandfather wur a poor man," thought Dominic, as he walked up the drive, "yet afore he deed, he wur a great man. I wonder if ever I shall do owt in the world?"

A look of yearning came into his eyes. Evidently he was not one who would be contented with living a humdrum, purposeless life. Moreover, he did not look so haggard and despairing as on the night when Fletcher Yorke had first seen him. Nearly five months of cleanliness and healthy surroundings had changed him. He no longer slouched as he walked, neither was there the old look of haunting fear in his eyes. His clothes, too, were clean and tidy, while his speech was far less rough than it had been when he became a servant at the Community. Indeed, when he was not talking to himself, he spoke correctly, and the books which Father Trouville had encouraged him to study had given him a new and large conception of life. He had grown physically too, and was no longer small for his age.

As he neared the house, he saw an old man working among the flower beds, and, being in doubt as to what he should do in order to place his letter in Mr. Fletcher Yorke's hands, he made his way towards him.

"Yon is Mr. Fletcher Yorke's house?" he said, nodding to a large stone mansion.

"There's nobody denyong that," replied the old man, without looking up.

"I have a letter for him."

"Well, there's nowt wonderful i' that."

“But what must I do with it?”

“Do? Why, go up to t’door, and chuck it in t’ letter-box, and then coom away.”

“Ay, but I want to take back an answer.”

“Where didst a coom from?”

“From the Community of the Incarnation.”

The old man stood upright for the first time, and looked at him steadily.

“Thou art none o’ that lot, art a?” he said presently.

“Nay; I work in the garden, and in the house.”

“What’s the letter about?”

“I don’t know. The Superior gave it to me, and told me to take it to Mr. Fletcher Yorke, and wait for an answer.”

“Mester Fletcher Yorke doan’t believe in no monkery,” said the old gardener, “He’s got too much sense. But tell ma, what do they do ower theer?”

“They mostly spends their time in praying, and singing and reading,” replied Dominic.

“Hev ony ov ’em ever bin converted?”

Dominic shook his head.

“Well, when yo go back,” said the old man, “yo just tell the head monk for me to read the third chapter of St. John. He’ll learn there that he needs convertin’. And tell him, too, that when he’s got soindly converted, he won’t want to have anything to do with fal-de-rals. And there’s another thing, tell him it’s not only dishonest work, but dirty work for a Protestant minister to try and bring back the ways o’ Rome to England.”

“He’s noan Protestant,” said Dominic, lapsing for a moment into broad Yorkshire.

“What then?”

“He calls himself a Catholic.”

“What, a Roman?”

“Nay, not a Roman Catholic, just a Catholic.”

“Let him call hissen what he will, but you just tell him fro’ me, Elijah Moorbottom, one as has preached the Gospel for more nor forty year, that Yorkshire folk’ll ha’ nowt to do wi’ Popery; tell him that, and then coom to me, and tell me ‘ow he taks it. Ay, Miss Maggie, ’ere’s a lad wi’ a letter for your fev’ther; he comes fro’ the Protestant Monkery.”

Dominic turned with a start, and saw the girl who had spoken kindly to him on the day of his father’s funeral standing by his side. He saw, too, that

she was looking steadily at him, as though she were trying to recollect something.

"Father's not home yet," she said; "he's just telephoned to mother, saying he will not be home until nearly six o'clock."

"Then I must wait until he comes," said Dominic.

Maggie looked at him keenly. She remembered now that he was the boy she had seen several months before by the cemetery gates, a boy concerning whom she had often wondered.

"Do you remember me?" she said.

"Ay, I remember."

"Would — would you like to look around the gardens till my father comes home?" She wanted to talk to the boy who had been in such sorrow on the night of their meeting.

"Thank you!"

She led the way towards the green-houses, and there was a suggestion of patronage in her action.

Instinctively she felt that her father was the owner of the beautiful grounds in which they walked, while this boy was only a common working lad. Nevertheless, she felt an interest in him.

"Have you been very lonely since that night when — when the priest man took you away with him?"

"Yes, miss, I've often been lonely."

"But they've been kind to you?"

"Ay, they've been very kind."

"This is the winery, don't you see? Later on we shall have a lot of grapes here. Have you any grapes at the — where you live?"

"No, there's nothing of that sort there."

"And what do you do there?"

"I work in the garden, and I clean the boots, and knives and forks, and that sort of thing. Then I read a goodish bit in my spare time."

"Read! What do you read?"

"Well, Father Trouville is helping me, and I'm learning Latin and French."

"French! That's jolly. Can you conjugate 'avoir'?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Oh! you are quite clever. Are the monks clever, too?"

"I expect so."

“What do they do?”

“They go to church a great deal. There are services nearly all day long. Then when they are not at church, they read and pray.”

“That must be an awfully dreary life?”

“They don’t seem dreary. When they are having what they call recreation, they laugh and enjoy themselves. Then they spend a lot of time decorating the church with candles and such like. Then one or two are very clever at painting; they paint pictures for the church.”

“And are you happy there?”

“I expect so. I don’t know. I am when I am learning Latin and French.”

“But are you always going to remain there?”

“I don’t know. I never thought about it.”

“But you will have to think about it, won’t you?”

“Ay, I expect so, sometime — but — but —”

“But what?” asked Maggie.

“I doan’t know, miss,” he replied. Then suddenly, “Do you know, miss, what it is to hev a big longin’ for somethin’, an’ yo doan’t know what it is? It’s like as ef somethin’ wur at the back o’ yer yead, and then yo try and find words for’t, yo feel as tho’ yo wur makkin’ a fool o’ yersen?”

He lapsed into the Yorkshire dialect as he spoke, as though he had forgotten that he was endeavoring to try and speak correctly.

“Yes, I think I know what you mean,” she said quietly, “Do you feel like that?”

“Ay, I do. Sometimes I just forgit mysen, and forgit the job I’m at. I seem to see a lot o’ things a long way off, and they are just wonderful. Then if somebody wur to ax what I wur thinkin’ on, I couldn’t say owt.”

“That must be very nice,” said Maggie. “Look, this is our orchid house. Do you like orchids?”

“They seem very funny things,” said Dominic.

“Yes, they are funny. Some of the flowers seem to be like human beings. I sometimes think they’ve got souls.”

“Oh, yo feel like that too, do yo? But that must be aisy for yo?”

“Why?”

“Because yo ’ave everything you like. You’re Fletcher Yorke’s lass. But for me everything is different.”

“Why are they different for you?”

“Because — ’because — ’well, I’ve no feyther, no mother, no home. I’m just working for those chaps yonder.”

“But you’ll grow to be a man some day, and then you’ll be very clever.”

Dominic shook his head.

“You’ve never made up your mind what you are going to be?”

“Nay. What would yo be, if yo were a lad like me? That is, what would yo try to be?”

“I would— oh, let me see.” And Maggie led the way towards the conservatory. “Well, if I were a lad, I’d be like my father is. That is, you see, I’d be the chief man in the district. Perhaps not in the same way he is, but I’d try and be a leader. Don’t you see, a leader? I’d make other people do what I wanted them to do.”

“Like those chaps what owned slaves?” asked Dominic.

“No, not in that way, of course. Slavery is a very wicked thing. But I should try to be so much stronger and cleverer than other people, that I should make them want to do the things I told them to do. Of course, I should only want to make them do good things.”

“I don’t think I quite take yo,” said Dominic.

“Well, our minister is very good and great and clever. When he preaches, people seem to do what he wants them to do. Then some time ago my father had a great politician here. He is a member of the Cabinet. I don’t know what that means, but he is a very great man in the Government of the country. Well, there was a great meeting at Meremeadows Town Hall, and he just made people think what he thought. When he first began to speak, lots of people were against him; but before he’d finished speaking, he made them think as he thought.”

Dominic’s eyes flashed. He thought he saw what was in the girl’s mind.

“I think the Reverend Father Superior at our place is like that,” he said. “After he’s been talkin’ to yo a bit, yo somehow feel as though there’s nothing else in the world.”

“Oh!” said Maggie doubtfully.

“But I see nowt for me,” said Dominic dolefully, after a few minutes’ silence.

“Why?”

“How can there be? I’m only a poor lad.”

“Yes, but you are learning Latin and French. Besides, lots of poor boys have become very great.”

“As poor as I am?” said Dominic.

“Quite as poor as you,” said Maggie decidedly.

“I’ll see about it,” said Dominic. “That is, I must think about it. If it can be done, it shall be. Do you know anything about a chap what had the same name as I’ve got?”

“What, Wildthorne?”

“No, Dominic. Father Trouville told me that hundreds of years ago a young man called Dominic saw that many of the people had wrong beliefs, and he just got mad at it, and he started preaching to them. Afterwards he got a lot of others to join him, and they banded themselves into an Order that they might convert the heretics.”

“Were the heretics bad people?”

“No, they just believed in wrong things; and that’s very wrong. Just as bad, or worse, than doing wrong things, because, you see, it leads to them. And Dominic went to Rome, and got the Holy Father to allow him to stir up a lot of fighting men to go and convert these people who did wrong. He did it too, and those who wouldn’t be converted, he just killed. That’s the kind of man you mean, isn’t it?”

“No, I don’t think I mean that exactly,” said Maggie. “It can’t be right to kill people, and the man I should try to be would only try to make people do right.”

“Well, Dominic did. He made them believe in Jesus Christ in the right way. Thousands of people came to hear him, and wherever he went he just m’ a lot of people do what he wanted.”

“Well, that’s *something* like the man I should try to be,” said Maggie.

“But being only a lass, that is the kind of man you will think a lot on when you grow up?” suggested Dominic. He was beginning to feel more comfortable now, and to forget that Maggie was the rich man’s daughter, while he was only a poor lad who worked at the Protestant Monastery. “Of course,” he went on, “you would like him to make you do just what he liked, just as he made other people?”

“Oh! no!” said Maggie quickly. “I shall never do what any one likes. I should never like any one ’o would try to hector over me.”

“Ah!” said Dominic quietly. Then he went on, “I wonder how one can get to be strong and great like the man you are thinking of?”

“Well, partly; I expect he would be born like that. Then, of course, he would study very hard, and know a lot, and — well, he would have to make

up his mind that he was going to have his way.”

“But suppose other people made up their minds that he shouldn’t have his way?”

“Why, of course, he must be stronger than they. He must be cleverer than they, he must know more, and he must have a stronger will than they. Anyhow, if I were a lad, that is just what I should try to be.”

Dominic said nothing, but there was a look in his eyes which revealed the fact that he was thinking of what the girl had told him.

“You see,” Maggie went on, as though she had been giving the subject very serious consideration, “there must be leaders, and I should aim at being one. I should not do what other people told me, but make them do what I told them; I should not think as they wished me to think, but I should just think for myself, and make them think what I thought.”

“There seems no chance for me,” said Dominic,

“I’m afraid I don’t see much,” admitted Maggie.

“You see, over there, everybody has to do what the Superior says, and think what he thinks. They say it’s the only way to be happy.”

“And do all the men there obey the Superior?”

“Every one of them.”

“Poor things,” said Maggie; “but then, you are not one of them.”

“Oh, no I – I’m only a poor lad; but I keep my eyes open. For a long time I didn’t go into the church, but lately I’ve been two or three times.”

“Oh! have you?” said Maggie; “what is it like?”

“Oh! they sing, and pray, and then they have smoky stuff which they call incense. I can’t make it out at all. Only when you are there it gives you a sort of feeling that the only thing worth doing is just to pray and be quiet. You feel as though you are nothing, and were just meant to be nothing.”

“Oh!” said Maggie, “I shouldn’t like that; but listen, there’s dad coming. I can hear the sound of the carriage wheels.”

She left Dominic without another word, and rushed towards the entrance of their house. By the time the boy had reached her again, she was in her father’s arms.

“Oh, dad!” she said, as she saw him come up, “that boy whom we saw at the cemetery gates that night has come over from that place where the monks live. He says he has a letter for you from the Superior.”

Fletcher Yorke turned towards Dominic as she spoke and held out his hand for the letter.

“Father Townley told me to wait for an answer,” said Dominic, as he placed the missive in his hand.

Fletcher Yorke did not break the seal. Rather he looked at the boy steadily.

“Are you suited yon?” he asked.

Dominic nodded.

“They give you enough to eat? They treat you kindly?”

Dominic nodded again. Somehow the presence of the man caused him to lapse into his old habit.

“You wouldn’t like to go into the kitchen and have some food, would you?”

“No, thank you; I’m not hungry.”

“That’s all right.” He broke the seal and scanned the letter. As he did so, his brows contracted.

“Will you come with me into my study?” he said.

Dominic Wildthorne entered in at the doors of Barstone, behind the owner of the great house, and followed him until he came to a room lined with books.

“Sit down,” said Fletcher Yorke, pointing to a chair beside the fire.

Dominic did as he was bidden, glancing furtively all the time at the book-laden shelves around the room. Presently, however, his eyes were drawn from the books towards the face of Fletcher Yorke. He watched the rugged features of the man who read a second time the letter he had brought, and then noticed that he was evidently thinking deeply.

“I’ll say no,” he heard Fletcher Yorke say; but apparently there was some doubt in his mind, for although he seized his pen to write, he sat looking at the carpet as though he were not satisfied with his resolution.

4. The Layman And The Priest

THIS WAS the letter which Dominic Wildthorne had brought to Fletcher Yorke:

“HOUSE OF THE INCARNATION,”

"MEREMEADOWS,

"MARCH 19, 189 —,

"Fletcher Yorke, Esq.

"Dear Sir, — With a view of extending the buildings in connection with the Community of the Incarnation, I am anxious to secure the piece of vacant land which adjoins our present northern boundary. The land already in my possession is unsuited for the extensions I propose making, but that to which I refer is admirably adapted to my purpose. Being informed that it was your property, I approached your agent, who told me you were not disposed to sell it. I am therefore writing to you direct, believing that if you would grant me an interview I could give you reasons for granting my desires which might not appeal to your agent. If you could spare me half an hour at any time most convenient to yourself, I will do myself the honor of calling on you, either at your house, or any other place which you may be pleased to select.

"Trusting that you will grant my request,

"I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

"JOHN TOWNLEY,

“SUPERIOR OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE INCARNATION.”

Fletcher Yorke read this epistle a third time, and still remained in doubt. This was not his ordinary state of mind. As a rule he was quick both in decision and action.

"I don't like them," he reflected; "I don't like the whole business. I am not certain that they are not doing a great deal more harm than good, even although I suppose they are sincere, earnest men. How, then, can I let them have land in order to strengthen what seems to me a baneful influence? On the other hand, it would scarcely be courteous to send back a curt refusal. I know what I felt when Mr. Jephson showed me the letter he had received from Lord Graystone's steward in answer to his request that he should sell some land on which to build a chapel. I remember saying it was the act of a sectarian bigot. I don't want to sell the land, for many reasons, but I don't want to seem churlish, or discourteous."

Presently he had evidently made up his mind, for he hastily scribbled a letter saying he should be pleased to see Mr. Townley the next evening at five o'clock.

"And you are quite happy over yonder with the monks?" said Fletcher Yorke to Dominic, as he sealed the letter.

"Ay, I think so," replied the boy.

"But surely you won't stay there long?"

"Father Trouville is very good to me," replied Dominic. "He's teaching me many things."

"What things?"

"Latin, and French, and history, and such like."

"Oh! I see."

"Then he gives me books to read."

"What books?"

"Oh! stories of the saints."

"What saints?"

"Well, there's a book called *The Monks of the West*. It's not bad reading, and it's very wonderful. I often ask myself if the stories can be proved; then there are such funny things told in Butler's *Lives of the Saints*."

Fletcher Yorke had never read this class of book, neither was he interested in Dominic's reply. He supposed they were of a monkish nature, and told of dreams and visions and miracles. Naturally such books would be in demand at a religious house, even though that house was associated with what was called the Protestant Church of England. Nevertheless, he could not help asking himself why they gave such books to a boy like Dominic. The most sensible thing would be to help him to learn something whereby he could earn an honest living.

“Well, you take this letter back to your master,” he said. “By the way, when you are tired of being there you can come to me. Very likely I can give you a job.”

“Thank you!” said Dominic.

The boy wondered if he should see the little girl who had spoken so kindly to him, and he looked eagerly around when he was in the grounds again, but she was nowhere visible. He was glad he had seen her and spoken to her, however. The incident of meeting her was like a ray of sunshine in his life.

Meremeadows was plainly visible from where he stood, and tonight it did not look depressing. The mills were all closed, and the cloud of smoke which usually brooded over the place was swept away. The tall chimneys stood like silent sentinels, watching over the town. Away beyond the chimneys stood the church, its square tower plainly outlined against the sky, and beyond the church was the House of the Incarnation. He pictured the monks at church praying and chanting. There did not seem much in common between the thought of men shutting themselves away from the world, and the sight of the great dome of the sky above him, on whose broad expanse the clouds chased each other. But he supposed all was right.

He thought of Maggie Yorke’s childish ideas concerning the people she admired, and the thought stirred his heart. To be a leader! To make other people yield to his will, and his desires! He remembered the stories he had read of Savonarola, the Florentine monk. He was a man of that Order. He dominated the lives of others, and bent the will of a city to his own. His influence was only for good, too! Moreover, he had a vague idea that Father Townley desired to be such a man in Meremeadows.

When he reached the House of the Incarnation he took Mr. Fletcher Yorke’s letter to the Superior. Father Townley was evidently well pleased.

“You are a successful messenger, Dominic,” he said.

“Thank you, sir!”

“I hope you will be always a messenger,” continued Father Townley: “a messenger of the Cross, a messenger of the Church, Dominic. Brother Trouville tells me you were baptized by Father Mullarney.”

“I’ve heard so,” said Dominic.

“Then you are a child of the Church. Dominic, it is time for you to prepare to receive your first Communion. Our Lord has called you to be His

follower, my child. Who knows but you may be a great upholder of His Church."

"I, sir?"

"You, Dominic. Who knows? The Lord needs all His children, all, and especially those who are eager, young, strong. He needs those who will fight the devil, and who will tell out the news of the Gospel. But they who do this must be in the army, Dominic."

"What army, sir?"

"The Church. It is the Church that Christ blesses; it is through the Church, and her sacraments, that the world is to be saved. Faithful soldiers of the Church, that is what our Lord wants."

The next evening Father Townley made his way towards Barstone, the residence of Fletcher Yorke, and at the appointed time sat closeted with him. Father Townley told Mr. Yorke of his desires and of his plans, he enlarged upon the success of his work, and the need of extension, and presently became enthusiastic, and almost eloquent.

Fletcher Yorke listened quietly, without interposing a word. He determined to hear what this man had to say, so that presently he might be able to put his own side of the question. He was not what Father Townley would have called a spiritually minded man, but he was honest, conscientious, and desired fervently to do the thing he believed to be right. If he was not easily influenced by appeals to mere emotionalism, he was desirous of orbiting others with the sincerity he strove after.

"And you believe your work is necessary?" he asked, when Father Townley had ceased.

"Necessary!" cried the priest—"necessary!" And for the moment he forgot that he was speaking to a man who, though generously supporting most of the churches in the district, was well known to be a Nonconformist. "What is the state of the country at the present time? It can be described by no other word than 'Godless.' Godlessness is everywhere, everywhere! What is the spirit of our age? The spirit of devouring worldliness, a love of luxury, a love of money! This sordid vice kills every virtue, drags down every holy aspiration, blasts and withers every bud of goodness in the soul. The nation is ruled by money; and money feeds and pampers every vice. On every hand are attempts to drive Christ from our schools, and in His place we find Dissent, which may be described as politics touched with emotion; we have the widespread popularity of undenominationalism, which is the

most subtle form of skepticism. Now, what is needed? A band of clergy uninfluenced by worldliness. We want men trained to make the religious work of the Church everything, men who will make the nation feel that it is in the sacraments that the nation's true life exists. We want to make an open door for every boy, fit for the priesthood, to enter the priesthood, no matter how poor he may be. We want to dot the whole of England with monasteries or friaries, from which shall go forth men who shall help the clergy, and rouse the people to the fact that they belong to the Church. We want to stamp out that hideous thing called Dissent, and undo the work of that terrible crime called the Reformation. We want to show the world that the Christian Church is one, and consists of the three great branches: the Western, the Eastern, and the Anglican; and we will never cease our endeavors to unite these as they were united before the ghastly schisms of the past. Instead of the nation being ruled by money, we want God to rule through His priests, and through His sacraments. The machinery of our Church is out of date, hence worldliness, hence Dissent, hence Godlessness. We have forgotten that the monastic orders were the greatest missionary agencies of the past. But for them England would never have heard of Christ; and by the establishment of monastic orders, all over the land, we hope to bring back the golden age. Our brethren of the Roman Church are doing much in this direction, and we at Meremeadows are one of several orders by which we wish to make the Church all-powerful in the land, so that not money-kings may rule, but that Christ may reign through His appointed ministers."

Fletcher Yorke listened to this long harangue with a smile upon his lips. Not that he was uninfluenced by the man's earnestness and enthusiasm; he was. Father Townley's eyes shone with a bright light as he spoke, and his voice quivered with emotion. The man doubtless saw a vision of a new England, an England which drew its life-blood from the Church which he believed to be the only Church of Christ, and as he saw that vision, and longed for its realization, he forgot everything else.

"And that is what you are laboring for?" said Fletcher Yorke.

"Yes. The Order of the Incarnation is established for that purpose. We exist to show forth to the world the true life. All of us have taken the three-fold vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience. We live a life of self-sacrifice and of prayer. Our rule is as strict as that of La Trappe, or Benedict. We mortify the flesh, we feed on the Bread of Life. We continually fight against the vile heresies of the Reformation, we seek to strangle that Godless thing

called Dissent. But more, we are drawing together a number of young men to train them for the priesthood. They also are, after due probation, under strict monastic rule. They know nothing save Christ and Him crucified. They are trained in the principles of the one true Church, they see Jesus only through His sacraments. And they, when they are trained for the work, will go forth like the preaching friars of old time, and proclaim salvation through the Church. This may be done on the village green, in the market square, or in the parish church. They may not all be sacrificing priests, but all will be evangelists of Christ. Now, Mr. Yorke, we need land to extend our monastery, we need money to build it. That is why I have come to you."

Mr. Yorke thought a moment, then he said: "Perhaps you may not know, Mr. Townley, that I am a Protestant, and a convinced Protestant."

"I am very sorry," said Father Townley.

"I am," said Mr. Yorke — "I am of the opinion of Lord Macaulay and Thomas Carlyle, who argued that the salvation of England was through the Reformation. I will go further, and tell you what you may already know, although your remarks suggest that you are ignorant of it, that I am what you call a Dissenter. I believe that what is distinctively Papist, or what you call Catholic, in the Christian religion is a violation of Christianity. I go further still, and I tell you this, I regard your attitude, as a minister in the Church of England, the Reformed Church of England, whose vows you have taken, as the attitude of a dishonest man. Let me be absolutely plain. I believe you are sincere. Did I not believe that, I would have shown you the door some time ago. But that is how it appeals to me — a blunt, unsophisticated layman. Had Father Mullarney come to me, and spoken to me as you have spoken, I should have respected him. His words would have been in accord with the history of his Church and his professed belief. But how a man, professing to belong to the Church of England, as by law established, having taken her vows, as you have taken, having professed to hate the errors of Rome, as you professed to hate them when you professed your faith in the Thirty-nine Articles, is to me, a plain layman, having some respect for truth and honesty, simply beyond my comprehension. I say again, if you were a professed Roman Catholic, and came to me, telling me, as you have told me, of your dreams and your visions, I would have helped you. I should have said, 'This man is mistaken, this man believes in a lot of nonsense, but there is so much of good in his heart, and he is so earnest to do what he believes to be the will of God, that I believe God will make the good which he

aims at doing, with such evident sincerity, destroy the evil.' But the man who professes to belong to the Protestant Church –"

"I do not, I hate the very word," interrupted Father Townley.

"Who professes to belong to the Protestant Church of England," persisted Mr. Yorke, "and who pretends to fight under her banner, at the same time trying to destroy her distinctive doctrines, is what I and thousands of others of plain men who call a spade a spade, cannot reconcile with common honesty."

"It is because I love the Church of England that I adopt this attitude," said the priest; "it is because I and thousands of other priests desire to purify her of her Protestantism that we stay within her fold. That is why scores of societies exist in her today. What do the English Church Union, the Society of the Holy Cross, the Society of Corporate Reunion, and a dozen others exist for? Why do we not come out from the English Church? Because, although she is not at present in communion with the great Mother Church, she is a part of her, and we desire so to purge her from error that she shall in the near future become of her in deed and in truth."

Had Father Townley not been under the influence of a great excitement he would not have spoken so freely, for while such sentiments as he expressed were freely uttered among the various sections of the Church to which he had referred, he was not in the habit of speaking so freely to those whom he regarded as outsiders. Still, he did not regret what he had said. He was noted in Ritualistic circles for his plainness of speech, and had for years urged a greater frankness among those who maintained what was called the Catholic position in the Church of England. It is true the history of the Ritualistic party had been in the main a secret history, from the time of Newman and the Tractarian movement. The societies which existed for Romanizing the Church of England had been in the main secret societies. Their meetings had been secret, their rules had been secret; indeed, many of them had outwardly professed to be Evangelicals, in order that they might get into Evangelical parishes, and, under the guise of Protestants, teach Romanist dogmas. But Father Townley did not believe in this attitude. "Let us tell the world boldly what we mean," he said again and again. "People may be shocked at first, but when they see the grandeur of our ideals, when they see the Church as she really is, they will flock to her as doves flock to their master's window."

Nevertheless, he was somewhat startled at Fletcher Yorke's plain speech. He had been so impressed by his own point of view that he was not prepared for the unvarnished words of the man whose word carried greater weight than that of any man in the district. For there was no mistaking the Yorkshireman's meaning. He indulged in no innuendos, no veiled threats. Such was not his manner of speech. He spoke bluntly, plainly, honestly, and, as he spoke, Father Townley gave up all hope of obtaining the land necessary to his purposes. Still, he was not going to give up without a struggle.

"This is God's work, Mr. Yorke," he said. "You, as a county magistrate, and as a large employer of labor, are aware of the Godlessness, the drunkenness, the practical atheism which exists in our midst. It is our work to fight against it. Already we have done something, and by God's help we mean to do a great deal more. All our brethren are godly, self-sacrificing men. Not a penny of money we receive is spent on ourselves. We have all taken the vow of poverty. All is spent on the work of the Lord. Ours is a battle for the Lord against the world, the flesh, and the devil. You can help on the cause of God; and, speaking in the name of my Master, if you refuse, you refuse at your peril!"

The light of the fanatic was in his eyes, and in his eagerness he rose from his seat, and held out his hand as though he would pronounce a curse upon the man from whom he sought a favor.

"I want to put a question to you," said Fletcher Yorke quietly. "Suppose that you, believing as you do, were a large landowner, and suppose I came to you asking for land on which to build, say, a Primitive Methodist chapel, what would your answer be?"

"I should refuse you," said Father Townley, in quick, decided tones. "I would never encourage heresy and schism by such an action."

"But why? Such a chapel would fight against Godlessness and drunkenness."

"What of that, when it rends the body of Christ asunder? What of that, when it would open the wounds in His precious body?"

"By fighting uncleanness and drunkenness and vice?"

"This can never be truly done except through the Church," replied the priest. "The conventicle might seem to help in bringing in the kingdom of God; in reality it would be a hindrance."

"So you would refuse?"

“Absolutely. Oh! I see what my answer means, but I repeat it. I should refuse absolutely.”

“Then think of the situation from my standpoint. I am a Protestant, a convinced Protestant. I believe that your attitude is a dishonest attitude. If you went over to the Church of Rome I should respect you as an honest man, whatever I should think of your opinions. But you are a professed minister of the Reformed Church of England, and yet under the banner of that Church you are trying to bring back into the country those things which, according to my belief, have been a curse to the world through many centuries. I am a landowner, and you come to me, and say, ‘Sell me land that I may extend this disloyal work.’ Don’t you see the situation?”

Again the fanatical light shone in Father Townley’s eyes, and again he forgot all caution.

“And why do we try and bring back the beliefs and practices of the primitive Church, Mr. Yorke? It is because we love the Church of England. It is because under her Protestantism she was moribund, inactive, powerless. It is because under her Protestantism her ministers were little more than laymen, and could not therefore speak with authority. It is because the only hope of the Anglican Church, ay, and the only hope for religion in this country, lies in going back to the full Catholic faith and ritual.”

Fletcher Yorke rose to his feet.

“I cannot sell you the land you ask for,” he said.

The light of the fanatic died out of Father Townley’s eyes, and in its place flashed a gleam of anger.

“Believing as I do, I could not take money for such a thing,” went on the Yorkshireman. “But,” and he strode up and down the room like a man trying to solve a difficult problem, “I cannot help believing that you are sincere, even in your dishonest position. I have no respect for your attitude, nay, I despise it, except for its apparent unselfishness. You have done good among the vicious of this neighborhood. I know I shall be called inconsistent, when my action becomes known, but it is not for me to judge the ways of the Almighty. He may bless the sincerity and self-sacrifice of your work, even although you are disloyal to your vows as a minister of the English Church, and although you are trying to bring back the darkness of Rome. Anyhow, it is because of my faith that He will cause the sincerity and earnestness of your lives to counterbalance the falsity and evil, that I have decided to give you the piece of land you ask for.”

“To give it?”

“Yes; I could not make money out of it, Yorkshireman as I am.”

“May God lead you into the fulness of His light,” said the priest fervently.

“Thank you!” said Fletcher Yorke. “I am not at all sure that I have done what is right. I am acting in the nature of a compromise. But I am a Protestant, and as a Protestant I must allow freedom of conscience. However, there you are.”

“But you make no conditions?” cried Father Townley.

“No,” said the Yorkshireman, “I don’t believe in making conditions. You were admitted into the English Church on conditions. You accepted the conditions, and yet you, while remaining in the English Church, are violating those conditions, both in the letter and the spirit. You would do the same with mine. No, there is the land. I will see to it that it is properly conveyed to your Community, if your solicitor will write to mine. May God help you all to be honest men as well as sincere.”

“Does not one imply the other?” asked Father Townley.

“The ecclesiastical nature is beyond me,” said Fletcher Yorke. “I am a plain layman, and judge according to a layman’s standards. That is why I can’t help despising you fellows at your Community. But there, I have said my say, and yielded to your wishes. Leave me now, or I may repent of what I have promised.”

“In the name of Christ, and His holy Church, I thank you!” said the priest; “the gift you have made is a gift to the Body of Christ.”

“I wish I were sure of it,” said the Yorkshireman.

“Good-night!”

Half an hour later Fletcher Yorke was still in the same room alone. He had been pondering over his promise. Although he was a Nonconformist he had a great admiration for the Church of England, and if the land which he had promised were to be devoted to the building of an evangelical church, he would have been perfectly satisfied. But it was not. It would be utilized for the dissemination of the Romish faith and ritual, even although it would ostensibly be in the hands of ministers of the Reformed Church of England. Had he done right? The only thing that comforted him was that they were sincere and earnest, and men of much prayer.

“I wonder what will become of that boy, Dominic Wildthorne?” he said to himself, as he went to dress for dinner.

5. Dominic Begins To Think

ON THE EVENING of the conversation between Mr. Fletcher Yorke and Father Townley, Dominic Wildthorne was free. He had finished his duties at the House of the Incarnation before dark, and then hurried up to the cemetery so as to have a look at his father's grave before the gates were closed.

Dominic had often, during his quiet hours, wondered what had become of his father. He had a sort of instinctive feeling, that although his body was dead, the something which he had known as his father still lived. Where was it? He wished he knew. Wished, too, that he could have some communication with him. For Dominic had loved his father in a dog-like and unreasoning sort of way. He had sorrowed with a great sorrow when he died. He had heard that the future of men who, like his father, were without faith, was utterly hopeless; but he could not believe it. He remembered much that was good in his father's life, and he did not believe that the great God would make no use of that goodness. Still, he was in a state of doubt, and as he wended his way towards the cemetery, he longed to know what had become of the only man he had ever really loved.

He found the cemetery gates open, and without hesitation he made his way to his father's grave. He was able to distinguish it by a number. The man at the graveside had told him that a little wooden stake would be driven in the ground at the foot of the grave, and that the number would be ninety-five.

No one was near, and as there was a dip in the ground just there, he was comparatively hidden from view. All around him was a sea of tombstones. He had no thought of fear, nevertheless his heart was full of wonder. What had become of all the people who had lived, and died, and were buried?

He knelt down by his father's grave, and tried to think. Yes, he knew that Barnaby Wildthorne had been what was called an atheist, and a drunkard. He had been an evil liver too. But he had also been kind to him, and he could remember several deeds of his father's life which had been generous, and large-hearted. He was not a little, petty, spiteful man. He was, at times,

rough and passionate, but had also been good and generous. When there had been a colliery explosion near Meremeadows, and many men had been entombed, no man had worked harder, faced more dangers, or shown more self-sacrifice than Barnaby Wildthorne. Indeed, as it had been reported in the newspapers, he had faced what seemed certain death in order to save the life of a young fellow, whose wife and children stood weeping at the pit's mouth. Surely the great God would take that into consideration!

A bell announcing that the cemetery gates were being shut was ringing, but Dominic never heard it. The darkness began to fall, but Dominic did not heed. He had heard that people sometimes came back to the earth, and appeared to those they loved at the graves in which they were buried. He wondered if his father would come back. He waited a long time, but he neither heard nor saw anything. The grave had no message for him, and God was silent.

Presently he realized that he was chilled to the bone, and that only the pale moonbeams lit up the dreary scene. Shivering with the cold, and with a strange feeling in his heart, he found his way to the cemetery gates, only to find them locked. But this did not trouble him. The wall was not high, and a little later he found himself in the road.

"I wonder where father is?" he asked himself as he walked towards Meremeadows. Up above him dark clouds rolled across the sky, but in the blue of the sky he saw the twinkling stars. How little he was. Yet the great God made him, even as He made the stars. The wind which swept across hill and dale breathed the spirit of mystery; it made him feel as though the spirits of the dead, whose bodies lay in the cold cemetery, were all around him — all except his father's. Away in the distance he saw the dim outlines of the lulls. It was all very wonderful: the great dome of the heavens, the black storm-clouds, the shining stars, the pale light of the moon, the sighing winds, and the great hills. And God made it all. His father was called an atheist, but this did not affect the boy's consciousness that there was a great God at the back of it all. Still, he was dazed by the thoughts which passed through his mind, by the mystery of life, and death.

Presently he came to Meremeadows. As he trudged along the almost deserted street, he heard singing, and looking he saw a brightly lit building. It was a chapel. He wondered if it were the one where Maggie Yorke went on Sunday. Perhaps the minister who she said was so clever would be preaching there. He would go in and see. Who knew? Perhaps the beautiful girl

who had been so kind to him the day before would be there, and he would see her. Perhaps, too, as the minister was such a wise man, he might be able to tell him what had become of his father.

Dominic climbed the stone steps of the chapel, and entered the vestibule.

“Want a seat, lad?” said a man standing there.

Dominic nodded. “I don’t want to go far in,” he said, “just far eno’ to hear and see.”

“Come on, then. You’re just in time for t’ sermon.” A good number of people were in the building, for the people at the chapel were holding what they called special revival services. They were singing the last verse of the hymn as he was shown into a seat. Dominic did not know the hymn, but the minor key in which it was sung seemed to harmonize with his feelings. The words, however, caused a cold feeling to come into his heart.

“Almost persuaded:” harvest is past!

“Almost persuaded:” doom comes at last!

“Almost” cannot avail; “Almost” is but to fail;

Sad, sad, that bitter wail— “Almost”—but lost!

The preacher belonged to that class of people commonly called traveling evangelists, and he was not the best representative of his class. He was a man of slender education, and very pronounced views. He held fast to the letter of a theology which is now practically dead. Nevertheless, he had the gift of speech, and having preached his stock of sermons many times over, and in many places, he delivered his message with great fluency. The sermon was on the lines of the verse I have quoted. I will not try to analyze, or describe it. It would be neither profitable nor pleasant. For what he preached was not gospel; it was exploded and unreasonable dogma. Nevertheless it affected the mind of the sensitive boy. For hours he had been pondering over the problem as to what had become of his father; and now this man had told him. He was in a ghastly, hopeless, everlasting hell. His body was tormented by flames of fire, his soul was tormented by the wrath of God. “All unbelievers . . . shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.” This was the theme of the man’s sermon, and he dealt with it in the crudest and most literal fashion.

Dominic listened like one spellbound. The boy’s imagination was fired, and he saw the burning lake, the grinning devils, and the suffering sinners.

He heard their howls of despair, their groans of anguish. Yes, this was the doom of unbelievers, and his father was an unbeliever. He knew now why he could not feel his presence at the graveyard. His father was in hell. He could see him writhing in anguish in the dread region of the lost.

He was not afraid for himself, but he was afraid for his father. The man's sermon did not touch him at all; he did not consider why, but he knew it did not. The hell that the man preached about was not real as far as he was concerned, but if his father was there the thought was ghastly. And he was there. Barnaby Wildthorne belonged to the class which the preacher described.

Directly the preacher had finished, he seemed to awake out of a trance. He heard the preacher inviting those who wanted to be saved to go into an inquiry room, but it had no meaning to him. He hurried out of the chapel, and rushed back to the House of the Incarnation as fast as he was able.

The clock was striking nine. No, he was not late, and therefore no one would ask him where he had been, or take notice of him in any way. At least he thought not; but he had scarcely entered the building when he saw Father Trouville.

"Is that you, Dominic?" said the priest kindly. "Have you been out?"

"Ay," replied the boy, "I was told I might. It's only just struck nine."

"That's all right. The Father Superior wants to see you."

"Does he want me to do something?"

"I don't know, but I don't think so. Didn't you tell him this morning that Mr. Fletcher Yorke had offered you work?"

Dominic nodded.

"Perhaps it's about that. You'd better go into his study."

Dominic made his way to Father Townley's study, the room in which the bronze figure of the Christ hanging on the cross had so impressed him.

The priest greeted Dominic very kindly. Since his return from Fletcher Yorke's house he had been much elated. The question of the land on which he hoped to extend his buildings had troubled him greatly.

He had been afraid that such a pronounced Protestant and Dissenter would have curtly refused his desire. Therefore, when he realized that he would have the necessary land as a free gift, he felt sure that the hand of God was upon the Yorkshireman, and he felt sure that in the near future he would be won over to his, Father Townley's, views.

Fletcher Yorke's offer to give Dominic Wildthorne work, however, troubled him. He had had many dreams about the boy. He had felt sure from the first that he was marked out for a great work. The boy's great speaking eyes, the sensitive mouth, and his eagerness for knowledge all confirmed his first impressions. The boy must be an evangel of the Catholic faith. If he were taken in hand now his pliant nature could be molded as the potter molds clay. If, on the other hand, he were given employment by Fletcher Yorke, he would become a mere money-maker, and possibly be lost to the cause he had at heart. He felt sure that God had called the boy to the life he loved. Let him take the vows of the Community of the Incarnation, and be filled with the Catholic Ideals, and he would be a worthy successor of the man whose name he bore. He determined, therefore, that he would take the first steps towards bringing him into the fold. He felt sure he had read the boy's character correctly. He was a mystic, a seer of visions, and perhaps a thinker. Besides, he had the mystic's eyes, the orator's mouth. It was of such men that God made monks. If he were true in his calculations, Dominic would do a great deal towards bringing back the Catholic ideals in England.

As we have said. Father Townley was a good deal of a fanatic, but he had not been altogether mistaken in his estimate of the boy's nature. There was a great deal of latent mysticism in his nature, he did see visions and dream dreams. But while this was true, there were other elements in the boy's life which he had not realized. His nature was complex. Because Father Townley knew nothing of wild questionings, and passionate yearnings, he did not dream of what was stored up in the heart of the lad, and as a consequence he never calculated that this orphan boy in whom he had become so interested could be torn with passion, human as well as divine. Because Father Townley knew little or nothing of doubt, he had no suspicion of the turbulent questions which would some day rise in Dominic's mind, questions which could not be answered by the only sophistries with which he was acquainted.

All he saw at present was that probably Mr. Fletcher Yorke would induce him to leave the Community, and in order to avert that danger he must lose no time in carrying out his plans.

"Well, Dominic, you have been out this evening?" he began, with a pleasant smile.

"Yes, I was told I might."

“Certainly. Have you had a pleasant evening?”

“No.”

“How is that? Where have you been?”

“I went first to see father’s grave. After that, I went to chapel.”

“Chapel! What chapel?”

“One in Meremeadows.”

Father Townley was silent for a few seconds. He felt that the time had indeed come for him to begin his work.

“I am very sorry for that,” he said presently.

Dominic looked at him questioningly. There was wonder in his eyes.

“I am very sorry for that,” repeated the priest.

“That is — the chapel was one of those dissenting places, was it not?”

Dominic nodded.

“Then you have committed a sin, a grave sin.”

“Why, sir?”

“Because you were baptized into the true Church, and because these dissenting chapels give pain to our Lord. The preachers at these places usurp the holy offices, and they make a mockery of religion.”

“Do you mean to say that they preach what isn’t true?” asked the boy eagerly.

“I mean,” said Father Townley, “that allowing such men to preach is like allowing uneducated, untrained quack doctors to practice medicine. It is true that one or two of our bishops, and a large number of clergymen are falsely lenient with them, by recognizing them as true ministers of Christ. That is an outcome of the Protestantism of the Church. They may seem to do good, but in reality these preachers are ignorant usurpers. I want you to promise me, Dominic, never to go to one of these places again.”

“I have heard of church parsons going to Chapels,” said the boy, like one trying to understand what was being said.

“Then they have done what is wrong. The law does not allow it, and, what is more, it is a sin in the eyes of God. By-and-by I hope you will understand more plainly; meanwhile, I want you to promise me never to put foot in one of such places again.”

“Do they preach what isn’t true?” asked the boy again, and his voice was tremulous with emotion.

“They do not preach Catholic doctrine, and therefore they do not preach what is true,” said the priest.

"Then my feyther isn't in 'ell?" he cried.

"Who said he was in hell?" asked the priest, not noticing the lad's lapse into the Yorkshire manner of speech.

"The chap in t' chapel. He said as 'ow all unbelievers were burnt in a lake full of fire and brimstone. He said 'twas in t' Bible.

"That comes of men preaching what they do not understand," said Father Townley. "The Bible is God's book, but it must be interpreted by the Church."

"Then the Bible doesn't say as 'ow feyther's in 'ell?" urged the boy.

"In all probability your father was baptized into the Church by one of its priests," said the priest; "indeed, I feel sure he was. Therefore, although he has sinned deeply, there is hope for him."

"Feyther was good sometimes," said Dominic eagerly. "He went down to the Woodroyd coal mine when the explosion was there, and the papers said as 'ow 'ee was a 'ero. Sometimes he was very good to me, and I've known him give his last sixpence to chaps as was hard up."

"Then it's your opportunity to pray for him."

"Pray for him!" said Dominic wonderingly,

"The preacher said as 'ow, when a man were in 'ell, it was no use praying."

"That may be true if he is in hell," said the priest, "but those who are in the Covenant of Grace do not go to hell. They go to a place called Purgatory, where they are purified from their sins, and after they are purified they go to heaven. That is why we can pray for them, and why we can say masees for the repose of their souls."

A look of hope came into Dominic's eyes. This was good news indeed, and he eagerly questioned the priest concerning this doctrine of Purgatory. He had a sort of feeling that his father was not good enough to go to heaven, but if there was another place besides hell and heaven, where such as he could go, and where he could be led to repent of his sins, and at last be made fit for heaven, that there was hope. Yes, he would do anything to get him to heaven. He would willingly pray all day and all night for such a purpose; ay, and he would suffer anything.

"I see," he said presently, "then the chap at the chapel knew nothing about it. He was just a quack at the job."

"He was outside the Church. He had not the Church's sanction nor authority," said the priest.

“Then the law shouldn’t allow him to preach,” said Dominic.

“The law has become lax because of the spirit of Protestantism,” said Father Townley; “let us hope that better days will dawn. Meanwhile it is for those who belong to the Church never to make terms with Dissenters, and always to carry the banner of truth aloft. Promise me, Dominic, that you will never enter one of those places again.”

“Yes, I’ll promise,” said the boy. “But, sir, I would like you, who know so much, to tell me something. When I was up at the cemetery, kneeling on father’s grave, I seemed in a sort of trance. There seemed to be so much besides what I could see with my eyes. I felt as how what I could see was just blinding my eyes to what was behind. I could hear all sorts of voices, and I felt as how the other world, which I could only see when I shut my eyes, was far more beautiful, far more wonderful than that which I could see when I opened them. I felt, too, that I was in a sort of cage; that my body just shut myself in. I wanted wings so that I could fly away.”

This gave Father Townley the opening he wanted, and he urged that this was God’s call to him to a life of faith and prayer. He told him that it was by such a life that this vision he had seen would be raised. That the outside world was blinding him to the great spiritual realities, and that in so far as he gave himself to the spiritual life, the material partitions, which hid the truth, would fall down.

The boy was in the mood to be influenced by such an appeal. For months he had been reading the lives of saints, and although while he had been reading them he had been little influenced, their experiences appeared to him in a new light as he listened to Father Townley. All the services which he had witnessed in the church appealed to the mysticism in the boy’s nature. The chanting of the prayers, the smoke of incense, the sacraments, had some strange, mysterious meaning, which ministered to his longings. The life of the world, as he had known it, was dark and cruel and dreary, but the life which Father Townley described fascinated him.

Besides, he would be able to ease the pains which his father was suffering, he would be able to help poor agonized souls in Purgatory. For the time the realm of his thought was confined to that which Father Townley described. He knew nothing of the endeavors of the world after truth, or of the discoveries of science and scholarship. He did not realize that the faith of the world had been tested in the crucibles of history, of criticism, and human experience. He was only a boy, with strange, unexplained longings and

undisciplined thoughts; and never dreamt of the hidden longings of his being which would one day rise up and demand satisfaction. At present, what Father Townley told him seemed to satisfy him altogether. To live a life of prayer and of vision, and then later on, if he proved worthy, to be prepared for the great vocation of weaning men from heresy and schism, even as the great preacher whose name he bore had done before him, would be all his heart could desire. His eyes flashed with a new light, his heart burned with a great joy.

"I do not know what the future has for you, my son," said Father Townley; "but I feel sure that God has called you to a life of faith, of prayer, and of meditation. If you prove worthy the future will be made plain. The religious life of England is very barren, although not so barren as it was fifty years ago. The Church has become fossilized and moribund. Through that awful calamity called the Reformation, it has been almost degraded into a sect. The old faith and the old unity have gone. But we are trying to bring them back. That is why this community of true Catholics was founded. We want men who love only God and His Church, and who fear only the devil; we want to bring back the faith of the past. To do that those who come to us must love the Church supremely. Why, think, Francis of Assisi changed the religious life of Europe. Think, my son, think! What a joy it would be if you proved worthy of the Holy Life, and became a preaching monk, going up and down England winning tens of thousands to faith, and bringing back this land, eaten out by schism and dissent, to the one true faith of the Holy Catholic Church!"

"But — 'but, sir!" ejaculated the boy.

"We do not know what lies in the future, but perhaps God has called you to this, the most glorious calling under heaven. But it means a great deal, my son. It means complete renunciation of the world. It means absolute obedience to the commands of the Church which has placed complete power in the hands of the Superior. It means giving up all worldly ambitions, all thoughts of love save for Christ, all thoughts of home and family. He who is worthy to do such work as I have mentioned must take the vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. He must hate all schism, all faithlessness to the Catholic Church; but his reward shall be great in heaven, while on earth he shall have the joy of bending the stubborn wills of men to the sweet will of our Lord."

“Yes, yes, it’s wonderful! — wonderful!” cried the boy. “Please, sir, may I become a novice? Help me, sir, to prepare for such a work.”

“I cannot promise that, even,” said Father Townley. “A period of probation is necessary, so that we may know whether you have a vocation.”

“Try me, sir! — try me!” At that moment he saw visions, the material barriers of the world seemed to break down, and he caught glimpses of a life that was far removed from the sordid hopes of men.

“Yes, I will try you,” said the priest.

“Let me begin at once. Father.” And the boy’s face was pale as death.

“Yes, my son, you shall. I will take necessary steps immediately.”

6. Dominic Becomes a Novice

WHEN DOMINIC WILDTHORNE woke next morning, he wondered why his heart was so heavy. He was not aware that anything of importance had happened, and yet his eyes were wet with tears, and the world seemed dark. Presently, however, he remembered the conversation he had had with Father Townley, and then he knew. He was going to renounce the world and all its pleasures, he was going into the religious life. And yet he could not realize why he should be sad. He had not found the world joyful, and there was little he had to renounce. Besides, Father Townley had told him that the religious life was joyful beyond measure. Why, then, should his heart be so sore?

Presently the feeling passed away. He called to mind the experience of the saints whose lives he had read, and as he remembered what ecstasies of joy they experienced, he eagerly looked forward to his next conversation with the Superior of the Community.

He did his ordinary work that day, no one asking him questions or making remarks. He was disappointed in this, because he hoped to begin his new life immediately. Still, he remembered that those who gave themselves to God were not allowed to ask questions, but to obey implicitly their Superior in everything. He therefore performed his duties as though the interview with Father Townley had not taken place.

Towards evening, however, his heart leaped with excitement. A message came to him from the Superior, asking him to come again to his study. He imagined that he would be called upon to begin his life as a postulant immediately. But he was not. Father Townley simply gave him a note, requesting him to take it to Mr. Fletcher Yorke, and wait for an answer. When he was on the road to Barstone, he was glad that his postulancy had not commenced that day. Perhaps he might see the brown-haired, brown-eyed little girl who had spoken so kindly to him. When he reached the lodge gates, therefore, he looked eagerly around, but saw no one. During the long walk from the lodge gates to the house all was silent and lonely. The wild March

winds swept among the shrubs and moaned through the leafless tree branches. The black, threatening clouds rolled across an angry-looking sky; the boy shivered as he walked.

He had come just within sight of the house, when he heard the sound of horses' hoofs. Turning, he saw Maggie Yorke riding a small pony, while immediately behind her was a groom. Evidently she did not share his feelings. The gleam of glad excitement was in her eyes, the keen winds and the exercise had brought a bright glow on her cheeks. How beautiful she looked, sitting so easily on the galloping pony! How her long hair floated in the wind! He had never been on the back of a horse in his life, and for the first time he realized the pleasure such an occupation must give.

Maggie recognized him as she came up.

"Have you come to see dad?" she said, forgetting in the excitement of her ride that it was not usual to question boys like Dominic in such a way.

"I've brought a letter for Mr. Fletcher Yorke," he said.

"He's not in," said Maggie; "he'll not be home till late tonight."

She jumped off her pony as she spoke, and flung the reins to the groom.

"Be sore you take great care of Yarn, Pollard," she said. "Wash him well, and give him plenty of oats."

"Yes, Miss Maggie."

"You can give me the letter," she continued, turning to Dominic; "I'll take it straight to the library."

Dominic handed her the letter without a word. It seemed natural to obey her.

She went towards the open door, as though she had not another thought for him, while he stood watching. He was on the point of walking away, when he checked himself.

"Please, miss," he said.

"Yes?" And Maggie turned towards him.

"You asked me the other day if I had made up my mind what I was going to be."

"Oh, yes," she said, as though she recalled something which she had forgotten.

"Well, I've made up my mind."

"Oh I Well, what are you going to be?"

"I'm going to give myself to God."

"I'm very glad," said Maggie. "Have you been to chapel and got converted?"

"Oh, no; nothing of that," said Dominic. "I went to chapel, but I shall never go again."

"Why?"

"Because it's wrong," said the boy. "The man had no right to preach. No; I'm going to give myself to God, and lead a holy life."

"What do you mean? Become a monk?"

Dominic nodded, while Maggie felt like laughing. It seemed strange to her that the boy should speak in such a way. She fancied him wearing a cowl such as she had seen in pictures.

"That must be awfully funny," she said.

"Monks are holy men," said the boy. "They lead a life of prayer, and, if they are fit, they become preachers."

"Oh, and you think of becoming a preacher?"

"If I'm fit for it," said Dominic. "Not like those chaps at the chapel," he added, "but really and truly, you know."

Maggie laughed merrily. "Oh! that will be funny," she said. "If ever you are going to preach, I'll come and hear you."

"Will you?" said the boy wonderingly.

"Yes. Oh! I'd like to, ever so much."

"But it'll not be for years yet," said Dominic; "it can't be, you know."

"Of course not," said Maggie. "Our minister told me that after he left school, when he was eighteen, he went to the University for three years, and after that he went to another college to study the Bible and things like that for four years more before he became a minister; so, of course, you can't be a proper minister for many years."

She said this as though she had great experience in such matters.

"But you'll let me know when you become a preacher, and if you preach in any church around here, I'll come and hear you."

"Will you?" he said again. The thought seemed so strange that he wondered at it.

"You'll tell me if you are going to preach anywhere around Meremeadows, won't you?"

"Yes, I'll tell you," he said, scarcely realizing what he was saying.

"Of course I shan't like you," said Maggie decisively. "My dad thinks all these monkish preachers in the Church of England are all wrong, so I shan't

like you; but I'll come and hear you, all the same. It will be such fun to see you dressed like a monk. But there, you've promised to tell me. I'll give the letter to dad. Good-evening."

She entered the house, and left him there alone on the drive. He knew not why, but their conversation had fired his imagination. He a preacher! Yes, Father Townley had suggested it himself. The thought was full of fascination. He fancied a great silent church, filled with the smoke of incense, and the candles giving a ghostly light. He thought of a crowded congregation, and Maggie sitting where he could see her; while he, the preacher, was convicting men of heresy and wickedness. She went to one of the chapels which Father Townley condemned, and he, Dominic Wildthorne, would prove to her how wrong it was. He remembered how Savonarola in Florence made proud ladies cry out in shame and agony, and then renounce their lives of worldly pleasure. Yes, and he might become such another.

The thought was alluring beyond words, and he hoped that on his return Father Townley would tell him that arrangements were made for him to enter upon his term of probation forthwith. In this he was disappointed, however. A long time elapsed before any further reference to his vocation was made. Meanwhile he did his work as before; but in his spare hours he went much to the church, and spent many hours in reading the devotional books which were given to him, as well as in studying the subjects in which he had become interested.

As the days went by, he was more and more drawn to the religious life. The services in the church became more and more attractive; the dim mysteries of the mass and prayers for the dead awed and fascinated him at the same time. Yes, he hoped more and more that the Father Superior would let him enter that period of probation whereby he would be tested as to his fitness for the life that grew more and more wonderful to him.

At length his desires were realized. In spite of his youth, he was informed that he was to be received for a probationary period into the Community.

He was put through a very strict examination, and he laid bare the inmost recesses of his soul to his confessor. No thought, however sacred or personal, was reserved; he told the priest before whom he knelt everything. Moreover, there seemed nothing strange in doing it. During the last few months he had lived so much in the religious atmosphere of the members of the Order, he had been so assiduous in regard to all the prescribed devo-

tions, and he had been so impressed with the thought that the priests of the Church were a special class, who were the channels through which the Divine grace flowed, that there seemed nothing else for him than to make confession of everything and receive absolution. Moreover, it seemed to him that the world in which he lived and of which he dreamed, were all he needed. Every want of his being was satisfied. He knew nothing of the feelings and longings and passions in his soul that were lying dormant, and which would one day be aroused to life. The senses were dulled, the longings were asleep, and he was content.

He had no doubts. He knew next to nothing of the great crises which had torn the Christian Church in pieces, nothing of the intellectual battles which had been and were still being fought. He was told that he had been received into the one true Church of Christ, and that this Church had authority from its Head. It was true that the branch of the Church to which he belonged had been separated from the other branches, through the evil work of Protestants; but he knew little or nothing of the inwardness of those great ecclesiastical cleavages. In a vague way he believed that it was for him to help to bring about a union between these branches, and that sometime he would be powerful in doing it.

Dissent he hated. He had been made to believe that it kept open the wounds in the body of Christ, and that therefore it was his duty to hate it, just as it was his duty to hate atheism and sin. But more than that, he hated it because the Dissenting preacher made him believe that his father was in hell, and therefore past praying for.

The service in the church when he was admitted as a postulant was very impressive. The Community of the Incarnation adopted the full ritual of the Roman Church, the only difference being that the prayers were said in English instead of Latin. But Dominic knew but little of this. Neither did he know that the Community under whose influence he had fallen was condemned by a large section of the English Church. The thoughts of the outside world were a sealed book to him; he lived in a narrow world of the Community, and was content.

As a postulant, Dominic was eminently satisfactory. No one could be more obedient and submissive than he, neither could any one perform all that was laid upon him with more eagerness and devotion. He learnt all the offices by heart; he could repeat every rule that was laid down for his guid-

ance. Little by little, too, he learnt to subdue natural desires, natural hopes. Although he did not realize it, his boyhood was gone.

Certain of the rules of his life in this monastery, which existed under the name of the Church of England, and which was condemned by a few of the bishops, and condoned by a great many, had a special attraction for him.

1. *Not to be greedy at meals.* This had been very hard for him. The food was sparing and plain, yet when the hour of eating arrived, he was so ravenous that he could scarcely listen to the one appointed to read some pious work.
2. *Not to love sleep.* This again was very hard. He spent many hours at his devotions, and when he fell asleep he felt as though he needed many hours. Consequently, when he was summoned at two o'clock in the morning to *Nocturns*, or the night office, it seemed to him as though he were chained to his scanty bed. Morning after morning as he heard the brother whose duty it was going around the corridors, and saying *Benedicamus Domino* (Let us bless the Lord), he felt that he could imperil his soul for a little more sleep. Of course he said, *Deo Gratias*, but he was afraid he felt but little thanks to God.
3. *To be jealous of the Church's honor.* Yes, he did not find that a difficulty, and was faithful to it.
4. *To fear the Day of Judgment.* He did fear the Day of Judgment, and yet he feared it more for his father than himself. This was wrong, and he prayed earnestly that he might so feel his own sins that he might indeed fear the Judgment Day.
5. *To dread the torments of hell.* Again he thought more of his father than himself, especially during the early part of his novitiate, although he hoped presently that his fear might be for himself.
6. *Constantly to dwell on the thought of death.* This also was hard. He thought more of life than death, although little by little his love of life became subdued.

Four of the rules he prayed earnestly that he might obey, not only in the letter, but in the spirit.

These were as follows:

To hate our own will.

To love poverty.

To love chastity.

To love obedience.

He made these a matter of special prayer, because the Superior had told him that obedience to them meant the highest virtue. And he longed with a great longing to be told after a short probation that he could take the novice's vows.

In this, however, he was disappointed. His postulancy was of a long duration, not because he was in any way disobedient or unworthy, but because of his youth. At length, after weeks had lengthened into months, and months into years, he was told that the day had arrived when he should be received as a novice.

In due time he was received as a novice with great solemnity, and Dominic felt a great joy that he should be regarded as worthy of such high estate. His life as a novice was utterly uneventful. The rules of the Community of the Incarnation were copied from the older orders in the Roman Communion. The same discipline obtained, and the same life was lived; in fact, it was generally understood among the inmates that they were to conform to the monastic ideals which had been recognized through the centuries.

All the while the boy's heart slept. He knew little or nothing of the world outside, although he often dreamed of the time when he would have to go out into the busy world and preach to those in darkness. Sometimes he wondered what Maggie Yorke was doing, and whether she ever thought of him; wondered, too, if the time would ever come when she would fulfill her promise and come to hear him preach. But this was seldom; his mind was too full of his devotions and of the performance of his religious offices.

His studies during his novitiate were somewhat difficult to describe; they were rather intended to cultivate his heart and to bring his will into entire subjection than to train his intellectual powers. Nevertheless, he knew they were preparatory to the severer mental training which was to come later.

On the whole, he was very happy. He was, he believed, engaged in the holiest, highest kind of work. He was preparing for the ministry, he was fitting himself for that great work of which Father Townley had spoken to him.

One evening the Superior sent for him, and after some conversation with him, said to him:

“Dominic, my son, do you desire to become a brother of the Community?”

“I do desire it greatly,” said Dominic.

“You think you are now old enough to judge wisely? You are now more than eighteen years of age.”

“I have no other desire, no other hope,” said the boy.

“This is as I have hoped,” said Father Townley.

“From the first I marked you for the religious life, from the first I believed in your vocation. Nevertheless, I would not have you do anything rashly or foolishly. For three years you have seen little or nothing of the world you are willing to renounce; and although some may deem me unwise, I have decided that you shall go into the world for a few weeks before you finally decide to take the vows.”

“Surely there is no need for that,” said the lad. “I found the world hard and cruel and cold, and I hate it.”

“Nevertheless, it can be very beautiful, very attractive,” said the Superior. “You have stood the test of hardship within the Community in a most exemplary manner. You have been absolute in your obedience, you have been most faithful in your duties. The testing time has been hard, and you have stood the test nobly. But there is a harder testing time before you. You have stood the test of poverty, of chastity, and of obedience within these walls; now you shall go out into the world and see its allurements, its powers. I am saying this, not because I think you will fail, but because it is necessary that you should be tried. If you are worthy of your high calling, you will come out of the fire unscathed.”

Dominic was about to open his mouth in protest, but he remembered the obedience that was due to his Superior, an obedience which was to be absolute as to God Himself.

“I am ready to do your will,” he said.

“It is now summer,” said Father Townley. “In a few days I will tell you further of my desires concerning you.”

A few days later, Dominic had left the Community of the Brothers of the Incarnation, and was on his way to a fashionable watering-place.

7. How Dominic Felt His Call To Preach

WHEN DOMINIC WILDTHORNE left the Community of the Incarnation, he determined that he would at the end of the fortnight, which was the time his Superior had told him he must be absent, return with increased ardor for his vocation. If he had borne the test of solitude, of hardship, and of severe discipline in a way that called forth Father Townley's approbation, he would bear the test of the world's allurements with far more worthiness. He hated the world. It had been cruel and wicked when he had known it, and although Father Townley had told him of a world of which he knew nothing, he felt sure it would have no attraction for him. In fact, he almost resented the idea that his Superior should think it necessary for him to go to a gay watering-place. He felt sure of his heart. He knew he should hate the gay scenes he had been told to visit, and that he should long at the end of the fortnight to come back and be admitted as a "brother" in the Community. He looked forward to three or four years of hard study, of severe mental discipline. He knew they were necessary to the life he purposed leading. He wanted to be a preaching monk, wanted to go up and down England, as St. Dominic went through Spain, turning people from worldliness and sin to the Church.

And yet in a sense he rejoiced in his freedom. For nearly three years he had been under the strictest discipline. At the middle of each night he had been called to prayer, and through both winter and summer had left his bed at the call of the brother who had awakened him. He had fared hardly, he had mortified his passions, he had taught himself to hate the things which man naturally loves. He had confessed not only his actions, but his most inmost thoughts and desires to his confessor, and he had been amenable to rules that oftentimes seemed foolish and unjust. Thus to feel that for a fortnight he was free to follow his own inclinations was as sweet as the morn-

ing air. But he had no desire to step aside from the path he had marked out. His life should be as pure in the world as in the cloister.

He had thrown off his novice's garb, and had the appearance of a well-dressed clerk out for a holiday. He was not a handsome youth. His features were somewhat rugged and his mouth a trifle large. He was very pale too, and evidently needed the health giving air of the sea. Still, he was not one to be passed lightly by. The large well-shaped head, the dark, lustrous, speaking eyes, the sensitive mouth, the strong chin, all betokened a character of uncommon qualities.

He took up his abode at a large boarding-house, amidst a busy throng of well-to-do pleasure seekers. In spite of himself he could not help being glad he had come. The throng in which he found himself was not a fashionable throng; mostly they were well-to-do tradespeople, with here and there a curate of a poor parish, a hardworking doctor, or a struggling lawyer. They belonged to the class who could not, or would not, afford to go to a first-class hotel; nevertheless, the women, who largely outnumbered the men, were gaily dressed, while the young men tried to behave as though they had been accustomed to the neighborhood of Berkeley Square. On every hand was mirth and laughter; on every hand, too, was an evident desire to be friendly. Acquaintances were struck up without the formality of an introduction, and flirtations were common.

At first Dominic felt himself to be sadly out of place. His childhood had been spent in poverty and squalor, while since his introduction to the Community of the Incarnation his mind had been entirely filled with religious subjects. Moreover, his manner of life had kept him in entire ignorance of the world and its ways. Still, he had for more than three years lived in the society of gentlemen, and had become associated with the habits and manner of speech of men who had passed through public schools and universities. If the food at the Community was frugal, it was served tastefully, while politeness and decorum were strictly observed. Consequently, although, as it seemed to him, the food at the boarding-house suggested a luxury of which he was ignorant, he was not slow to notice that many who sat down at the table were coarse and uncouth. The conversation, too, lacked the culture and the refinement to which he had been accustomed, while the feeble jokes grated on his finer feelings. But this feeling quickly passed away. He found that he was not regarded with disfavor, especially by young girls, who sought to be friendly. He was not yet nineteen years of age, but he

looked older. His life had given him a staid, thoughtful appearance and manner which did not naturally belong to one of his age. Most of the people at the boarding-house imagined him to be twenty-two or twenty-three years of age. He had been told that he must speak to no one of his former life, thus when he was asked concerning his place of abode and his occupation he answered evasively. This aroused a certain amount of curiosity concerning him, and many wondered who the pale, distinguished young man was.

During the first evening at the boarding-house he scarcely spoke to any one, but on the second evening he found himself sitting next to a smartly dressed girl who was evidently desirous of being agreeable.

“Are you going to the Spa tonight?” she asked.

“I had not thought of it,” was his reply.

“Oh, you should,” replied the girl; “the pater and mater are going to take me. There is to be such a funny play. I suppose one is kept in roars of laughter from beginning to end. Charlie Tonkin saw it in London, and he told me about it. Do you go to the theaters much?”

He shook his head.

“Oh, but you should, they are such fun. But perhaps you only go to see the Shakespearian drama.”

“I never saw a play,” said Dominic. The words slipped out unintentionally. He was sorry he had said so much.

“Goodness gracious!” said the girl, “where have you lived?”

But to this Dominic gave no reply.

“Perhaps your parents object to the theater,” said the girl; “I’ve been told that a lot of Dissenters do. I was at school with a girl whose father and mother were Dissenters, and she told me they thought the theater wicked.”

“I have no parents,” he replied quietly.

“Nor are you a Dissenter?” suggested the girl.

“No,” said Dominic, almost angrily, “certainly not!”

“Oh, then, why not come to the Spa tonight? I’m sure you would enjoy it.”

“What’s that you are saying, Rosa?” said a matronly woman, who was sitting on the other side of the girl.

“I was only telling Mr. Wildthorne that he ought to go the Spa tonight, mater,” said the girl.

The woman seconded her daughter’s suggestion.

“I’m sure you’d enjoy it,” she said,

“And he says he’s never been to a theater,” said the girl.

“Then it’s time he went,” said the stout woman.

Someone had told her through the day that Dominic was a theological student, and her daughter’s information confirmed her in her impression.

“Of course,” she went on, “it’s a perfectly respectable play, or I would never think of taking Rosa to it. No one can be more particular than I am about such things. My husband is a churchwarden, and, of course, I must be careful.”

Dominic remembered Father Townley’s advice to him before he had left the “Community,” and his mind was made up.

“Yes, I’ll go,” he said.

“Then it’s time you made haste,” said Rosa. “It commences at eight o’clock, and we shall barely be in time to get there before the curtain goes up.”

Dominic left the table, and seized his hat.

“You are not going off like that, are you?” said Rosa, who passed him on her way to her room; “you may as well walk down with the rest of us,” Evidently she hoped to have his company to and from the Spa, and perhaps a talk with him between the acts. It is true he had said nothing interesting as yet, but she felt sure he would.

Dominic waited for her, and a few seconds later Rosa appeared, tricked out in all her summer finery.

“I expect we’d better wait for the pater and mater,” she said; “they’ll wonder where I am if we go on first.”

Had Dominic been reared like most of the young men who were staying at the boarding-house he would have taken this as a hint that they should go on together; but he took her at her word, and waited. Rosa pouted somewhat impatiently, nevertheless she felt pleased that she was to see more of the young man of whom so many had spoken.

“This is Mr. Wildthorne, pa,” said Rosa’s mother, as she came by his side, accompanied by a stout, good-humored-looking man.

“Hope you’ll enjoy the little play, I’m sure,” said the man. “I believe in enjoyin’ myself when I’m away for a holiday. Now then, ma, we may as well be trottin’.”

As if by mutual arrangement Dominic found himself by Rosa’s side as they wended their way towards the Spa.

“It will be strange to you,” she said.

“What?” he asked.

“The play. My word, I’ve gone to plays all my life! What’s the harm in an innocent bit of fun?”

“What, indeed?” said Dominic.

“Did I tell you my name?” went on Rosa. “It’s Rosa Perry, and we come from Croydon. Have you ever been to Croydon?”

“No, never.”

“But you know London?”

“No, I’ve never been to London.”

“Then where in the world have you lived?”

“In Yorkshire.”

“Oh! but it does seem strange to meet some one who has never been to London, especially when one thinks of the cheap trips.”

“I’ve never wanted to go,” said Dominic.

“Never wanted to go to London!”

“No, what is there in London?”

“Oh! millions of people, and miles of houses.”

“There’s not much to attract in that, is there?” said Dominic. “A house is a dead thing made of stone and mortar, and when you’ve seen six people, you’ve seen all the rest.”

“What in the world do you mean?”

“I think I mean just exactly what I said,” said Dominic, “There are a hundred people at our boardinghouse, but there seems to be no difference in them. They say the same things, and think the same things,”

“How do you know?”

“I listen,”

“Oh I but there are all sorts of things in London, In fact, everything is there.”

“So is everything here.”

“What would you call ‘everything’?”

“God, and myself,” said Dominic.

“Goodness gracious,” said Rosa, “you are funny!”

“What is there besides?” asked the youth.

“Oh! — well, there’s the sea, the sky, and — and other people,”

“There would be no sea, if you did not exist to see it,” said Dominic, “and there would be no ‘you’ without God,”

“Then why are you going to see the play?”

"I — I hardly know," he replied. "I expect because you asked me, and because — well, I want to see what are shadows, and what are real. After all, a play is only a thought, is it? Just a thought which has taken form."

Dominic did not know he was pedantic. He had no idea of parading a first year's student's philosophy. He had been living so long in the subjective world, that the objective did not count for much.

He paid his money, and took his place beside the girl at the Spa. He had no idea that the people who were staying at the boarding-house were nudging each other, and whispering that "Rosa Perry had hooked the silent boy." He was no more interested in Rosa than in the boy who sold programs. He was there to see the shadow called the world, and so he waited with a certain curiosity for the curtain to rise.

He was not much impressed by the play. It seemed to him so unspeakably silly. Uncritical as he was, he realized that the farce bore no relation to life, while the jokes were forced and unnatural. If Father Townley wanted to test him by such means, he had surely failed to understand him. What allurements had the music of the orchestra to one who had been moved by the sublime strains of Church music? What attractions had the tawdry play to one who had seen visions and dreamt dreams? He longed for the day to come when he, a preaching monk, vowed to a life of celibacy, of poverty and obedience, would be able to show the multitudes how hollow and unworthy all this was. Had the play been a serious drama it might have attracted him, but there was no fascination in this screaming farce.

"How do you like it?" asked Rosa, at the end of the first act.

"I was thinking how people must long to be interested," replied Dominic.

"Why?"

"Because every one seems interested in this."

"But aren't you?"

He shook his head. "You don't mind if I leave before it's over, do you?" he said.

"Why, there's nothing wrong in it, is there?"

"Everything silly is wrong," said Dominic. "Besides, God never created men and women with immortal souls in order that—"

He stopped suddenly, remembering Father Townley's injunctions.

"Goodness gracious!" said Rosa. She was beginning to think there was not much fun in sitting by a young man who never made her laugh, nor paid

her a compliment. Still, the look in his eyes fascinated her, and in spite of herself made her long to know more of him.

The curtain rose again, and the farce went on. One impossible scene followed another, and the audience grew uproarious in their laughter and applause.

"Isn't the Reverend Robert Spalding funny?" whispered Rosa' "Think of him counting his wraps, and asking for a bath bun."

"Curates are not like that!" said Dominic angrily.

"Are you a curate?" asked the girl.

"No," he answered "I wish I were."

"Why?"

"Why! I'd—"

Again he stopped, for into his heart had come a wild desire. Ought he not for the sake of his Church and his Master, to go on the stage and preach the Gospel to them? Ought he not to stand up and tell the people that the Son of God came on earth, and suffered the direst agony, that they might be saved from hell? It was true he knew nothing of public speaking, and his thoughts were confused; but at least he could warn them against a life of inanity and godlessness. Yes, he would do it. He would wait until the act was ended, and then he would find his way to the stage, and call upon this crowd to repent and turn to God. Had not the saints of old time done such things? Did not Telemachus put an end to the butcheries of Rome by leaping into the arena, and in the name of Christ forbid them to continue their devilish pastime? He wished he had brought his cross with him. Then he could hold it above his head and command the people in the name of his crucified Lord to listen to him.

Perhaps God brought him to this place of worldly amusement for this purpose. If He did he must be faithful. Of course his action might be resented, but would he not by this means prove to Father Townley his fitness for his great vocation?

He felt his heart beating wildly, while his head swam with excitement. Now was his time to tell these worldlings that they were on the brink of the grave, and that they should prepare for eternity. Yes, his thoughts began to shape themselves now. He would speak of the transitoriness of life and of the reality of hell. He would tell them that this play was a trick of the devil to lead them to forget that they had souls to save, to forget that God was made flesh in order to save them from the torments of the damned. He cast

a glance at Rosa Perry, whose eyes were filled with laughter, and who was evidently carried away by amusement at the sight of a minister of Christ made to appear ridiculous in order to raise a laugh to the lips of a vulgar crowd. Poor, blinded, benighted creature! Yes, this was the devil's trick to capture such silly creatures. Yes, God had led him here that he might preach on the vanity, the sinfulness of the world, and he would be true to God's call.

But he would wait his time. He would say nothing until the curtain fell. Then the lights would be turned up, and the people should see him, should hear his message. He would be doing only what St. Dominic did, he would be fighting the devil on his own ground. True, he could not say that unchastity was condoned, or wickedness encouraged by the farce that the people on the stage were acting; but it was sinful, because life was earnest, death was near, and hell yawned for impenitent souls. And he — he, ignorant and untrained as he was, would preach repentance.

The curtain fell, and there was wild applause. Again and again it was uplifted, and still the crowd cheered the puppets on the stage, who were simply the tools of the devil, whereby he might make people forget that they should constantly think of death.

Yes, he would wait until silence was restored, and then he would find his way to the stage. Some of the people were leaving, but they would quickly return, and listen to him as they had listened to St. Dominic, to St. Francis, to Savonarola, and to Ignatius Loyola.

The applause ceased, and the curtain fell for the fourth time. Then in a second, the place which had been in semi-darkness was full of light, and the people turned to each other with a laugh, and asked how they were enjoying the play.

Unheeding Rosa's glances, he rose to his feet in order to find his way to the stage, his heart beating wildly, his brain on fire; but as he rose he looked towards the stalls, and then he stood still, as though he were chained to the ground. There, looking towards him, was a face he remembered well. It was three years and more since he had seen it, but he had no difficulty in recognizing it. It was the face of Maggie Yorke, and although he knew not why, he felt powerless to obey what he felt sure had been the call of God.

8. The Meeting On The Moors

ALTHOUGH DOMINIC recognized Maggie Yorke, it was evident that she did not recognize him. It was true she looked in his direction, but although he was only four or five rows of seats behind her, she neither by look nor movement gave any sign that she saw him. Beside her was Fletcher Yorke and a lady whose face he had never seen before, but who, he felt sure, was Maggie's mother. They, too, had been laughing at the farce, and were now idly glancing around to see if there was any one near whom they knew. Maggie's face was somewhat altered since he had seen it last. She was over thirteen then, while now she must be nearly seventeen. It was true she looked only a child still, and yet there was a suggestion of approaching womanhood in her appearance, which Dominic felt rather than recognized by any process of the mind. He could not tell what clothes she wore; he only had some idea that she was in pure white, and that her dress accorded with her great waving masses of brown hair, and her fair face. He had an idea that she was very beautiful, and although for years he had been taught to despise the beauty of the flesh, he did not despise Maggie Yorke. Rather he found himself looking at her like one entranced. Perhaps he was held by her eyes. Large, lustrous brown eyes they were, and although they were full of merriment at the thought of the play she had just been witnessing, they suggested to the boy that they were as pure as the eyes of an infant. Perhaps that was why the sight of her made it impossible for him to do what he had made up his mind to do.

He was brought to himself presently by Rosa Perry pulling at his sleeve.

"Do you see any one you know, Mr. Wildthorne?" she said.

He sat down by her side without a word.

"You do look strange," went on the girl; "you might have seen a ghost."

Rosa belonged to that fast-increasing class of girls who become familiar on very short acquaintance.

"What is the matter with you?" she went on, "Do you still think the play to be sinful?"

Her question aroused him to the fact of what he had intended to do, and a great feeling of shame swept over him. He had been disobedient to the first call of God, He had heard the call distinctly, and he had risen in obedience to it, and yet, before he had taken the first step, his purpose had been driven from his mind. Instead of being on the stage, proclaiming his message, he was sitting there dumb and distracted. For months, years he had been praying that he might be worthy of his high calling, and yet when the time of testing came he had failed.

But it was not too late even yet. There would be at least five minutes before the curtain would rise again. There was still time for him to obey the call. But he did not move. He knew that if he went on the stage he would be dumb and helpless.

And yet his conviction remained. This play was the means which the devil used to blind the people, and those who could enjoy it were in danger of hell fire. A few minutes before his heart burned with eagerness to denounce it, while the very words of his denunciation were made known to him. But now all had gone, save a feeling of defeat, of unworthiness, of disgrace. He would have to tell his confessor of what he had purposed to do, and how he had failed. Father Townley had been wise when he said that he, Dominic, needed the test of the world.

But why had he failed? Why had the face of the child, of one who had been kind to him years before, paralyzed him? It was not because the face suggested wickedness. No such thought had entered his mind. Nevertheless his opportunity had gone.

He thought of St. Paul when he visited Athens. The great apostle was moved when he saw the idolatry of the people. But that was not all. He had preached Jesus and the Resurrection. While he, yes he, had been moved by the brainless mockery by which the devil was luring the souls of men and women to the forgetfulness of their need, he had felt the call to speak, but he had said nothing. And he had declared that he was to be a preaching monk, who should go up and down England, and by the faithfulness of his life and message bring them back to God.

“You like it better now, don’t you?” said Rosa. “You’ll stay to the end, won’t you?”

He wanted to stay, why, he did not know, but he would not. He knew that he would not be able to fulfill his purpose, but he would not stay as a fur-

ther witness. He hated it enough to leave the scene of worldliness and sin, the place where God's ministers were made objects of ridicule.

"No, I shall not stay," he said. "Good-night," and without another word he left Rosa Perry looking chagrined and angry.

Presently he got outside the Spa grounds, and was walking along the promenade. The laughing crowds jostled him, but he did not heed them; he was too angry. He hated Maggie Yorke. But for her he would have obeyed the call of God, and called the giddy crowd to repentance, but the sight of her face had stopped him. Yes, he hated her. The devil had used her as an instrument to bring around his damnation. It was the sight of her beautiful, girlish face which had paralyzed his brain, and destroyed the holy feeling in his heart. But for her the people who had been witnessing a silly caricature of life would have been called to repentance.

He had never expected to see her; and perhaps his very surprise had had something to do with his defeat. But this did not lessen his anger. It was through her that he had disobeyed the call of God.

Presently he found himself alone. He had got beyond the promenade, and found himself in a lonely lane. By this time he was able to collect his thoughts. Yes, he had failed, but his failure was not irretrievable. He would go to the theater another night, and then he would carry out his purposes. After all, his experience that night had only made him more than ever determined to fit himself for the great work of his life.

Dominic went straight back to the boarding-house, and found his way to his bedroom. The people were returning from the various places of amusement, but no one noticed him, and as it happened Rosa Perry had not returned.

On the following morning he rose early and partook of a lonely breakfast. He asked for a few sandwiches, as he did not intend being back for lunch. He would go for a long walk over the moors, and dream dreams of the life he was going to live, and the work he was going to do. The morning was fine, and he felt in the humor for walking. The air, though warm, was strong and invigorating, and in spite of himself his thoughts became less morbid, less unhealthy. After all, it was a glad thing to live, and nature everywhere called on him to rejoice.

The moors were glorious. Purple heather bloomed everywhere, the landscape stretched in huge billows as far as the eye could see. Moors, moors, nothing but moors, right away to the edge of the horizon. A great sea of

heather bloom and bracken, with here and there a deep, wooded valley, and all bathed in sunshine. Everything was different from Meremeadows. There were no mill chimneys, no black slime-covered roads, no clash of granite and steel, no shouting crowds; all around was the glorious moorland unsullied by the bands of man, the country as God made it.

Somehow his anger at not proclaiming his message the night before became less, his desire to get back to the cloister was not so strong. The moors called him, the wideness of the countryside made the life of the Community seem narrow. After all, what was any man that he should confine the thoughts of God?

Presently he began to feel hungry. It was only a little after ten o'clock, but he lay down among the heather and began to eat his sandwiches. Oh, the glory of that summer day!

Before him rose a high hill, on the top of which was a great amphitheater. He had heard about it the day before. The guide-books said that it commanded one of the finest views in the country. Yes, he would go there. It was some miles away, but he felt no suggestion of weariness. How could one be weary amidst such glorious sunshine!

He left the main road, and followed a winding footpath. He was sorry afterwards that he had done so, because walking on the heather was so tiring, but after nearly three hours' walk he found himself on the top of the hill.

What a glorious panorama it was! He stood still, and drank in the beauty of the scene; on every side save one was moorland, as far as the eye could see, and where there was no moorland there was the great wide sea.

Presently he realized that he was hungry and tired. He wished he had brought more sandwiches, or had kept those he had until now. But no house was near. Everywhere was the silence and loneliness of the moors.

He threw himself upon a huge clump of heather, and closed his eyes. A few minutes later he was fast asleep. How long he slept he did not know. Now and then, when he grew near consciousness, it was to feel the warmth of the sun and the cool winds blowing across his face. Nothing mattered; he was there on the great bosom of nature, who fanned him with her breezes, warmed him with her sun, and wrapped him in her great arms.

Presently he woke with a start. Someone was near him. He no longer felt alone, while he fancied he heard voices in the near distance. He opened his eyes, and saw standing before him, not a dozen yards away, the girl who had kept him from obeying the voice of God on the previous evening.

The recognition was mutual. Although he had changed since she had seen him last, he was not so altered but Maggie Yorke remembered him perfectly. His first feeling was that of anger. He was brought face to face with the one who had caused him to disobey God, but the anger did not remain. He was angry with himself at ceasing to be angry with her, and he wondered why it was.

"Miss Yorke," he said, as he rose to his feet.

"Why, you are Dominic Wildthorne," she said, almost laughingly.

"Yes," he replied.

"And you have altered very much. As you lay asleep I did not recognize you, and I was hurrying away. But when you opened your eyes, I saw who you were. But — but"

He did not speak, but kept looking at her.

"It is a great surprise to see you up here," she concluded.

"Why?" he asked.

"Well, I thought you were going to be some sort of a monk. You told me so years ago. But of course you have given up such a foolish idea."

"No," he replied angrily, "I have not given it up. I never shall."

"No?" she said. "I'm sorry."

"Why should you be sorry?"

"Oh! I don't know. I suppose it was only a passing thought. But, of course — every one to his fancy," and he thought he detected a sneer in her voice.

He was angry with her again now, and he felt glad. He would convince her that, although she was the daughter of Fletcher Yorke, the richest man in the Meremeadows district, he stood on a higher platform than she. After all, she was a Protestant, and belonged to a schismatic sect of that order, while he was going to be a priest in the Anglican branch of the great Catholic Church.

"I am here because my Superior commanded me," said Dominic. "I have left the Community for a few days that I may prove to him that the world has no attractions for me."

"Oh! I see," she replied, but in reality she was not sure what he meant.

"I have borne the test of hard discipline, of fasting, of penances," he went on, "now I am undergoing the test of the world. Last night I was at the Spa Theater — today I am come out here on the moors that I may realize how hollow and sinful are the world's amusements."

“And fell asleep over it,” said Maggie, with a laugh. She had not intended to say this, but it escaped her lips before she was aware. She was sorry she had spoken, too, when she saw the flush of mortification and anger rise to his face. Still, there was a certain amount of pleasure in seeing him get angry. She had rather liked him when he had called at her home three or four years before, but now he suggested the prig. She was rather disappointed that the poor, hungry lad whom she had seen at the cemetery gates should become a kind of conceited fanatic, and should boast of his superiority.

“I am sure I wish you every success,” she said, rather patronizingly, “but I must return to my father and mother now. They will be wanting to drive back.”

He did not want her to go, although he felt sure she despised him. He wanted to prove to her — he was not quite sure what.

“Oh! you drove here,” he said, “I hope you enjoyed your drive.”

“Immensely,” she replied, “Good-day. I shall tell my father that I have seen you, and of your plans for the future. He has often wondered what would become of you.”

He felt as he had felt the previous night. This girl made him feel that the life he had been living was unreal. She seemed to regard him with a kind of pity, and the pity angered him. But more than that, she had acted as an evil influence, and had kept him from preaching to the pleasure-seekers at the theater, as the preaching friars of olden time had preached to worldlings. He remembered that back in the time of the Medicis, Savonarola had humbled proud ladies in the city of Florence, and that they, at the monk’s commands, had left their lives of worldly pleasure, and had given themselves to good works. On the previous night she had, unknowing to herself, triumphed over him; but now he would triumph over her — he would make her realize how perilous her position was.

After all, he was only a boy, and painfully ignorant. For the last three years he had been living a life which had had the tendency of stifling a boy’s natural feelings, and of filling his heart with a kind of spiritual pride, which was not far removed from worldly vanity.

“Forgive me, Miss Yorke, but would you mind staying a minute longer?” he said. “I little thought, when I saw you in the Spa Theater last night, that I should meet you today.”

“Oh, you were at the Spa Theater, were you?” she said. “Surely that kind—”

“Yes, I know,” he interrupted, “it was not the kind of place that you would expect to see one whose vocation is to preach against the sins of the world. But I went that I might see the world — see its fascinations, its allurements.”

“And, of course, you saw them?” she said.

“I saw something unspeakably silly,” he replied. “I saw something that degraded the minds of the spectators, and blinded them to the fact that this life is but a passing show, that death is near, and that after death comes eternity. I was sorry to see you. Miss Yorke, laughing at such ribald nonsense.”

For a moment Maggie felt annoyed. Dominic’s rudeness made her want to snub him unmercifully. She infinitely preferred the shabbily dressed boy who years before brought the letter to her father to this prig who put on airs of authority.

“Something tells me,” he went on, “that you are living the life of a worldling, and that you find your pleasure in such scenes.”

“I laughed immoderately,” she replied. “I was nearly as much amused as I am now.”

The girl’s sting silenced him. He wanted to tell her of the danger in which she stood, wanted to show her that as a worldling and as a Dissenter she was angering a just God. But he could say nothing. He felt that she scorned him, that she looked upon him as one who was badly behaved, and ignorant, and foolish. And what was worse, she almost took away his longing to go back to his cell to prepare for his great vocation. Why was it? He felt more than ever that she was an enemy to that life, which to him was the only life worth the living

“Holloa, Maggie, who have you got here?”

It was Fletcher Yorke who, wondering where Maggie had gone, had come around to this side of the hill to find her.

“This is Mr. Dominic Wildthorne,” said Maggie. “Don’t you remember him?”

“Why, so it is,” said Fletcher Yorke. “My word, Dominic, I shouldn’t have known you. You’ve shot up into a young man. You are a bit weedy yet, but in two or three years you’ll be fairly well set up.”

He held out his hand as he spoke, and grasped Dominic’s heartily.

“I’m glad to see you’ve left that Community place, and are clothed and in your right mind again,” went on the Yorkshireman heartily. “What do you do for a living now, my lad?”

Again Dominic felt angry. How dared this purse-proud millionaire speak slightly of his calling? But what was worse, he had no desire to deceive him. He felt he must, however. He saw Maggie’s eyes upon them, and knew that she would tell her father if he did not.

“Oh, well,” said Fletcher Yorke, when he had finished speaking, “I was hoping you’d given up that nonsense, but every man to his liking. Besides, you are young yet, and your eyes will be opened as you get older — that is, if you don’t get blinded altogether. But how did you get here?”

“I walked.”

“Walked! Why, it must be more than a dozen miles. Have you had any lunch?”

“I had some sandwiches about ten o’clock. You see, I breakfasted a little after seven.”

“Ay, and you are hungry now, I’ll warrant. We’ve had our lunch, but there’s plenty left; come along and have something.”

He dragged Dominic along as he spoke, and there, lying on the plateau at the top of the hill, was a clean white cloth, on which he saw a chicken and some ham, and delicious-looking white bread. Dominic wanted to refuse. Somehow he felt that there was something unworthy of his calling in being hungry, and he called to mind that Maggie had been laughing at him. But nature was too strong. The moorland air was keen and appetizing, and the wing of a chicken which Fletcher Yorke carved for him looked tempting beyond words.

“Now, then, here you are,” exclaimed the Yorkshireman heartily. “My word, if you enjoy it as much as I did, you’ll have a good meal.”

Flesh and blood could endure it no longer. He obeyed Fletcher Yorke’s bidding, and partook of a hearty meal.

“There, that’s better,” said the Yorkshireman; “now, how are you going to get back?”

“I’m going to walk.”

“But are you up to it?”

“I’m a little tired, but I think I can manage it.”

“Why not ride back with us? We have room for another, and you can tell me about your life at the ‘Community’ as we go.”

Again he wanted to refuse. He knew that Maggie Yorke despised the life he had been leading; nevertheless, the thought of riding back by her side in the luxurious carriage, into which the coachman was putting the horses, was too tempting. Besides, Mrs. Yorke, to whom he had been introduced, had been very kind to him, and it would seem churlish to refuse.

“Perhaps I shall have an opportunity of proving to her that I am right and she is wrong,” he said to himself as he took his seat by Maggie’s side. Nevertheless, he felt very angry with himself because his desire was to make her think well of him rather than of bringing her to repentance.

9. A Married Man's Views

DOMINIC WILDTHORNE said very little concerning his life at the Community of the Incarnation during the ride back to the town. Somehow the fact that Maggie was sitting by his side hindered him. He had a feeling that she despised him. As she had hindered him from carrying out his purposes on the previous night, so she hindered him from speaking freely of his monastic life now. Besides, he felt tired. He had not been accustomed to long walks, and his jaunt across the moors had utterly wearied him. In addition to this, the comfortable carriage in which he rode felt like a cradle. He had known nothing of such luxuries, and now to ride over the glorious countryside had a tendency to dissipate all other thoughts. Moreover, after a few minutes' conversation, Mr. Fletcher Yorke showed less and less inclination for conversation, so that ere long the party lapsed into silence. One fact, however, he could not help wondering at. It was that Mr. Fletcher Yorke, the rich landlord and mill-owner, should have invited him to ride with them. He reflected that he would not have done this four years before, and therefore a great change must have taken place in himself. The years he had spent in scholarly and refined associations had transformed him from a vagrant lad into a person fit to ride in Fletcher Yorke's carriage. Unimportant as this seemed, it was not without its effect on the lad's mind.

"Are you staying long?" asked the Yorkshireman presently.

"Several days yet," replied Dominic.

"Ah, well, you look pale. I hope this fine air will do you good. We are returning back home tomorrow."

In spite of himself he was disappointed. Why this should be so he could not tell. Even if they had been staying a month, it would not affect him; in all probability he should never see them again. Nevertheless he knew he felt sorry.

As they entered the town, the carriage stopped for a moment on account of passing traffic, and he saw Rosa Perry on the side-walk looking at him.

Before he could raise his hat, however, she had turned her face away, and although he scarcely knew why, Dominic was thankful.

He left the Yorkes at their hotel door, after thanking them heartily. Both Mr. and Mrs. Yorke shook hands with him very kindly, and then he turned to Maggie.

“Are you also going back tomorrow?” he asked.

“Yes.”

“I don’t suppose I shall see you at Meremeadows when I return. I so seldom go out.”

He had no reason for saying this, and he scarcely knew why he spoke.

“You would not be likely to see me if you did,” she replied. “I shall be away at school for another year, and then I shall go to Somerville.”

He could not remember for the moment where or what Somerville was, but he felt as though her words removed them, if possible, farther away from each other. Perhaps she had told him this that he might see how different her life would be from his.

“I shall go back to work,” he said. “I shall study for several years, and then I shall go out on my mission.”

“What is that?” she asked and then went on, “Oh! I had forgotten. You told me you were going to be a sort of preaching monk, like Father Ignatius.”

“Yes,” he said, “You promised to come and hear me preach, didn’t you?”

“Did I?”

“Yes, don’t you remember? You told me to be sure and let you know if I were preaching in Meremeadows, because you wanted to come and hear me.”

“Oh, then, if you’ll let me know, I’ll be sure to come. Good-evening!” And she went into the hotel without another word.

He walked back to the boarding-house like one in a dream. Nothing had happened, and yet he felt as though a great deal had taken place; what, he could scarcely tell. Of one thing he was sure, however: he hated Maggie Yorke. She had been an evil influence in his life the night before, and that day she had showed that she despised him.

At dinner he again found himself beside Rosa Perry.

“I saw you with your grand people this afternoon,” she said.

“How do you know who they are?” asked Dominic.

“Oh, every one here knows about them,” she replied.

“People say that the young lady who sat beside you will be one of the greatest heiresses in England. I had no idea that you knew such people. I can’t say that I think much of her looks, however. As for her clothes, there are shop-girls in Croydon who dress far better.”

“I never noticed,” said Dominic.

“You say so,” said Rosa; “but trust young men not to know what girls wear. Don’t you think you were very rude last night? It isn’t my idea of a young man to take a young lady to a theater, and then leave her in the middle of the play.”

“I’m afraid I was rude,” said Dominic; “but I know so little about such matters.”

“But where have you lived?”

“Always in Yorkshire,” replied Dominic.

Rosa was evidently inclined to be angry with him, but the fact of his riding with the Yorke family that day increased her interest in him. She had seen the Yorke family before, and they had been pointed out to her as among the richest and most important people in Yorkshire; therefore her conclusion that Dominic was “something out of the ordinary” was confirmed.

“What are you doing tomorrow?” she asked presently; “going out riding with your rich friends again?”

“No,” said Dominic.

“If the sea is smooth we are taking a boat and rowing to Hindley Bay for a picnic. There’ll be room in the boat if you would like to go.”

“You are very kind,” said Dominic, “but I have made other plans for tomorrow.”

“Oh! just as you like,” said Rosa petulantly. She was beginning to think that Dominic was a very dull young man. All the same she wished she knew where he was going, and she could not help reflecting that she should look forward to the picnic to Hindley Bay with a great deal more interest if he were coming.

The truth was, Dominic was troubled. Something was wrong. The thought of his vocation did not bring him the same joy as it had brought him two days before. He began to look forward to his work with less joy than before. Tomorrow he would get away into the country again, and examine himself.

The next day was wonderfully fine, and again he went out alone. But he did not turn towards the moors. He chose a road which led through a lovely

valley. Again he was entranced by the beauty of the scene. It was true that it was different from the wild freedom of the moors, but in its way it was just as enchanting. The air was soft and caressing, a tiny river murmured its way to the sea, and the fast yellowing corn-fields bared their bosoms to the shining sun. Here and there was a patch of woodland, while through the openings in the hills he occasionally saw the sweep of the moorland beyond.

In a way he could not realize, he heard the voice of Nature calling him. He was no longer hedged in by rules and regulations. He did not at almost every hour hear a bell calling him to some particular service; he no longer scented the smell of incense. Different influences were at work. For the first time he felt that he was verging on to manhood, and that which had once satisfied him did not satisfy him now. Was he to live his life differently from the way in which other men lived theirs? He thought of the young men who were staying at the same boarding-house as himself. Their outlook on life was different from his. They would take to themselves wives, they would have homes of their own, and see their children grow up around them, while he was voluntarily accepting a life of celibacy. He would never know of the joys of love or of home. It had been pleasant to him to watch the lovers together, and he had noticed how happy they were. But he could never be happy in that way. Not that he had the slightest thought of love himself, but the feeling might come some day, and then he would be bound by the vows he proposed to take. He remembered every word of the “office” admitting him into the full brotherhood of the Community of the Incarnation. Even now the letters stood out before his mind’s eye as they stood in the rules and regulations of the Community:

The Vow of Chastity

SUPERIOR: Wilt thou take a solemn vow to continue in the Holy Estate of Chastity during the term of — years?

NOVICE: ✠ In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. — I vow that I will observe the Holy Estate of Chastity during the term of years. So help me God!

Moreover, he knew that he was destined to take a life vow, not only of Chastity, but of Poverty and Obedience. Each of the three vows would be binding upon him for life, for he felt that he would be cursed indeed if, after putting his hand to the plow, he turned back.

Bearing this in mind, it would be impossible for him to think of love and of home. He was to be a preaching monk or friar, going around the country like those of old, bringing back the people to repentance.

A few days ago he had gloried in the thought, but now, although he had barely seen a glimpse of the world, the desire for love and home had come to him.

Presently he was far away in the country. Not a soul was to be seen, nothing spoke to him but the babbling brook, the hum of insects, and the soft summer winds. The day was cloudless, and the sheltered valley became very hot. He jumped over a fence, and threw himself beneath the shade of a great tree.

He was not long left alone. He had not been there more than a few minutes before he saw a man coming towards him, followed by a sheep-dog. The man appeared to be about forty years of age; he had the appearance of a small working farmer, but seemed in no great hurry.

"I s'pose you know you are trespassin'?" he said to Dominic as he came up.

"I did not think of it," said Dominic, rising. "I felt hot and tired, and so came under the shade of this tree; but I will —"

"Oh, noa, tha needn' be in such a hurry! I didn' msin owt. Set down agean ef yo want to. Aw'm noan so throng mysen. The truth is, I spoke because I war a bit lonely and wanted to talk."

"It's very quiet here," said Dominic,

"Ay, it is. It's our time for lakin' as yo may say. Us 'ave got the hay in, and the corn'll noan be fit to cut for anuther week."

"Is this your farm?"

"Ay. Yen's my house. You can just see it through the trees,"

"It's very beautiful," said Dominic.

"It's noan so bad," said the farmer; "but farmin's noan what it used to be."

"Do you mean that you can't make your farm pay?"

"I main nowt o' t' sort. But there 's no brass made out o' farming now, as you may say,"

"But you make a living?"

"Ay, I mak' a livin', but when you've nobbut seventy acre, and you've got a wife and six bairns, it tak's a bit o' doin'. Ay, lad, it must be grand to be young and free like you."

“What do you mean?” asked Dominic. The man struck him as being fairly intelligent, and he at least knew the joys of love and of home.

“I mean this,” said the man. “Yo’re young, yo’ve no cares, no responsibilities. You come when you like, and go when you like.”

“For the present,” said Dominic musingly.

“For the present?” queried the farmer. “Yo doan’t main as how yo are agoin’ to tie yourself up to any one, do yo?”

“Why, what if I did?”

“I think yo’d be a fooil.”

“Why?” asked Dominic.

“‘Cause ther’s nowt i’ this world worth givin’ up yer liberty for, that’s why,” said the Yorkshireman. somewhat impatiently.

“Nothing?” said Dominic eagerly. He had become interested in the man’s conversation.

“Nowt,” said the man, and his voice was almost stern. “I’ll tell tha, lad, the saicret of life’s happiness, as I’ve made it out, and as I’ve worked among these fields, is liberty. If I wer thy age agean, I’d never give it up.”

“But have you given it up?” asked Dominic.

“Are you not free to come where you like, and go where you like?”

“There’s not a married man i’ England who’s free in that way, mester. Directly a man geets wed, he puts chains upon his legs, ay, and heavy, strong chains too.”

“And yet you look well and strong and happy.”

“There’s noan so much matter wi’ my aitin, as I know on,” said the farmer.

“And surely, with a wife and six children, you are happy?”

“Put you in my place, and see if you’d be,” was the answer.

“Then you don’t believe that the married life is the happiest life?”

The farmer looked at him keenly. “You’re noan very old yet,” he said; “nobbut one or two and twenty anyhow, but thou lookst as if thou’d brains, and has kept thy eyes open. Now tell me this: Didst ‘a in all thy life ever meet wi’ a bachelor who wished he’d ever got wed?”

“I don’t quite follow you.”

“Noa. Well, I’ll put it this way. I’m forty-two, and I’ve knocked about a goodish bit, and jawed with a lot of people. Now then, I’ve met wi’ scores and scores o’ married men who wished they’d never got wed, but I never

met wi' an unwedded man who wished he was wed. Now you can draw your own conclusions."

"But a man marries a woman because he loves her, doesn't he?"

"Ay, or he thinks he does, I s'poase; but what then?"

"Why, isn't it love that makes happiness?"

"Ah, lad, when tha geets my age, thou'll know that lasses of twenty or thereabouts are different from women who are gettin' on in life."

"How?"

"Why, a lass of twenty or so, when tha goes courtin', 'as no temper; she's as sweet as sugar, and butter'll noan melt in her mouth' But wait till she's got bairns and thou can do nowt to please 'er,"

"But they are not all like that. Some are kind and loving all through their lives,"

"Are they? Weel, it may be soa, but I've noan met that soart yet. But it's not only that; yer liberty's gone the moment you git wed. Look 'ere; yore 'ere for your holidays, I reckon?"

"I suppose so."

"When yo geet back to where you are staying, will anybody ax where you've been, or why you're late?"

"No one will care enough to ask."

"Exactly. Yo're free. But geet wed, and you've got to give an account of where you've been and what you've been doin'. You're away from your wark for a holiday. But a married man can noan 'ave a holiday."

"Oh, come now!"

"A married man can noan 'ave a holiday," repeated the Yorkshireman sternly, "unless he takes t' missis and bairns wi' 'im, and where's the holiday in that?"

"But surely men go for a holiday without their wives?"

"Think that over twice, youngster. If a chap goes for a holiday wi'out his missis, he knows two things: he knows he'll be thinkin' oal time what a mean cuss he is, and he knows, too, that when he geets 'ome she'll be always throwin' it up i' his teeth."

"You are joking."

"Am I? Well, I'm telling tha now. Not as I expect tha'll heed what I say, but it's true, all t' same. There's nowt i' this warld as is worth givin' up thy liberty for, and geetin' wed means givin' it up."

“There are other ways by which you can give up your liberty,” said Dominic musingly.

“Ay, then a man’s a fool if he gives it up,” said the Yorkshireman. “It’s t’ grandest thing I knows on i’ life, is liberty, and whatever he geets i’stead ‘ll noan pay for it. Ay, but thou’lt tak’ no heed to what I’ve tould thee.”

“I think I shall,” said Dominic; “but you say that’s your house? I wonder if you can give me a glass of water to drink with my sandwiches?”

“Ay, tha can have a bucketful. Coom on.”

He led the way to the house which Dominic had dimly seen through the trees, but before they reached it the boy heard the shrill voice of a woman.

“Uzziah, where art a’?”

“I’m comin’, mother.”

“Ay, thou’rt allus comin’, and thou’rt allus late. Here’s dinner spoilin’ all ‘cause o’ thee. But who hast a’ goot theer?”

“It’s a chap as wants a drop o’ watter with his sandwiches, and I tould him he cud ha’ soom.”

“Ay, and tha did’n ax’n to ‘ave a bit o’ dinner wi’ os, I’ll warrant.”

“Noa, I did’n know that—.”

“Ay, I’ll warrant tha did’n; but come on, t’ puddin will be ‘eavy as ‘tis.”

Dominic sat down to dinner with the family, which was characterized by coarse plenty. With him the farmer’s wife was affable and kind, but with her husband she was different. He stayed at the house a couple of hours before continuing his journey.

“What might your wark be?” asked the farmer, as he accompanied him across two meadows towards the main road.

“I’m studing for the priesthood,”

“What? Art a Roman Catholic?”

“No, I belong to the Church of England.”

“Then yo’re at college?”

“I’m in what you would call a monastery.”

“You main that there’s no wimmen there, and you can stay quiet in your cell.”

“Yes, I suppose so.”

“Ay, I envy tha, lad, I do, for sure I’d give summat if I could just ‘ave six months quiet, I would.”

Dominic laughed.

The Yorkshireman looked at him steadily.

"I reckon thou'lt mak' a poor monk," he said presently; "and mayhap thou'lt kick ower the traces and want to geet wed."

"No, I never shall. I'm going to take the vows."

"Ay, weel, I tell thee my experience. The only way to get on wi' women is to be at their beck and call always, and give them their own way i' everything. And remember another thing, lad: liberty's grandest thing i' t' world,"

Dominic made his way back to the boarding-house that night in a somewhat altered frame of mind. It was true he could not help laughing as he remembered the expression on the farmer's face when his wife lectured him on his delinquencies. It was irresistibly funny to see how the great, strong Yorkshireman feared the little woman who lectured him; nevertheless it affected his thoughts.

"What would that man give for the silence of the cloister?" he said to himself as he tramped along.

"And what a hell it must be to be for ever burdened with a nagging, shrewish wife! He has taken no vow except the marriage vow, and yet he can hardly call his soul his own. Adam was in Paradise until the woman came into the Garden of Eden. Besides, have not the great Fathers of the Church repeatedly declared that woman is man's chief enemy? One thing he felt sure of, more even than he had felt it two days before: he hated Maggie Yorke. It was she who had turned him aside from his purpose in the theater, it was she who scorned the vocation to which he felt himself called.

Yes, undoubtedly the less he had to say to the opposite sex the better. Rosa Perry was vain and shallow and silly. All her pleasures were poor and worldly. As for Maggie Yorke, she lessened his passion for his work, she made him long for the pleasures of the world, and he was glad he hated her.

He spent the full time Father Townley had mentioned to him at the watering-place, but he was glad it was over. He wanted to get back to his life of study and prayer, he wanted to prepare himself for his calling. When the last day of his "testing time" came, he rejoiced because he felt as eager as ever for the vocation, and he dreamed continually of the glad time when he, having taken his vows and being prepared for his work, could go up and down England, like the preaching monks and friars of old, when he would win the people from heresy, and schism, and sin, back to the one true Catholic Church.

Among the most pleasant of his dreams, however, was the one of the time when he should preach his first sermon in the great church at Mere-meadows, and when Maggie Yorke would, according to her promise, come and hear him.

10. The Years Pass By

IF DOMINIC WILDTHORNE had any doubts about his vocation prior to his return to his old life, they were quickly dispelled. Had the Yorkshire farmer enlarged upon the joys and the glory of liberty? Father Townley had made him feel that the bondage which he contemplated was far more glorious. Almost immediately on his return the Superior had preached in his hearing on the text, "I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus." In this sermon the Superior, while admitting man's innate love of liberty, urged that absolute liberty as men understood it was impossible, but showed how true liberty was only realized by becoming a prisoner of Christ, and that having accepted His bonds, the highest kind of liberty became man's possession. He pictured Paul without home, without wife or children, without riches, owning no allegiance to any one, save his Divine Master, going from land to land, and from city to city proclaiming Christ. It was a life of hardship and toil; yet he rejoiced in his bonds, and despised the allurements of the world. Every word inspired the young novice's heart; and as the preacher dwelt on the great apostle's triumphant joys, telling how his bonds became his glory and his crown, the last vestige of doubt seemed removed. He wanted no liberty save that which Paul had, he longed for the bonds which made the apostle a prisoner. Thus when the day came for him to be admitted a brother of the Community, he rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

He never forgot that solemn service, when his admission took place. The Superior sat on the north side of the altar vested in alb and violet cope, and as he was brought from the nave of the church by the senior brother present, his heart was filled with a great throbbing joy. The time was immediately before the Antiphon of the Magnificat at Solemn Vespers. In the church were the brothers of the Community.

He knelt at the feet of Father Townley, and heard him say:
"What dost thou require?"

His voice was hoarse with emotion as he made his response, nevertheless he spoke plainly.

"I desire to be admitted as a Brother in the Community of the Incarnation."

"Brother Dominic Wildthorne desires to be admitted as a Brother in our Community. Are you willing that I should examine him before you, and proceed to admit him to our Community?" said the Superior.

And the Brothers around him replied:

"We are willing."

"Dost thou fully know that the Religious Life is a solemn espousal of Jesus Christ; and that the Consummation of the Bridal tie with the Lord will be expected of thee, when thou shalt take thy final vows?"

"All this I know full well."

"The Bridegroom would have his spouse leave his father, mother, brothers, sisters, and relations, and cleave unto Him. Canst thou do this?"

There seemed to be a tone of warning in the Superior's voice as he asked this question, but he replied boldly:

"In His strength I leave them, in order that I may be joined to the Lord, and be one in spirit with Him."

Then all the Brethren said aloud:

"Thanks be to God." This was followed by the Antiphon.

"Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, and shall the King have pleasure in thy beauty."

Then said the Superior:

"Why dost thou desire to leave the world, its permitted pleasure and love of friends?"

And he replied according to the office:

"In order that I may give myself more truly to the Lord, as the apostle says: *'That I may be without carefulness for the fashions of this world'*; also that I may give up myself more truly to the work of Jesus, by working for the salvation of souls under the Rule of the Community of the Incarnation."

Upon this the Antiphon followed:

"The Master is come and calleth for thee, Alleluia; the Spirit and the Bride say Come, Alleluia."

"Dost thou desire entirely to renounce and forsake the world and its pleasures?"

"I do, for the love of Christ constraineth me."

And so on to the end of the office, until he heard with joy the Superior say:

“Know that thou hast made a good profession; to few is it given to leave all for Christ’s sake, and to choose the Heavenly Bridegroom. Thank thou the Lord who hast called thee.”

“Thanks be to God,” he replied.

After they had all knelt down, and sang the Miserere, the great Litany followed, and then after other suffrages he took his vows.

In addition to the vow of chastity he took the vow of *voluntary* poverty, promising to possess nothing during a given time. Following this was the vow of Obedience, in which he said:

“✠ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. I vow unquestioning obedience to the rule of the Community of the Incarnation, and to the instructions of the Superior in detail, *as unto the voice of God Himself*, so help me God.”

After this he signed the written form of his vows, and going to the altar, he in his heart presented them to God on his knees. When this was done, the cord of Chastity, the Habit of Poverty, and the Tippet of Holy Obedience were given him. After this were certain petitions and responses, and then all joined in the following prayer:

“O most sweet, and most chaste Jesus, great and spotless Son of the ever pure and Holy Mary, receive in Thine own embrace Thy servant, Dominic Wildthorne, our Brother, who has now by solemn vows unto the Community espoused himself to Thee. . . . Confirm him in his holy vocation, and that, his term of his novitiate safely past, he may devote himself by *life-long* vows to Thee.”¹

When Dominic retired to his cell that night, he felt that the desires of his heart had been fulfilled. He was a brother of the Community, and he would now be able to devote himself to the work of preparing for his great vocation. To be a preaching monk; to go from town to town, and village to village, as the monks of old had gone; to be one of those who should help to bring back the Church of England to the great mother Church, to restore England to the condition in which it was when the Church ruled, — what could he desire more?

He was glad now that Father Townley had insisted on his going away for a few days. It had given him an opportunity to prove himself worthy of his calling. He did not hate the world, it simply had no allurements for him. He was glad he had gone to the Spa Theater: his visit had opened his eyes to his glorious opportunities. It had showed him also that the great enemies to

a man's soul were women. But for Maggie Yorke, he would have delivered his message. It was she who had made him dumb. Well, perhaps it was well on this occasion that he had not spoken; he was not yet prepared. Nevertheless, the incident made him realize that if he were to be true to his vows, he must shut women out of his heart altogether. It was for him to live for the Church, and therefore he must not look at women's faces; he must drive all thought of them from his life.

He had no doubts. He had entered the House of the Community of the Incarnation while his character was unformed and while his beliefs were in a liquid condition, and the years he had spent there had molded him according to the desired pattern. He had learnt to look at everything through the eyes of the Superior, and knowing little or nothing of the thoughts of the world, there seemed nothing for him but to accept everything without question. And this he did. The great overmastering thought in his mind was that he was to be a preaching monk, and to this end all his energies must be bent. His great business in life was to win men for the Church, and to help to heal the Church's divisions. For all the sects outside what he called the Church, his feelings were made up of anger, of contempt, and of pity. Schism was a form of sin which must be fought to the death, and to which no quarter must be given. Meanwhile he had renounced the world. He had no money, he wanted none, and he believed that the estate of poverty was a holy estate. He had no will, save the will of the Superior, and the Superior's commands were as the commands of God. The Church was the depository of God's power, and the expression of God's thoughts. It is true that at times he thought of the great lines of cleavage which existed between the Anglican and the Latin Church, but he had a vague feeling that the mistakes made by the Reformation would be remedied. It was for him to accept the position taken up at the Community of the Incarnation with unfaltering faith, and seek to undo the wrongs of the past.

Thus, during the next five years he gave himself to eager study, always with the same thought in his mind. No member of the Community was more obedient to discipline, more fervent in his devotions, or more faithful to the beliefs of the brotherhood than he. Every power he possessed, he cultivated with the utmost care. He possessed a natural facility for speech, and he carefully studied the arts of the orator. In reading the life of Savonarola, he saw how the great preacher's close study of philosophy aided him in his preaching, and he reveled in mystical philosophy. He saturated his mind

with the stories of the Church's past victories, and committed to memory long extracts from the sermons of the great preaching fathers. It was to the past that the world must look for the truth, and not the present. Thus Chrysostom, Gregory, St. Ambrose, St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. Hilary, became his models. The Church became his passion, while the world had to be subjugated to the will of the Church.

When the Superior insisted on his taking a vacation, he went to a Church of England monastery in Wales, and there he found fellowship with men who were absolutely ignorant of the discoveries of science, of criticism, or of scholarship.

The head of this monastery was a preaching monk, who went around England in a monk's garb, and a shaven crown. It was true the Church of England refused to open some of its buildings to this man, nevertheless he became in many respects Dominic's living hero.

Thus, by the time Dominic was twenty-four years of age, all his thoughts, hopes, and ideals were shaped by his years of association and training. The twelfth century was more real than the twentieth.

The one great thing in the world was the Church, as a great ecclesiastical institution; the great need of the world was the acceptance of the Church's sacraments and the Church's teaching.

When his course of training came to an end, and when he had been ordained, Father Townley called him into his study.

"It is time you commenced your work," said the older man kindly.

"I hope I am ready," he replied.

"Do you look forward to it with joy?"

"I look forward to nothing else," he replied.

"I want to prepare you for great disappointments," said the Superior.

"What do you mean?" asked Dominic.

"I mean this," replied Father Townley. "You are soon to commence your actual work in the world. You know little or nothing of it. Your life has been the life of the cloister and the study, rather than that of the world. In your boyhood you knew nothing of the real world, and you have not learned it here. But you will soon know now. I have been arranging an itinerary for you."

"Yes?" said Dominic eagerly.

The Superior looked at him steadily, and tears came into his eyes. He had taken to Dominic from the first, and as the years passed away he had

learned to love him. He was more than twenty-four years old now; but the older man knew that he was ignorant of the world's life, its struggles, and its temptations. Dominic had seen life from the outside, and not from within. Moreover, the older man had the gift of imagination, and he felt sure that lying latent in Dominic's nature were longings and passions which would one day be aroused. His great, dark eyes, his sensitive mouth, the tremulous lips, all suggested the hidden fires of the heart. By-and-by, when he came face to face with the world's thoughts and problems and questions, when he had to wrestle with men's real difficulties, then would come the testing time. At present all seemed easy and plain; to the youth's enthusiasm everything seemed possible; but when he came into contact with the cultured agnosticism and the indifferent skepticism which would meet him at every hand, all would be changed.

Besides, other questions would naturally rise in his mind, questions concerning; but he would not trouble about that. Had not Dominic's whole training gone to prepare him for these? He had done his best, and the issues must be left in the hands of Him whom he believed smiled upon his work.

"Yes," he said presently, "I have arranged your itinerary, and I have decided that you shall begin your work here at Meremeadows, that you shall preach at the Church of St. Michael and All Angels next Thursday evening."

Dominic was speechless for a moment. A kind of awe possessed him.

"Yes, Father," he said presently.

"Look," continued Father Townley with a smile, "I have gone so far as to have bills printed. Here is one."

Dominic looked at it like one afraid. Yes, there was his name in large type —

THE REVEREND FATHER DOMINIC WILDTHORNE.

He never felt so insignificant in his life. How could he stand in the pulpit of the Church of St. Michael and preach! But the feeling of awe was followed by one of joy. At last his dream would be realized. The vision of years had been to see himself in the pulpit of the great church at Meremeadows, and now the vision was to become a reality. Again he saw the crowded seats in the dim church, again he heard the chant of the choir, and then he saw himself climb the pulpit stairs and deliver his message. At last! At last!

“You’ve prepared your sermon, I expect?” said Father Townley, with a smile.

“Yes, yes— that is Father, I should like you to read it before I deliver it. And — and I think I shall have to rewrite it.”

“Very well, I will read it; but you will remember that no true preacher was ever tied down to the written word. St. Dominic would never have swayed men as the wind sways the treetops had he been fettered with a manuscript.”

“Oh, no! Every word shall burn into my brain and heart before I climb the pulpit stairs,” said Dominic eagerly. “I will try and prove worthy, Father; but I am very young, and I — I — am afraid to trust myself.”

“I quite understand. Well, after I have heard you, we will talk again on these things; meanwhile you will want to be alone.”

Dominic went away to his cell like one in a dream. Although he had fondly hoped that his first public sermon might be delivered at Meremeadows, he had never really believed that he would be so honored. And now to see his name in print! to see himself advertised as the preacher in St. Michael’s Church! Oh, the joy of it!

He took the manuscript of the sermon he had been for months secretly preparing, and began to read. Ah, that first sermon! “He that is ashamed to confess Me before men, him also will I be ashamed to confess before My Father and His Holy Angels.”

That was the text that he had brooded over, and this text was to be the basis of the sermon that was to commence his public ministry, and help to establish the Kingdom of God. It was all very plain to him. To confess Christ was to confess His Church. The Church was Christ’s body. Therefore he who was ashamed to confess his allegiance to Christ’s Church as manifested in the Church’s sacraments and doctrines — on him would fall the awful doom.

Therefore all atheists, all schismatics —

He was reminded of Maggie Yorke. He remembered the promise he had made to her when he had gone to her father’s house soon after he had first met her at the cemetery gates. It was all very unreal then, and it was but little more real when he had met her years later away on the wild moors, and had renewed his promise. But now it was a reality. His name stood out in capital letters on the bill which was spread out before him. He had received the bishop’s license to preach, and was different from that ignorant evange-

list who had so aroused his anger long years before. Yes, and he would be faithful, he would utter the truth with no uncertain sound.

And she would be there. She had promised to come and hear him when he preached at Meremeadows, and he had promised to tell her when this event should take place. And there was no difficulty in doing this. All he had to do was to see that she received a copy of one of these bills.

He had not seen her since that day on which they had met on the moors. She had ridiculed him then, but she would not ridicule him now. He would make her tremble as Savonarola made the proud ladies of Florence tremble, as St. Paul made Felix tremble in the days when the light of the Christian day was first dawning.

He read the sermon through for the hundredth time. Yes, there was no flaw in his reasoning. It was built on eternal truth, and she would be convinced.

Almost unconsciously he found himself wondering what she would be like. More than five years had passed since he had seen her last. She was about seventeen then; now she must be twenty-two. She had told him that she was going back to school for a year, and then was taking up her residence in Somerville. He had since realized that Somerville was an Oxford College for women. Well, no doubt she would be very learned and very clever; but he was sure of his ground, and the Superior would read his sermon before he delivered it. Besides, was it not said that God had chosen the weak of this world to confound the mighty?

All this showed that Dominic was, even yet, only an inexperienced boy, with a boy's thoughts, and a boy's dreams. By-and-by his eyes would be opened; but at present he had no doubts nor fears.

On the following Thursday he found his way to the Church of St. Michael, feeling that the great day of his life had come.

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1. The above are literal extracts from the office of admission into one of the orders of the Church of England.↩

11. St. Michael's Church

MAGGIE YORKE sat at the piano in the drawing-room of Barstone after dinner on a September evening. Maggie was alone, for the simple reason that neither her father nor her brother entered the drawing-room except under compulsion. As for Mrs. Yorke, she was generally found near her husband. Maggie was dreaming. It was true her fingers moved quietly over the keys, but she had no music before her. Neither was she playing from memory. She was simply letting her fingers fall where they would, and almost unconsciously her dream found expression in music. Had an acute listener been there, he would have thought of Browning's poem, "Wanting is What?" For while her music was not in a minor key, it suggested something plaintive. It told neither of contentment nor triumph.

And yet she believed herself perfectly happy. It was true she was a little tired. The September day had been warm, and somewhat sultry, and Maggie had been for a long walk. Perhaps that was why, after dinner, she had found her way to the drawing-room, and sat before the open piano. Perhaps there was another reason for the want of triumph or contentment in her music. She had come to a kind of transition period in her life. She had left Oxford only three months before, after having spent four years at Somerville College. While there she had a purpose in life. She wanted to take first-class honors, and while she did not absent herself from the festivities of the old University town, she worked hard, and was finally rewarded by occupying a place of distinction in the examination lists. Maggie had specialized in history, and had left the University laden with honors. Her college was justly proud of her, and the Yorkshire newspapers were not slow in giving publicity to the fact that the only daughter of Fletcher Yorke had had a distinguished University career.

For a time all this made Maggie very elated. She saw with delight that her father and mother gloried in her achievements, and it seemed to her that the cup of her happiness was full. She had thoroughly enjoyed her holiday in Germany, accompanied as she had been by her father and mother, to-

gether with two of her best friends. After her return, however, her friends had naturally gone to their own homes, and she had to settle down to the quietness of her home life.

She did not find this irksome, but she realized that something was wanting. That was natural. All of us, consciously or unconsciously, demand some definite object for which to live. While Maggie was working for her degree, or rather in order that she might pass the examinations which would have qualified her for her degree had she been a man, she had a definite aim, but now she had none. She had passed the examinations with distinction, and there seemed nothing more to be done. She was not even entitled to the degree for which she had worked. For, to the disgrace of our older Universities, women, while allowed to compete with men, are not allowed to wear all the honors they have won. What tangible or sufficient reason there is for this has not yet been made clear to the mind of man, any more than why a woman who is fully qualified may not practice at the Bar. But as prejudice is stronger than common-sense, women have to wait for their rights.

Not that Maggie troubled so much about this. She was conscious that she had won her honors, although the purblindness of officialdom tried to keep some of them back from her; but she did have a kind of feeling that she had come to a new phase of her existence, and that something was wanting.

“Mags.”

“Yes.”

“Come in here. What are you mooning alone there for?”

It was her brother George who spoke.

“Why should I come in there?”

“Why, to behold us in our beauty.”

“My dear George, I shall be able to see neither father, mother, Fletcher nor you for tobacco smoke. Besides, I’ve got a new dress on.”

“Exactly; we want to feast our eyes on such a wondrous creation,” said young Fletcher. “It is fearfully and wonderfully made!”

“So are you, Fletcher,” retorted Maggie. “But I have pity on my dress. If I come in there it will smell of tobacco smoke for a week. Your cigars are horribly strong.”

“Maggie, if you are not educated up to the point of appreciating good Havana smoke, father has wasted all the money he spent on sending you to Oxford.”

“Come on, Mags,” said Fletcher Yorke senior, “it’s not often I have an evening home, let us all spend it together.”

Maggie found her way into a room which was designated “the lounge,” the chief characteristics of which were the number of easy chairs which were scattered around the room, and the perfume of tobacco.

“The air is fairly thick,” she said, as she entered.

“With incense,” said young Fletcher. “My dear girl, do try and appreciate your privileges. In my opinion this incense is far more sensible than that burnt at St. Michael’s.”

“What do you know about St. Michael’s?”

“Oh! I went there last Sunday. Of coirse you know there has been a row about the Community of the Incarnation. The papers have been calling it ‘The new route to Rome,’ and I hear that the member for Gilchrist is going to kick up a row about it when Parliament meets. One of the papers suggests that the place is subsidized from Rome, so I thought I’d go.”

“And did you enjoy it?”

“Oh! it was a very fair copy of the services at the Roman Catholic chapel. As far as I can see, there was nothing to choose. As far as I could judge, all the vestments were copied from Rome; the church fairly reeked of incense, while the sermon might have been preached in one of the chapels at St. Peter’s by the Pope’s own chaplain.”

At that moment there was a knock at the door, and a servant entered, bringing the letters which had arrived by the last post.

“Any for me, dad?” asked Maggie.

“Only something with a halfpenny stamp, my dear,” replied Fletcher Yorke.

Maggie did not trouble to open the envelope.

“I think the postal regulations are a nuisance,” she said. “Whenever I see anything with a halfpenny stamp it loses interest.”

“It may be a dressmaker’s advertisement,” suggested George.

“Dressmakers know better than to send their communications in such an unattractive way,” she replied.

“Their communications may correspond with the dresses,” suggested young Fletcher.

“How dare you insinuate that Mags’ dresses are unattractive?” laughed George.

“I decline to discuss my dress,” said Maggie; “that is, with persons who have no sense of the beautiful,” she added. “But to return to my dislike to halfpenny stamps. When you go into Parliament, Fletcher, I hope you’ll bring about a reform.”

“My dear girl,” said Fletcher, “you are not a student of philosophy. It is not the stamp that makes the difference, it is the fact that the thing is open. There’s no mystery about it. The one thing a woman loves is the thing that’s closed. It suggests mystery. That’s why nine-tenths of the congregation at St. Michael’s were made up of women. The incense, the genuflecting, and the whole atmosphere of the place suggests mystery. That’s the secret of the power of this kind of thing over the women. Men in the main laugh at it, but women are attracted by it. They are impressed by the idea that the officiating priest has some mysterious power, otherwise they would find no interest in it. They don’t dare to find out what the mystery is, but they are impressed by the incense, and all the rest of it.”

“I think it is a shame that such things should be allowed in the Church of England,” remarked Mrs. Yorke, speaking for the first time; “don’t you, Fletcher?” And she turned towards her husband.

“The wonder to me is that it has any attraction,” remarked the Yorkshireman. “I think there is something in what young Fletcher says. Not only women love mystery, but men are nearly as bad. This afternoon, as I was coming through the town, I saw a crowd of people gathered around a kind of cheap Jack sort of fellow, who had a box, concerning which he made a great deal of fuss. The people seemed to be very anxious to know what was inside. So the fellow, who had been doing all he knew to increase this anxiety, told them that if they would throw five shillings on the box, he would open it, and let them see. Well, in two minutes sixty pennies were thrown on the box. After the cheap Jack had carefully counted them, he put them in his pocket, and prepared to open the box. You never saw such a look of eagerness as there was upon the faces of the people. They crowded around so close that the fellow had hardly room to move. One guessed one thing, another guessed another, but all seemed sure that there was something wonderful.”

“Well, did he open the box?” asked young Fletcher.

“Yes, he opened it.”

“And what was in it?”

“Guess.”

“Oh! a white rat, or something of that sort,” suggested young Fletcher.

“Oh, no! some hocus-pocus,” said George.

“What do you say, Maggie?”

“I’ll give it up. Tell us.”

“The box was empty.”

“Empty?”

“There was absolutely nothing in it. But it just shows what people are. Create a mystery, and you can do almost anything.”

“I think such things are shameful,” said Mrs. Yorke, “and I wonder that you, Fletcher, being a magistrate, didn’t have the fellow taken up for swindling.”

“I did think of it,” replied Mr. Yorke; “but after all, it served the people right for being such fools. Besides,” he added whimsically, “I am not sure that I didn’t throw on a penny myself.”

At this there was general laughter, excepting only Mrs. Yorke, who felt quite scandalized.

“I wonder what has become of that boy whom we met on the moors some years ago?” said Mrs. Yorke at length. “He was studying to be a preaching monk, he said.”

“I expect he’s a full-blown priest by this time,” said Mr. Yorke. “He was shaping that way when we saw him last. I’ve never seen nor heard of him since then. It’s a pity, for I believe the boy had the makings of a man in him.”

“He was a sort of a fanatical prig that day,” said Maggie with some asperity.

“Let’s hope he’ll come to his senses,” said Fletcher Yorke, who had all the practical Yorkshireman’s contempt for what he called “church millinery.”

Meanwhile Maggie opened the envelope which she had been listlessly holding in her hand. As she took out the enclosure she almost gave a start.

“Here’s an answer to your question, father,” she said. “It has come in my halfpenny-stamp letter.”

“What is it?”

“It is a bill announcing that next Thursday, being the feast of St. Michael and All Angels, there will be a special service at St. Michael’s Church, and that the preacher will be the Reverend Father Dominic Wildthorne.”

For a few seconds there was a silence.

"I little thought," said Fletcher Yorke presently, "when we saw that poor lad crying at the cemetery gates, and taken off by Father Trouville, that he would turn out that way. If I had, I'd a brought him back myself, and given him some honest work in the mill."

"You are bigoted, father," said his son Fletcher. "After all, those fellows have done a great deal of good, and this chap may do far more good as an Incarnation Father than as a weaver. Besides, bigoted as you are, it has come out since that you gave them land to extend their buildings."

"Ay, and I've never been sure I did right," said the Yorkshireman quietly.

"I'm going to hear him," said Maggie. "Will you come with me, Fletcher and George?"

"Thanks, no, we've engagements that night," replied the young men with a laugh.

"Won't you come, then, father?" asked Maggie. "I know it's no use asking mother to go."

"Nay, lass," said her father, "That kind of thing is nothing in my line."

"If you go, you must take Selina with you," said Mrs. Yorke; "but for my own part, I would not encourage such popery by going near the place."

When Maggie went to bed that night she read the bill again, and then she recalled the fact that long years before he had promised to tell her when he preached at Meremeadows, while she had promised to go and hear him. She had never imagined at the time that such a thing would ever come to pass, neither had she paid any attention to it since. Now, however, as she sat alone in her room, the memory of the day when the wistful-eyed boy spoke to her about his longings and hopes came vividly before her mind. He had asked her what kind of men she admired, and she had told him that she admired those who became leaders of men, and made others obey their will. She remembered how his eyes had flashed as she had spoken, and how he had said that he meant to be a man like that.

The bill before her seemed a strange commentary upon the boy-and-girl conversation. Something like ten years had passed away, and he had arrived at a man's estate, and instead of becoming a leader of men, he had become a kind of Church of England monk, who she imagined would be bloodless and characterless. He promised to be a sort of ecclesiastical prig when she had seen him on the moors, and she had no doubt but that he had fulfilled the promise.

During Maggie's sojourn at Oxford she had removed further and further from anything like admiration of the ecclesiastical. The college in which she had lived was strictly undenominational, and she had come into contact with people of all sorts of theological views. But more, she had made a special study of history, which study had made it impossible for her to admire those of Dominic's way of thinking.

Still she determined to go to St. Michael's Church. She had some curiosity about the preacher. The night when she had first seen him at the cemetery gates, nearly ten years before, had been impressed upon her mind. She had often thought since of the moans she had heard, and of the tone of the boy's voice when he had told her father that he had that day been to his father's funeral.

Therefore, on the night in question she found her way to St. Michael's Church. As she walked along, she heard the bell ringing for the service, and she wondered whether Dominic would be one who would dare to think for himself, or whether he would be simply an echo of those who were at the head of his Order.

It was quite early when she entered the building, and very few were present. Moreover, she judged from the slow way in which the chairs were filled that there would not be a large congregation. She was rather glad of this than otherwise, for the simple reason that she disliked crowds when she went to church. Where there was a crowd there was usually a lack of quiet thoughtfulness. And Maggie wanted to be quiet. She was glad she had come early; it gave her an opportunity of taking note of the architecture of the church; it also allowed the restful atmosphere of the building to take possession of her. In a way the dimly lighted building affected her. There was something reposeful, something worshipful in everything. And yet there was a sense of unreality in it all. Incense had evidently been used freely on some recent occasion, and she was reminded unpleasantly of some of the churches she had visited on the Continent. Indeed, but for her knowledge of the fact that she was in a Church of England, declared by the Prayer-book to be purified from the "abominations of Rome," she would have fancied herself in a Papist church. The old Puritan severity which had obtained after the English Revolution was nowhere in evidence. Everything that could be done had been done to destroy the idea of those Protestant beliefs on which the Church of England was supposed to be founded.

Presently the hour for the commencement of the service arrived, and the choir and clergy entered the church. Again Maggie reflected that she was no longer participating in the quiet but dignified Church service, a service which, in spite of her Puritan upbringing, always appealed to her as worshipful and reverent. Rather it was an undignified copy of a semi-pagan ceremonial, which, whatever it might seem to others, was to her tawdry and artificial. The hymns they sung, too, struck to her a false note. Although she had often attended Church services, she could not remember having heard them before.

Angel of peace, may Michael to our dwelling,
Down from high heaven, in mighty calmness come.
Breathing all peace, and hideous war dispelling
To hell's dark gloom.
Angel of night, may Gabriel, swift descending,
Far from our gates our ancient foe repel.
And, as of old, o'er Zacharias bending.
In temples dwell.

The boys and the youths belonging to the Community sung very sweetly, but everything seemed to lack reality. The thought of Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and the rest of the angels, did not help her to worship.

She had been accustomed to hymns which offered adoration to the great Father of mankind, and were in the main sung by the whole congregation. Perhaps that was the reason she had no feeling of worship while the choir sang hymns about angels. However, it was all very interesting, and although the church was but sparsely filled, and almost exclusively by women, she realized a kind of solemnity difficult to define or analyze.

Presently, however, the service came to an end, and while the congregation was singing another hymn, she saw some one climb the pulpit steps. In spite of herself, she felt strangely moved. The thought of the ragged boy to whom she had tried to be kind years before becoming the preacher in this stately church possessed the elements of romance. She could not see his face as he entered the pulpit, as he was in the shade, and when he came to the light he pillowed his face in his hands as if in prayer. Before the hymn was finished, however, he lifted his head and looked around the church. The light just above his head shone strongly upon him, revealing every feature.

She almost shuddered as she watched. When last she had seen him he, while not of robust appearance, looked comparatively healthy and strong.

Now, however, he was thin almost to emaciation, and his black eyes had a most unearthly look. Evidently Dominic had become an ascetic, while the expression of his eyes suggested a fanatic. Still he was an interesting study, and she wondered of what he was thinking as his eyes moved steadily and searchingly over the congregation.

Presently their eyes met. It was only for a second, but long enough to make both know that they had seen and recognized each other. Maggie was perfectly unmoved, but she noticed that Dominic gave a start, while the blood rushed madly into his face.

He quickly mastered himself, however, and before the hymn was finished his face was again stern, and almost rigid, while in his eyes there was a look which she could not understand.

The hymn ceased, and all the lights in the church were turned low, save that just above the preacher's head. She noticed that he wore a preaching stole, similar to that worn in Romanist churches, and in spite of her surroundings she could not help comparing him with the ragged boy who ten years before stood by the cemetery gates, and who cried out with a voice full of anguish:

“Mother deed when I wur a little un; feyther deed a Monda.”

He stood erect, and crossed himself.

“In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”

And then he gave out his text.

12. From Another Standpoint

DOMINIC WILDTHORNE was much excited as he entered the pulpit that night. It seemed to him that his sermon, which was his first really public utterance, was to form a new era in his life. He had, of course, spoken before his fellow-students, whose duty it had been to criticize him without mercy, and he had also given addresses at mission-hall gatherings. This, however, was his great sermon, a sermon which was to begin his public life, and as such it was regarded by him as of paramount importance. From that night he was to be set apart as a preaching monk, to go around the neighboring towns and villages, calling them to repentance. Sometimes he would preach in the parish churches; but if these were closed to him, on account of the Protestant tendencies of the vicars and rectors, he would resort to the streets and marketplaces, or to such halls as were available. In any case he was to preach the Catholic faith to darkened souls; he was to try and bring back the Church and the people to the faith held before that blaspheming heretic, Luther, tore the Church of Christ in twain.

For years he had been preparing himself, and now he felt that his life's work was really beginning. To this he had not only been consecrated, but he had consecrated himself, and he had taken life-long vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Moreover, he had found the vows easy. Of money he knew nothing.

He realized nothing of its fascination, or its power. He had been reared in poverty, and the thought of having possessions of his own had no attractions. Obedience had during the last ten years become second nature. As for marriage, he shuddered at the thought of it. He knew nothing of women; but he remembered with shame that the sight of Maggie Yorke's face had years before made him dumb, when he should have been an ambassador for his Lord; and if there was any creature whom he hated, it was she. If he thought of her at all, it was as a brand to be plucked from the burning. That was the reason why he sent her a copy of the bill announcing the service at which he was to preach. She had promised to come and hear him, and he had hoped and

prayed that he might convince her of the sin of her schism and her godlessness. Indeed, if the truth must be told, he had her in his mind when he had prepared his sermon. She had promised to come and hear him, and therefore he would speak the truth with no uncertain sound.

He could not help starting when he saw her, however. At first he was not sure it was she. Five years had passed since he had seen her, and she had passed from girlhood to young womanhood. She was very fair to behold, too. It is true he had steeled his heart against such beauty, but he could not help recognizing it. A strong light fell upon her face, and he saw her in the glory of her womanly beauty. Moreover, it was not a doll's beauty. Strong purpose, a bright intelligence, and a refined nature revealed themselves in her face. He reflected that she was a cultured woman too. He had noticed in the papers that she had distinguished herself at Oxford, and from the standpoint of academical training would be superior to himself. But that weighed nothing. He would speak with the authority of the Church, which was the mouthpiece of God.

At first his sermon went with halting steps. That magnetic influence which he had often felt when listening to great preachers was not there. The building was not crowded, as he had hoped it would be. Moreover, he was not a practiced speaker, and the sound of his own voice, as it traveled away among the Gothic arches of the church, almost frightened him. The opening passages of his sermon, upon which he had spent so much time and which he had thought so striking and arrestive, seemed poor and commonplace. He was afraid, moreover, the people were not listening, and for a moment he hesitated and stammered. Then he looked at Maggie, and saw that her eyes were riveted on him. Years before the sight of her had made him dumb. Now, however, her attention gave him confidence, it gave point and reality to his sermon. His thoughts became clear, and his words flowed easily. A few minutes later the preacher's passion had mastered him.

None but those who have spoken successfully in public can realize the exquisite pleasure which a preacher realizes when he knows he has gripped his audience, that the people are eagerly waiting for every word which falls from his lips, and that he is moving them to think as he thinks. And Dominic felt that pleasure. From the time his eyes had met Maggie's he knew that he was master of the situation. He had a dear musical voice, the orator's gift of speech; but more than all, he possessed that rare and indefinable thing, a magnetic personality. He compelled people to listen to him, even

when he was saying nothing of importance. But besides this, the sermon which he had prepared with so much care got hold of him. The preacher's passion became dominant, and there seemed nothing else in the world worth living for.

The sermon itself might have been preached by St. Dominic. It belonged to the Middle Ages, rather than to the twentieth century. It ignored Biblical and Church criticism; it took no heed of the strides of science. It was an appeal to the emotions and the fears of the people. The preacher assumed the authority of God. He proclaimed that salvation lay in accepting without question the sacraments, the teaching and authority of the Church. All Christ's authority and power were vested in the Church, Nowhere else could rest or salvation be found than by coming to the Church, and obeying her priests without question. Schism was a horrible sin; to disbelieve in, or to depart from the teaching of the Church, was to crucify Christ again. All those in the past, who in the name of freedom had become schismatics, were the enemies of God. The great duty of the Church all over the world was unity, was to make the Church Catholic. For any other body, than that body which could claim apostolical and priestly descent from the time of Peter, to claim union with the Church was blasphemy. Their only union was to come back humbly and obediently to her, to repent, to accept her laws and her sacraments without question, and be saved.

Evidently the young preacher could see no other side than that which he proclaimed. For nearly ten years all his thinking, all his reading had made him blind to everything else; and thus all that had happened during the last four centuries was as nothing. The thing called Protestantism was born of pride, of lust, and of disobedience. Agnosticism and materialism had lifted their ghastly heads, because at the so-called Reformation men had dared to question the authority of the Church. Therefore there remained nothing for England, if she would have salvation, but to confess the Church, which was our only way of confessing Christ. For those who because of pride, of hardness of heart, of stubbornness of will, or of sin were ashamed to confess the Catholic Church, to confess her sacraments, her claims, her priesthood, her authority, them would Christ be ashamed to confess before His Father and all the holy angels.

Evidently the congregation was moved by Dominic's impassioned appeal. The atmosphere of the building became electric. Even as men and women trembled at the time when the great monk of Florence poured forth

his denunciations against sin, so the congregation of St. Michael's Church in Meremeadows felt like trembling as they listened to the young man's fervid words.

Father Townley's eyes gleamed with joy. Dominic was indeed a son after his own heart; here was one who would compel attention by his wondrous gifts, his oratory, and his divine fire. Let his fame go abroad, and the Protestants who still existed in the Established Church would be silenced. Bishops and archbishops, who had perforce looked askance at the Community of the Incarnation, would be obliged to recognize it as a power to heal the wounds of the Reformation, and bring back the Church to her former authority.

That night, after the congregation had departed and Dominic had returned to "The House," Father Townley blessed him with tears in his eyes. "Be faithful, my son," he said, "and future generations will rise up to call you another Moses."

As may be imagined, Dominic was elated beyond measure. The occasion which he had feared might be disastrous had proved to him that God had set His seal upon his ministry. But more, he rejoiced because Maggie Yorke had witnessed his success. Why he should think so much of her he did not know; but he did. She had come to listen to his first public sermon, and he had been faithful.

"In a fortnight from now," said Father Townley, "you must commence your work. In the meanwhile you must rest. Let all your powers of body and mind be recuperated, so that when you go into the field you may go like a giant refreshed with new wine. The summer is not yet gone. Take long walks among the hills, and get some color into your cheeks."

Dominic would have liked to have told him that he did not desire rest, but he remembered his vow of obedience, and did as he was commanded. It was when he was returning from one of these walks that he came across Maggie Yorke, who had been to see one of her father's tenants. When he saw her first, and remembering his former antagonism towards her, he felt like passing her without a word; but when he saw that she recognized him, he stopped and held out his hand.

"It is more than five years since we last met," he said, when the first greetings were over.

"Yes," she replied; "it seems a very long time."

"Does it?" he said. "Yes, in a way it does, but in another it seems only yesterday. When one has a great deal to do, time passes very quickly."

“And of course your life has been very full. Thank you for sending me the announcement that you were going to preach at St. Michael’s. I should not have known otherwise. Of course I went.”

“I saw you there,” he said.

“You see I kept my word, as you kept yours.”

“I — I hope you — enjoyed the service,” he said hesitatingly.

“I was very much interested, indeed,” she replied.

Again the old feeling of aversion came back to him. He felt as he had felt in the Spa Theater, on the night when the sight of her made him dumb when he would otherwise have spoken. He thought he detected scorn in her voice. He had hoped and prayed that his sermon might have convinced her of her sin, and had fondly imagined her battling with her prejudices and her pride, and then finally yielding to the truth. But she had dispelled this hope within three minutes of their meeting. This girl was antagonistic both to him and to the message which he had proclaimed.

He did not know what to say next. He felt that some sort of barrier was raised between them. In a sense he was glad that it was so. He had no right to have anything in common with one who scorned his mission and his purposes.

“I am glad you were interested,” he said presently, and then he looked on the ground as though he were afraid to meet her eyes.

“Yes, it was all so strange,” she said. “Had I been in Spain, in some village church, I don’t think I should have thought it strange at all; but at Meremeadows, it was — well, very interesting.”

For a moment he had a great longing to know what she really thought of his sermon. Although he had not realized it, this girl, who had spoken kindly to him years before, when he was a poor, ragged, ignorant lad, had exercised an influence on him all through his life. It was she who had fired his imagination when she had spoken of her admiration of leaders of men. Even when he had hated her because he believed her influence over him was baneful, he knew that he longed for her approbation. In a sense he had idealized her, and although he did not know it, her dissent or her approval was of great importance to him.

“Did you like St. Michael’s Church?” he asked.

“Yes, in a way,” she replied.

“And the service?”

“It was very interesting,” she said.

For a few seconds there was a silence between them.

“Do you remember that conversation we had years ago?” he asked presently.

“What conversation?”

“Oh I when I came with a letter to your father, from Father Townley. You showed me around your conservatories, and told me of the people you admired.”

“Yes, I think I remember.”

“I shall never forget it. You told me that if you were a man you would be a leader of men, that you would make them think as you thought, I did not see how I was to be a man like that, but I longed to be, very much, and I made up my mind that I would be. I told you so afterwards. Do you remember that?”

“Yes, I remember.”

She looked at him as he stood before her. He was clothed in a long black robe and wore a leathern girdle, and his pale face and thin, spare figure were in accord with the dress he wore.

“And you still cherish the same hope?”

“Yes. Not in the way you understand it perhaps, but in its reality I do.”

She did not reply to this; but he had noted the look she had given him. He realized that he was wearing a monk’s garb.

“Yes,” he went on, and his words became intensely eager, “I am going to be a leader of men, not for my own sake, but for my Master’s. I am going to give my life to the greatest work a man can be engaged in, the proclamation of Catholic truth.”

He hurled the words at her half angrily, half beseechingly; he wanted to make her feel that her opinions were nothing to him, and yet he longed to know what she thought of him.

“I am going into the world to preach against schism, and disobedience, and materialism, and sin,” he cried. “For centuries the Church was dead to her duties, but she is being aroused. The old order of things is coming back. I want to help to heal the breaches in the Catholic household by proclaiming the true Catholic faith.”

“You will try and bring about a new Reformation?” she said.

“That is it,” he cried eagerly. “The so-called reformers of the sixteenth century brought about dissension and schism. I am going to heal the wounds, to bring back the dissentients to the one true faith,”

"What faith is that?" she asked innocently,

"The Catholic faith," he replied.

"The Roman Catholic faith?"

"Eventually the household of faith will be one in name, as well as in reality. During the last fifty years Protestantism has died. The Anglican branch of the Catholic Church has come to her own again. It is only a matter of time, when the three great branches of the Catholic Church will unite as one; and thus Rome, who is the mother of us all, will be our great head. Already we are reclaiming lost ground. Monasticism, which for centuries was dead in England, is springing into life again. In addition to those belonging to the Roman community, we English Catholics are establishing them up and down the land. As for Protestantism, it has already become a byword."

"Indeed," said Maggie innocently.

"Only a very few bishops in the whole of the Anglican Church will allow themselves to be called Protestants," said Dominic. "I know only of three. The old ritual, the old faith in the priesthood and in the sacraments are returning."

"And what is your part in this work?"

"It is to go as a preaching brother, proclaiming the truth to those who will not come to our churches," said Dominic proudly.

"You have not given up that fancy yet?"

"No, I never shall."

"Oh yes, you will," replied Maggie.

"I give it up? Never! I have taken my vows, and I will be faithful to them."

"Before two years are over you will have given up all such thoughts," urged Maggie quietly.

"But why?"

"Because, unless I am mistaken in you, you are a sincere and honest man," she replied. "Because I do not believe you can go on acting a dishonorable part."

"A dishonorable part?"

"A dishonorable part. You who have been ordained as a clergyman of the Church of England, a Church founded on the principles of the Reformation, cannot go on acting a living lie. You cannot mock your ordination vows by making them conflict with the vows you took at your Community."

You cannot continue a minister of the Protestant Church of England, for such she is as by law established; you cannot continue taking her pay, and benefiting by the advantage of her patronage, while you seek to undermine the principles on which she rests. You cannot belong to a Church which professes to exist as a protest against what the Prayer-book terms the abominations of Rome, while you work for reunion with that body. You cannot as an honest man do this. Your eyes will be opened to the truth, and then your sense of honor as an Englishman, as a lover of your country, to say nothing of your profession to be a Christian man, will prevent you from continuing to be a living lie."

Maggie had not intended to say so much as this, but the words escaped her almost before she knew she had spoken. Moreover, she enjoyed the look of mingled consternation and anger upon his face.

"You speak as a Protestant," he cried; "you speak as one blinded to Catholic truth."

"I speak as one who scorns treason," she said. "My being a Protestant or a Roman Catholic has nothing whatever to do with the matter. You are regarded as a Church of England minister; you have been ordained as a Church of England minister, and yet you set out to destroy the very truths on which the Church of England rests. You preach the sacrifice of the Mass, and you violate your vows every time you preach it. You disobey your Church when you participate in and urge the necessity for the full Roman ceremonial. You disavow the articles faith that you swore to defend. I am not arguing whether the Church of Rome is right or wrong; but the man who calls himself a minister of the Church of England, and yet preaches Rome's doctrines, and encourages Rome's beliefs, is not honest, he is no honorable, and he is a disgrace to the name of an Englishman."

Dominic stared at her in astonishment. He was too excited to speak. He had never regarded his ordination vows in this light. Father Townley, who had prepared him for ordination, had placed matter in such a light, moreover his training during several years had been of such a nature, that the Protestantism of the Prayer-book had offered no difficulties to him.

"I think I understand the teaching of the Prayer book, and the meaning of my ordination vows," he said presently.

Maggie was silent.

"Do you not think," he continued, "that I am likely to be a better judge than you?"

“Why should you be?” she asked.

“Because — because you were trained a Dissenter.”

“And Dissenters have died rather than be untrue to their consciences,” she replied.

“Then— then you think—”

“I think that if you are not an honest man, I shall be terribly disappointed,” she replied.

“But — but why should I change my views?” he cried excitedly. “I have had time to consider. I know I may be misunderstood, but — that is nothing. And I am not carried away by your Protestant versions of history.”

Maggie did not reply to him. Instead she held out her hand.

“Good-evening, Mr, Dominic Wildthorne,” she said; “I must return home.”

“But I tell you — you are utterly mistaken,” he cried.

“I hope not,” said Maggie, “I have always thought of you as honest. When you go out into the world, as I suppose you will, you will come into contact with men and women who live the life of today; you will meet Englishmen with a sense of honor, and — and I am sure you will not disappoint me. Good evening.”

A minute later Maggie had gone some distance on her way home; but Dominic Wildthorne stood still where he was, staring into vacancy.

13. Dominic Becomes Famous

TO SAY THAT Dominic Wildthorne was angry with Maggie Yorke would be to put it mildly. He was enraged with her. She had wounded his pride, she had accused him of being dishonorable, and of being a living lie. But more than all this, she had prophesied that in a few months his eyes would be so opened to the truth, that he would give up what he regarded as his life's work. Her presumption made him speechless. Instead of bringing her to repentance, she had assumed a superior position, and declared that he, and not she, was in the wrong. She, a Dissenter, had dared to tell him, a priest of the English Catholic Church, and who, therefore, should be obeyed by such as she, that he was playing the part of a traitor. In his heart of hearts he had regarded himself as another Savonarola, one who would bend stubborn wills and make proud hearts tremble. And yet after his first sermon, a sermon which Father Townley had associated with St. Chrysostom's great utterances, this schismatic had accused him of dishonesty, and called him to repentance.

But worst of all, her words stung him, because there seemed to be an element of truth in them. From time to time rumors had reached him concerning what certain sections of the religious community had been saying about the ideals of the House of the Incarnation. He had not been troubled by this, because the brothers had answered these accusations entirely to his satisfaction. They were occupying not a disloyal attitude to the Church, but a loyal one. They were the real saviours of the Church. Their grand old English branch of the great Catholic body had been eaten out with Erastianism, and that horrible negation called Protestantism. The English Church was dying because it was so "low," therefore it was the duty of all true Churchmen to lift it to its true place, and this could be done only by assuring its ancient authority, doctrines, claims, and ceremonials. The Reformation was a hideous mistake, and the salvation of men lay in destroying its malign power. The Oxford Movement had done much in this direction, and their Community, which was the child of that movement, was simply carrying

out its ideals. Moreover, all the influence of the last ten years — all his training, all his reading had been in that direction. He had joined the Community when he was but little more than a child, and since then all the subtle, unseen influences of a priestly order had been molding him into that pattern. The very air he breathed, the conversation in which he indulged, the everyday duties of life, were all laden with this dominating thought.

That was why his ordination vows had offered no difficulties. Everything was interpreted in the light of the hopes and desires of the Community. Of course there were senses in which the Roman Church had made mistakes; but it was still the Mother Church of Christendom, and in a very real and vital sense it was the duty of the Anglican branch of the Church to fall into line with the great Parent Body. A thousand forces were working in that direction; societies, of which his was one among many, honeycombed the Church of England, in order that it might be Catholicized, while it was rumored that a very large number of their clergy had secretly taken Roman orders.

In a sense this was rather vague to him, and he was not quite clear as to the exact relationship between English Catholics and Roman Catholics. How could they be one when they were divided? If the true Church were an organic, visible body, and Rome's claims were true, how could the Anglican Church, which was not recognized by Rome, be a part of the tree Church? But after all, this had not troubled him. He had been taught to accept the position held by the Community of the Incarnation, and as a consequence had dismissed all difficulties from his mind.

Thus Maggie's plain, outspoken words angered him beyond measure. Not that he had any doubts about his position. His anger was aroused because he was accused of acting a dishonorable part, and he did not quite see how to answer her.

When he went back to the "House," however, he had a long talk with Father Townley, who quieted his disturbed heart. He reminded him of the fact of the Archbishop who had given them his blessing, and had therefore set the seal of the Anglican Church upon their movement. Not that his mind was yet quite clear, it was only his heart that was at rest. The habits and training of ten years had their effect, and the Superior's words seemed all that he needed.

One effect, however, his meeting with Maggie had. It aroused with renewed force his old antagonism against her. She was an enemy to his faith,

she scorned his position, and he could not help regarding her as the Church regarded heretics of olden times. And more, he determined that he would yet convince and convert her. It was his duty to do so; and much as he disliked her, he vowed that he would bring this proud girl to kneel in humble submission to the claims and authority of the Catholic faith.

A few days later Dominic started on his work. Father Townley had arranged with rectors and vicars of pronounced Ritualistic tendencies for Dominic to visit their parishes, as well as to speak in certain public halls. At first little notice was taken of him, and but small congregations were attracted, but presently it was whispered around that the pale-faced boy was a wonderful orator. Moreover, as is often the case, all sorts of wild romantic stories came to be afloat concerning him. One had it that he was heir to a peerage, but that he had discarded everything, so that, like the monks and friars of old, he might go from place to place preaching the Catholic faith. It was said, moreover, that his determination to devote himself to this work was the outcome of a dream; that not long before he took his vows the Blessed Virgin had appeared to him, and told him that she had set her seal upon him that he might go through England, and lead men everywhere to repentance, and the acceptance of the faith of the Catholic Church. In a little while this story passed from village to village. It was also adorned by many fond imaginings. Young girls had it that in order to take his vows he had to give up a great and beauteous lady, whom he loved like his own life, but whom he had sacrificed in order that he might obey the command of the Virgin.

Another story had it that he had in a vision seen England converted to the Catholic faith, and the Pope acclaimed as Sovereign Pontiff; it was also said that he, Dominic, was to be the means whereby this wonderful reformation was to take place. It was moreover said to be revealed to him, that when this vision was come to pass the land was to become a perfect Paradise; that poverty was to be destroyed, that prisons were to become empty, that crime would be at a perpetual end.

Of course the saner element of the population laughed at these stories, and accepted them only according to their real value. Nevertheless they created a great desire to see and hear him, until presently wherever he went great crowds thronged to hear him. That he possessed the gifts of an orator none denied. His voice was clear and musical. His memory was something wonderful. He could quote without halting long sayings of the Fathers after

a single reading. In addition to this there was something very dramatic in his arrangement of his thoughts, and he had the poet's gift of clothing them with beautiful language. What wonder then that crowds listened spellbound to his utterances? People who had regarded ritualistic churches with a kind of scorn, crowded them when Dominic came. His very presence fascinated them. Clad in his monkish garb, which hung not ungracefully around his tall, thin figure, he possessed for the unthinking a charm almost unearthly. His face was extremely pale, but his black eyes shone with a strange light, his sensitive mouth seemed to express all the feelings of his soul. No one spoke of him as handsome, but all regarded him as a striking personality. Moreover, the fact that he was a clergyman of the Established Church, gave him a position of authority which would otherwise have been denied to him. No one accused him of self-seeking. It was made known concerning him that he had taken the vow of poverty, and that he would never see a penny of their offerings. He lived on the charity of those who opened their doors to him, his only reward lay in leading men and women to accept the Catholic faith.

As the months went by his power increased, rather than diminished. In some respects he copied the example of the great Florentine preacher. He cried aloud against the sins of the age. With all the fervor of a Benedict he preached against the pride, the materialism, the lust for money, the godlessness of the people. Temperance reformers praised him because he declaimed against drink. Socialists claimed him as their ally, because he denounced men who heaped up riches while thousands of their brethren were on the verge of starvation. Puritans had a good word for him, because he proclaimed against the vices and impurities of the age.

Churches became too small to contain the people who thronged around him. Town halls, and industrial halls holding thousands of people were engaged, and even then hundreds of people had to be turned away disappointed. A new star had indeed arisen in the firmament, and many rejoiced.

As day by day the news of his work reached Father Townley, at the House of the Incarnation, the old man's joy knew no bounds. For years he had been maligned because he had established what was known as the Protestant Monastery. He had been vilified as one who was unfaithful to the Church, and a traitor to the religion of the country. Years before he had made known his ideals in the Manuals of the Community, and he had either been laughed at or maligned. Yet here were his dreams actually being ful-

filled. In the Manuals of the Community reference had been made to the necessity for country monasteries, and Father Townley repeatedly thought of the words he had caused to be circulated, "We look abroad and see that where the poor are ministered to by priests *who themselves are poor* . . . the people are profoundly religious, and the immorality which is the curse of our villages is practically unknown. In days of old the monks who really plowed, and were as poor as the peasant, were the men who converted Europe, and made the desert blossom as the rose.

"Might not many parts of our country be worked from a central monastery or friary, from which priests could serve many of the neighboring villages? . . .

"Such a college or monastery might save men from the intellectual and spiritual stagnation of isolated vicarages; it might have two popular missionaries (not necessarily priests), each with his gospel van to patrol the diocese in summer months, and hold informal missions on the village green."

These words were actually fulfilled in the person of Dominic, fulfilled in a larger way than he had dared to hope. The rough, uncouth boy whom he had received was indeed proving to be "an angel unawares," and his success made him think of greater things yet to come. He felt sure that Dominic's work would silence the mouths of his enemies, and endear him to the heart of the English Church. But more than all this, it would help to bring back the Catholic faith, it would kill the Protestantism that was so rife in these Yorkshire villages and towns.

"What if men do upbraid me," he said one day to Father Trouville?" what if they do say our 'House' is a nursery for Rome, and hurl the names of Ritualists who have left Anglicanism and gone over to Rome? We have an answer now. Here is Dominic gathering men by hundreds into the fold. He is preaching definite Catholic doctrine, and is yet remaining in the English Catholic Church."

"But supposing Dominic went over to Rome?" suggested Father Trouville.

"He won't," said the Superior fervently. "He will help to prepare the way for the whole Church being united to Rome, but he will not go over himself."

Trouville shook his head.

"Do you doubt him?" asked the Superior.

“He has a logical mind,” replied Trouville. “Up to now he has been content to accept our teachings without question; but once out in the world, and meeting men’s suggestions, he will begin to think for himself. Then—”

“Well, what then?”

“He will see that there is no logical halting ground between us and Rome,” replied Trouville.

“And what then?”

“He will go to Rome. He is not like lots of us, who are content to remain in the Church, and Catholicize the Church of England. You could never persuade Dominic to accept a curacy under a Protestant vicar, and then quietly instill Rome’s doctrines. He does not belong to that order. The name of ‘Dominic’ will mean trouble, one day.”

“Not while he realizes the meaning of his vow of obedience.”

“If ever Dominic believes a certain thing to be right, vows will not stop him.”

“I have no fears,” asserted Father Townley doubtfully, after some seconds of silence.

Meanwhile Dominic continued his preaching crusade with increasing popularity, and his success caused him to enter realms with which he was unacquainted. He became more and more pronounced in his “Catholic” teaching; he declaimed against what he called the evils of the Reformation, and then declared that the Church of England had never separated from the Mother Church of Christendom, but had all the way through remained a branch of the Catholic Church.

As may be imagined, this aroused the opposition of the Puritans. The glamour of his personality lost power, his diatribes against money and pride were forgotten, and the old cry of “No Popery” was raised. On every hand he was accused of being an emissary of Rome, and the people more than ever believed that the Community of the Incarnation was only a recruiting ground for the Papacy.

More than one clergyman of the Church of England denounced his teaching, and even Ritualistic clergymen advised him to be cautious. But Dominic was not given to being cautious.

“If a thing is true, if it is right, if it is the will of God, it should be proclaimed,” he said. “We cannot be silent while Dissent, that vile thing which calls itself religion, but which is only ‘politics touched with emotion’ is so rampant. Nothing but Catholic truth will save the nation, and I am set apart

to preach it. How can I be silent while Dissent outnumbers our Church, and is gaining ground daily, and more than this, how can I be silent when a large portion of the Church is riddled with Protestantism? Nothing can be gained by silence. If our Church is to win England, she must be bold. The people must see her as she is. She must see the beauties of the faith of which she has been robbed, the loveliness of the ceremonials which have been suppressed, the glory of our outlook, which embraces the whole of the Catholic doctrines. We must make it known that we can make no terms with undenominationalism, which is the most subtle form of skepticism.”

In this many of the Ritualists rejoiced, for while they had taught these things in a covert way, but few were bold enough to proclaim it aloud. Therefore, when they found a man bold enough to say aloud what they had been thinking in secret, they encouraged him, even while they advised him to be cautious.

One night Dominic departed from his usual methods. He announced that he would give a lecture on “The English Catholic Church: Her Claims and her Authority.” The Town Hall of Brigfield, the place which he was visiting, was engaged, and huge posters soon appeared on the hoardings.

The announcement ran as follows:

THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC CHURCH.

A Lecture on the above will be given in the Town Hall

On March 26th, at 8 o'clock, by

FATHER DOMINIC.

Title of Lecture:

THE ENGLISH CATHOLIC CHURCH: HER CLAIMS AND HER AUTHORITY.

Let all who love the truth come.

As might be expected, the Town Hall was crowded. A great rush of people thronged the entrance an hour before the time announced, and by eight o'clock even every inch of standing-room was occupied.

On the platform were two Ritualistic priests, but no Evangelical clergymen were present. On the whole the crowd was good-natured, but it was keenly expectant of something sensational. The first flush of Dominic's fame was over. The period of criticism was come. Hard-headed, keen-eyed Yorkshiremen, who while neither scholars nor great readers, were gifted with a great deal of shrewd common-sense, waited warily for anything that might be said. The people who had first of all been carried away by his oratorical gifts, his striking appearance, and evident sincerity had had time to consider what his teaching really meant.

When Dominic appeared on the platform, the buzz of conversation came to a sudden end. There was something arresting in his very presence. After all, he was only a boy. His face was very pale, and almost emaciated, but his eyes shone with wondrous brilliancy. He wore his monkish attire, which included a leathern girdle around his waist. Perhaps his almost mediaeval appearance added interest to his lecture.

There was no chairman for the meeting. Perhaps that was why the Mayor of the town obtained a seat on the front row of chairs close to the platform. All classes of people were there. The two most striking personalities in the hall sat close behind the Mayor, side by side.

The first was a young man who looked but little older than Dominic, although he was thirty years of age. He was clean shaven, and while he did not present such an emaciated appearance as the young monk, he suggested the student. His eyes were large and brown, his hair also was brown, and hung in heavy waving masses over a well-shaped, intellectual-looking head. He did not wear a clerical attire, but he was a young Free Church minister who had not long since left Oxford, where he had had a most distinguished career. After taking his Arts degree, in which he had taken first-class honors, he had devoted several years to the study of theology, and had taken his B.D. in one of the Scotch universities.

The other was a much older man. He wore the garb of a priest, but was unknown in the town. His was a face which also suggested intellectuality, and he fixed his keen, searching gaze upon Dominic as he came on the platform. These two men did not speak to each other, although they sat side by side, but it was evident that the older man was interested in the younger.

Perhaps Dominic had never spoken with greater power than he spoke that night. He was evidently inspired by his subject, and he moved the audience at will. So great were his gifts as a speaker that he almost disarmed

criticism. He made people, for the moment, believe in things which were utterly out of accord with their previous convictions. For months he had been night by night improving his rare gifts of public speaking, and now, as he stood before the great assembled crowd, he swayed the people as the wind sways standing corn. When he sat down there was a regular tornado of applause.

"The fellow is a fine speaker, but he occupies an utterly false position," said the stranger in priest's attire to Cuthbert Trevelyan, the young minister, speaking to him for the first time.

"Utterly," replied the other; "you are in sympathy with him?"

"Entirely, except for —" And the stranger shrugged his shoulders.

They could barely hear each other because of the deafening applause of a section of the audience. Presently it began to die away, however; but the people did not depart. Evidently they expected something dramatic to follow such an utterance.

They had not to wait long; Before the applause had quite died away, Cuthbert Trevelyan was on his feet.

"May I say a word. Father Dominic?" he asked.

Dominic nodded his head, and the silence in the hall became profound.

"It would be impossible at this stage of the meeting to answer such an address as we have just heard," said Trevelyan, "specially as the lecturer would have the right to reply. Nevertheless, what we have heard demands an answer. That is my reason for rising. I wish, therefore, to give a challenge to the lecturer, and the challenge is this; That he and I debate for two nights the main statements he has, made. Moreover, if he will allow me, I would suggest that the debate take the following shape:

"First, are the main contentions of his lecture in accord with the facts of Scripture, history, and experience? and second, has a man holding the views expressed in the lecture the moral right to remain a minister of the Reformed Church of England as by law established?"

Trevelyan sat down, amidst a deathly silence. The people were too interested to applaud, but every eye was fixed upon the face of the young monk who had just moved them so greatly.

"I accept," said Dominic; "that is, on the understanding that the speaker is a person of repute and capable of dealing with such a question."

"My name is Cuthbert Trevelyan," replied the young man. "I am the minister of Trinity Church, in this town. As for my fitness to dealing with

the subject, I will leave others to judge.”

“Yes, yes,” shouted the crowd.

“Then I accept,” replied Dominic.

14. Why The Debate Was Canceled

THE REPORTERS for the two local papers, as well as the correspondents of the Yorkshire daily journals, crowded around Dominic and Cuthbert Trevelyan as they met. They were anxious to know the details of the arrangements which were to be made, so that they might make them known in striking paragraphs. They cared but little concerning the issues of the proposed debate, but they saw an amount of "good copy" in the affair, and they determined to make the most of it. The stranger in priest's attire also waited near, as if desirous of speaking with the two young men.

The arrangements were quickly made. The town hall was to be engaged for two nights, a representative man in the town was to be asked to preside, and the discussion was to take place a week later.

Dominic was very quiet during the discussion of these details. He made scarcely a demur or a protest of any sort to the suggestions of Trevelyan. On only one point did he raise any serious objection. Trevelyan suggested that if some restrictions were not made concerning the right of free entrance to the hall, they would be deluged by an irresponsible and possibly an uproarious crowd; he therefore proposed that a charge for admission should be made, and that the proceeds should be given to certain local charities. Dominic on the other hand urged that admission should be free to all without any restrictions whatever. In the end, however, he yielded, and thus it was arranged. The Ritualistic priests took no part whatever; indeed, they stood by seemingly disturbed and uncomfortable.

Wien at length Dominic prepared to go with these men to their apartments, the stranger in priest's attire approached him.

"Father Dominic;" he said, "I should like to thank you for your very masterly address tonight, and to ask you to give me an opportunity of a chat with you."

Dominic looked at him questioningly.

"I do not think I have the honor of knowing you," he said.

"That is my misfortune," said the stranger. "But I happened to hear of your lecture tonight, and decided to come. I should like to say that I almost entirely agree with it — that is, considering it from one standpoint. Nevertheless, I should like a chat with you about it."

"I am afraid it is impossible," said Dominic. "I have been working very hard, and, as you may imagine, I shall have a great deal to do."

"I quite realize that," said the stranger, "and I am quite conscious that I may seem to be asking an unreasonable thing. But — but — I think I may be of some help to you."

He handed him his card as he spoke.

"Rev. Anthony Ritzoom, SJ," read Dominic. "I have, of course, heard of your name."

"Possibly," replied the other. "May I hope that the fact may help me in my desires?"

Dominic looked at the stranger searchingly, and was impressed by the strong personality of the man who stood before him. Nevertheless he did not reply immediately. He was not drawn to Father Ritzoom, even although he was impressed by him.

"After this affair is over, I shall be delighted to have a chat with you," he said, "but until then I must ask you to excuse me."

"Thank you," said the other heartily. "I am afraid I cannot be here during the debate, that is, if it takes place," he added significantly; "but I shall be kept in Yorkshire during the next few weeks, and in good time I hope to be honored with a closer acquaintance with you."

He bowed as he spoke, and then walked away without another word.

"Let's get back, Wildthorne," said one of the Ritualistic priests. "You must be quite worn out."

The next morning, when Father Townley, after his early morning duties at the Community of the Incarnation, returned to his study, and opened his newspaper, he gave a sudden start.

"What's this?" he cried, taking off his glasses and wiping them vigorously. "No, no, the boy cannot be so rash."

Evidently, however, what he read the second time confirmed his first impressions. The headlines which had caught his attention were bold and arresting.

Dramatic Scene at Brigfield.

Father Dominic Lectures on the English Catholic Church.

Challenge to Debate by the Rev. Cuthbert Trevelyan, M.A., B.D.

The Challenge Accepted.

A description of the lecture followed, together with an account of Trevelyan's challenge, and Dominic's acceptance.

Nearly a column was devoted to this item of news, which Father Townley read eagerly, and then, as if dissatisfied, he read it a second time. "He goes too fast even for me," said the old man.

"Of course he is right, but it is not expedient to say so much. The people are not ready for it. It is true the language is somewhat obscure in certain places, but any intelligent reader can see what he means. It will frighten the timid, and it will give the 'Prots' a text. They will be shouting louder than ever, that this House is a recruiting place for Rome. Besides, a debate! — a debate!"

Evidently Father Townley was much disturbed. He was thinking not only of Dominic, but of the position and influence of the Community of the Incarnation. He knew that the House over which he was Father Superior was hated by the Evangelical party in the Church of England, and while it was praised by the Ritualistic section, the praise was mainly in secret. It was true an Archbishop had given them his blessing, but he had given it timidly, and with a certain amount of reservation. This being so, it behooved them to educate the people quietly, until they should be sufficiently advanced to enable them to proclaim their ideals boldly and loudly.

Dominic's action, therefore, was like plucking fruit before it was ripe. The English people were, in spite of all that had been done, Protestant. The Ritualistic movement had, in the main, been a priest's, and not a layman's movement. It behooved them, therefore, to be careful.

"A debate! — a debate!" he continued. "Dare I trust him? It is true Brigfield is a Dissenting town, and we Catholics have made but little headway. The Church is frightfully 'low,' as a whole, and is on good terms with Dissent. If the boy is not careful, he will arouse a hornet's nest. I do not believe in being timid, but will he not go too far? Has he not gone too far already?"

Again he sat back in his chair, and tried to grasp the whole bearings of the case.

"I wonder what kind of a man this Trevelyan is?" he went on musing. "He is not a Churchman, as I know the names of all our men in Brigfield and the neighborhood. He must be a Dissenter. Dominic is a clever speaker, a fine orator; but is he a match for this man in point of scholarship? These Dissenters are wise. The older bodies among them give their men a fine training. I must know everything before I allow this business to go on. Why could not the boy have been contented to conduct missions, and have left the debating field alone?"

He went to the telephone, and rang the bell somewhat impatiently.

"Telegraph office," he said to the girl at the call office.

He waited with the receiver in his hand until the connection was arranged.

"Bagshaw, House of St. Joseph, Brigfield," he said. "Got that?"

The girl at the post-office repeated his words.

"That's right. Now then. 'Come here without a moment's delay. Extremely urgent. Townley.'"

The telegram was read over to him, and despatched, and then Father Townley, in an uneasy frame of mind, prepared to attend to his ordinary duties.

A few hours later a clergyman drove up to the House of the Incarnation, and was shown immediately into Father Townley's study.

"Ah, Bagshaw," said Father Townley, "I am glad to see you. It is good of you to come so quickly."

"I expected your summons. I held myself in readiness," was the reply.

Father Townley looked at him questioningly.

"I read the papers," went on Bagshaw. "I knew that you would read them too. I know how you regard Dominic; and I knew that you would like particulars of the whole affair."

"Yes; of course I have had daily reports of Dominic's work. Why has the news of this lecture been kept from me?"

"I had to go to London, Lord Sowerby said he wanted to see me."

"Sowerby?"

"Yes."

Father Townley was silent for a few seconds.

"You see," went on Bagshaw, "I knew nothing about it till I returned yesterday. As for Linden — well, he was called away too. There was a meeting of — well, a society to which he belongs. When he came back from it he thought the lecture might as well be given. You see Dominic had had it announced."

"I see," said Father Townley.

"I imagine," went on Bagshaw, "that the society to which Linden belongs thinks it time to play a bolder game. The conversion of England to Rome does not go on fast enough. You cannot keep up secret practices for ever. As you know, their idea has been to win England by placing Rome's friends, under the guise of Protestant ministers, into every Evangelical parish. They did very well for a time; but it seems they have made known their views to the more intelligent, who — well, have asked some awkward questions. There has been an amount of exposure, with the result that the Master thought it time to advocate a bolder policy. That was why, when Linden returned, he favored the idea that the lecture should be given."

"I see. Tell me how Dominic has been doing?"

"Oh! magnificently. He has been a great draw."

"Of course he has given definite Catholic teaching?"

"Yes. We had some little difficulty with him. We had to make him realize that 'all things were lawful, but all things were not expedient'; we also had to impress upon him the necessity of catching certain with guile. That was why, although he gave definite Church teaching, he clothed it in somewhat ambiguous language. Still, it will bear fruit — it will bear fruit."

"But this lecture?"

Bagshaw lifted his eyebrows. "It was more pronounced," he said. "Of course Dominic's real views have been leaking out for some time, with the result that the Prots have begun to shout. Last night he came farther out of his shell. Still, he spoke splendidly, and so carried the people away that intellectually they did not know where they were."

"Of course you know what a debate will mean?"

Bagshaw shrugged his shoulders.

"Do you know anything about Trevelyan?"

"He is the ablest and most scholarly man in Brigfield. I might say in Yorkshire, for that matter."

"You have met him?"

"Yes; as you know, I make it my business to be friendly with Dissenters. I think it good policy. It looks well, it disarms the criticism of certain classes, and — well, it helps me in my work."

"I doubt it, Bagshaw. I know your views, but I doubt it; personally I will not even in form recognize these men as ministers of Christ. They usurp a sacred office. For them to pretend to administer the sacraments is blasphemy. Still, that is not the point just now. This is the question. Can Dominic hold his own against this man?"

Bagshaw was silent a few seconds.

"No," he said presently.

"He has been well trained, and, as you admit, is a brilliant speaker."

"He has been well trained on our lines — I know. But — but — well, Trevelyan is a man of wider reading. From the layman's standpoint Dominic would be driven from the field. Trevelyan is no ordinary man.

So much did he distinguish himself at Oxford that he was made fellow of his college. He was president of the Oxford Union, and he is one of the clearest reasoners I know, I am not sure but that he would shake Dominic's own foundations. You see he would make him look at Christian truth from another standpoint, Dominic has done good work because — well, he has seen only one side. He has looked at everything through a priest's eyes."

Father Townley was silent for some time.

"But to forbid the debate!" he said presently.

"Yes, I see the difficulty. But it is a choice of evils. Which is the greater evil, state some reason why the debate will not be held, or——?" and Bagshaw shrugged his shoulders significantly.

For a long time they talked, until at length Father Townley had made up his mind. When Bagshaw left the Community of the Incarnation he had a thoughtful look upon his face.

The following morning Dominic received a letter.

It is my will that you return here immediately," he read. "There are many reasons for this; but it is sufficient to say that you need absolute rest after the toil of many months. I forbid you at the present juncture even to think of taking part in the debate which has been announced in the papers. I have made all arrangements concerning this, and as far as possible have nullified the results of the grave mistake you have made. I will explain my will to you more fully on your return."

The letter came to Dominic like a sharp, sudden blow. He had not expected it. Throughout the previous day he had been going over his proposed arguments, and felt confident of the result of the debate. He felt sure that he would be able to strike such a blow for Catholic truth as had not been struck in England for many a long day, and he rejoiced at the thought of his triumph. No thought of defeat entered his mind. The thing was impossible. Did he not stand upon the rock of truth; and was he not to meet the worn-out arguments of a Protestant and a Dissenter? Therefore he was bitterly disappointed at Father Townley's letter.

Not that he ever thought of disobeying. For years he had been learning the lesson of obedience. While at the "House," so strict was the discipline that he dared do nothing, not even the simplest things, without asking permission. He realized now that he had done wrong in giving the lecture. He ought to have consulted his Superior first.

When he reached the "House," he was instructed to proceed at once to the Superior's study, where Father Townley awaited him.

"My son," said the older man, "I am deeply grieved."

"And yet I have tried to serve our Holy Church," said Dominic.

"You took the vow of obedience," said the Superior; "you vowed that you would act as I should dictate."

"I know," replied the young fellow, "and I thought I was acting in accordance with your wishes. While at Brigfield I received a lot of questions. The papers were full of letters. All sorts of Protestant absurdities were uttered about the claims of the Church. I know now that I ought to have written you, but it seemed to me that the matter was pressing."

"I absolve you of all thought or intention of wrong," said the older man quietly. "Nevertheless, you have sinned, in that you have acted without the consent of your superiors."

Dominic could not help thinking of the freedom Trevelyan enjoyed. He had not to ask the consent of any Superior in challenging him to a debate; he acted according to the dictates of his own judgment.

"Remember your vows," said Father Townley. "You are a bond slave to the Church. You live only for her. As you have often been told, you may at times have to act in ways which may seem wrong. But when the Church speaks, she must be obeyed."

"Yes, Father," said the young man. The measure of freedom he had enjoyed while out in the world departed at the moment he entered the

precincts of the Community. He was nothing, the Church was all, and the Church spoke through his Superior.

For a long time they conversed together, and then Dominic went away into silence. It was necessary for him that he should be placed under the discipline of his order. For several days he lived in absolute retirement, seeing no one except his Confessor and the Superior, and holding conversation with none of the brothers of the Community. To Dominic it was a time of much heart-searching. Something, he knew not what, struggled for expression. Questions, impulses, longings which he could not explain, surged in his mind and heart. He seemed like a bird in a cage who wanted to be free; the questions which at first seemed easily answered recurred with frequent iteration, offering new difficulties with every appearance. When he sought advice of his Confessor, he was told to crush his desire for freedom, to drive away every question which approached the door of his mind. He tried to do this, but did not altogether succeed.

One day Father Townley called him into his study. A huge pile of letters lay on the desk before him.

"My son," said the old man, "a large number of letters, addressed to you at the House of St. Joseph, Brigfield, have been sent on here. I have not thought it wise that you should see them. In the main they appertain to your lecture, and to the reasons why the proposed debate did not take place."

"What did take place?" asked Dominic eagerly. "What did the people say? What did the papers say? What course did Trevelyan take?"

"It is not well that you should know," said Father Townley. "You are under discipline, and it is my will that you shall read nothing about it."

Dominic sighed his obedience, nevertheless his heart was very bitter.

"There is one communication which came for you, however, which I think it well you should see," went on Father Townley. "It is addressed to you here."

He handed him the letter as he spoke, which Dominic, in spite of his endeavor to show no excitement, read eagerly.

It ran as follows:

"BARSTONE, MEREMeadOWS.

MARCH —, 19—.

"My dear Sir, —

"You will of course remember our meeting in the Town Hall at Brigfield, when we arranged to debate the views expressed in the lecture you gave. You will, of course, also be aware of subsequent events in relation thereto. As I shall be staying at the above address for a few days, and having been given to understand that you are living at the House of the Incarnation, I write in the hope of making an arrangement whereby we can meet. I propose giving two or three lectures in answer to the one you gave at Brigfield, and as I should not like in any way to misrepresent your views, and as certain of the statements you made are open to more than one interpretation, I should like to hear from your own lips exactly what your views are. I hope I am acting only in the interests of what appears to me as the truth, and as misrepresentation, even although given in good faith, would only hinder what we both desire, I sincerely hope you will grant my request.

"If convenient to you, I will call at the House of the Incarnation at any hour during the next three days, or if you prefer, I am requested by Mrs. Fletcher Yorke to say that she will be delighted to see you here, where we can have ample opportunity for talking over the questions which are uppermost in my mind.

"Apologizing for this intrusion upon your time, and trusting for a favorable reply, I am yours faithfully.

"CUTHBERT TREVELYAN."

Dominic read every word, to the last line, and then looked up.

"I have decided that you shall accede to this request," said Father Townley.

Dominic's heart beat fast, but he did not speak.

"After what I have said to you since your return from Brigfield, I am sure I can trust your discretion," went on the Superior. "Moreover, if the request he makes is refused, he will naturally make capital out of it in his lectures."

"Then you wish me to write, and tell him to come here?" said Dominic.

"No," said Father Townley, "I do not think so. On the whole I think it will be better for you to go there. I have no doubt that if you say you will be there on Wednesday evening, at five o'clock, you will be asked to dine with the family."

"And you would like this?"

"I see no objection to it," said the priest. "I shall want a long talk with you before you go, but I wish you to write saying you will call there at the time I have mentioned."

Dominic's head swam, and his heart beat violently, why, he did not know; but he only said, "Yes, Father."

“That is all, I think,” said the priest, and Dominic left the room without another word, and went back to his solitude.

On the Wednesday morning a letter came from Mrs. Yorke, inviting Dominic to dinner, and shortly after four o’clock the young man was walking rapidly towards Barstone. Why he walked so rapidly he did not know, except that he desired to reach the house before the time he had stated for his meeting with Cuthbert Trevelyan. When he reached the lodge gates, he looked at the shabby little gun-metal watch which he carried, and saw that it was only half-past four. He longed to hurry on, but felt that his early visit might be inopportune. He then struck into a footpath which led to an eminence above the house. The weather, although March, was dear and frosty, and the strong bracing air was acting on him like a tonic. A faint tinge of color came to his pale cheeks, and he reveled in the freedom he enjoyed. He had barely reached the hill-top when his heart seemed to stand still, for coming towards him he saw Maggie Yorke.

15. An Appeal To Honesty

IT WAS several months since Dominic had seen Maggie, yet no sooner did they meet than he felt angry. He remembered how, when they last met, she had practically accused him of acting the part of a traitor. She had told him that men holding his views had no right to be in the Church of England, that they were indeed living lies. He remembered too how her words had disturbed him, maddened him. For a time, moreover, he saw no answer to her accusation, and not until he had had a conversation with Father Townley had his heart been set at rest. Since then, his mind had been so full of his work that he had not been troubled by any doubts. His one great thought and object had been to win converts to the Church; into this work he had thrown all his energy, all the passion of his being. It was not for him to consider logic, nor history; it was for him to urge the claims, the sacraments, the authority of the Church. In his zeal he had overstepped his Superior's wishes, and he had undergone penance as a consequence. But what of that? He was a priest of the Catholic Church, and nothing must stand in the way of her triumph. He was nothing, no man was anything, the Catholic Church was all.

As I said, the meeting with Maggie angered him, and yet he was glad to meet her. Not that he imagined he had any pleasure in her society because she was a woman. He had never cherished thoughts of love, and even if he had, he could never love Maggie. Rather he hated her. He had a feeling that she had stood between him and his duty, that she had lessened his zeal for God, that she had sown the seeds of doubt in his mind. Moreover, he had taken the vow of celibacy. Christ, as He expressed Himself in the Catholic Church, was his spouse, and he must think of no other. Still his meeting with her gave him pleasure. She looked very beautiful on that wild March day. The wind had brought a rich color to her cheeks, and her hair had been somewhat disheveled by the breezes. But this only added to her beauty. She looked so strong, so healthy, so vigorous, that he could not help admiring her.

"I had no idea I should see you here," he said.

But Maggie made no reply to this remark on the obvious; she only held out her hand, as if she were greeting an old friend.

Maggie was very glad to see Dominic. She had heard all about his meeting with Cuthbert Trevelyan, who was staying at her father's house, and she wanted to hear what he had to say about it. She had been told that it was owing to the orders he had received from Father Townley that he failed to meet Mr. Trevelyan, and yet she could not help scorning the action. Reared as she had been, she could not understand how a man could shirk his obvious duty in the way Dominic had shirked his.

"All the Father Superiors in the world should not have kept me from sticking to my guns," she had said bluntly, when she heard of the upshot of the matter.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Wildthorne," she said; "glad too that you have promised to dine with us tonight. But that will not be till half-past seven."

"I have an appointment with Mr. Trevelyan in less than half an hour," said Dominic.

"Yes, and do you know, I think Mr. Trevelyan will be rather late. He went out golfing with my brother Fletcher this afternoon, and I don't see how they can be back till after five. They are both keen golfers, and I know Fletcher will not let his adversary go until they have finished the eighteen holes. You have never had the golf fever, I suppose, and can't understand how it feels? It's simply awful. When you get it you are ready to sacrifice anything for golf. Unfortunately I speak from experience."

"I wonder you are not playing this afternoon, then," retorted Dominic.

"My opponent failed me, or I should have been," she replied with a laugh, "I went to the links with that intention."

"I am glad your opponent failed you," said Dominic impulsively.

"Why?"

"Because then I should not have had this pleasure," And Dominic flushed as he spoke.

"Now, that's very kind of you," laughed Maggie. "Anyhow, I hope you'll forgive Mr. Trevelyan, because it will be Fletcher's fault if he's late. As it was it was only when he found that you would be staying to dinner, and that a few minutes would make no difference, that he risked the possibility of

being late. By the way, you can just see them from here. They are at the thirteenth tee. Would you not like to go and watch them?"

"No," replied Dominic; "I would rather stay and talk with you — if you don't mind."

"Then we'd better go to Barstone by the footpath, which leads through Dingley Clough," replied Maggie.

"You've heard all about the Brigfield fiasco, I suppose," said Dominic, after they had walked a few seconds.

"I read about it in the newspapers."

"And — and what did you think?"

He had not meant to ask this at all, but now that he was alone with Maggie, he had a most consuming desire to know what she thought.

"Do you want me to be quite frank?"

"Yes, of course."

"Then I was awfully disappointed in you."

"Yes?"

"I cannot imagine an Englishman accepting a challenge and then weakly backing out."

"A private soldier is bound to obey his commander-in-chief," said Dominic.

"Who is that?" asked Maggie.

"Father Townley."

"Oh!" said Maggie.

"Did you not know?"

"No, I did not know. I thought you regarded yourself as a minister of One greater than any priest. I thought you regarded yourself as having a Divine commission."

"I do not think you understand, Miss Yorke."

"No," she replied, "I do not understand. First of all, I hoped you refused to go on with the debate, because you wanted to be loyal to your Church."

"That *was* the reason."

"I am very glad," she said, and then she gave a hasty glance at the young man who walked by her side, and noticed that he was still clothed in the garb worn by the brothers of the Community of the Incarnation. This consisted of a kind of long, loose cassock, which reached his feet, fastened around his waist by a leathern girdle. She did not know whether he was ton-

sured or not, as he wore a biretta, such as she had often seen Jesuit priests wear in their monasteries.

“You doubt it?” he said almost angrily.

“I suppose you call yourself a clergyman of the Church of England?” she said.

“Of the English Catholic Church, certainly!”

“Of the Church which left the Church of Rome in the sixteenth century as a protest against its superstitions, and what was then called its blasphemies,” she said.

“Ye-es,” he said doubtfully.

“After I had read the report of your lecture at Brigfield,” she said, “I turned to the Prayer-Book and examined the Thirty-Nine Articles, and the Homilies which form the basis of your ordination vows. I hoped after Mr. Trevelyan had challenged you to debate your lecture, that you had again read those Articles and Homilies, and decided to be — well, honest.”

Again she angered him. The blunt, uncompromising manner of speech which she had inherited from her father grated upon his nerves. It left no room for sophistries of any sort.

“You are very outspoken, Miss Yorke,” he said, his face flushing.

“The real question is whether I am truthful,” she said.

“I am sure you desire to be truthful,” he replied.

“But have I stated the case correctly?” she retorted. “For the moment I am not arguing whether the Romanists are right, or whether we Protestants are right. The question which haunts me is this: Can a man who is a minister of the Protestant Church of England, who has taken her vows, who receives the advantages which that Church gives him, and yet advocates the very things which Rome claims, and his own Church rejects, be regarded as an honest man?”

“Miss Yorke!”

“Can he?” persisted Maggie.

“But if one is convinced that the Reformation was very largely a mistake?” he said unguardedly.

“Then he should not stay in a Church which claims to exist as a protest against Rome. If a man believes Rome to be right, let him in all honesty go to Rome.”

“Do you think you understand the position. Miss Yorke?” he said, still keeping his temper under control.

"Please show me wherein I fail to understand," said Maggie.

"Should not one try to reform his Church from within?" he asked.

"In order to bring her back to Rome?"

"Back to the truth," he replied.

"Then this, if I understand it, is your position," said Maggie scornfully.

"You take vows that you will protest against 'the errors of the Church of Rome,' and then, under the cloak of those vows, you advocate those very doctrines which you are sworn to protest against. That is what you call reforming the Church from within. In your lecture you, in effect, upheld the Mass, Mariolatry, the Roman view of the Sacraments, the Roman idea of the priesthood, Roman ceremonial, and other things which your Church denounces, and all this while promising to be faithful to your vows of ordination."

"May I again urge that I do not think you understand the position?" urged Dominic.

"I am afraid I am very dull," said Maggie; "but would you mind endeavoring to make it plain to me?"

Dominic was silent. He found it quite easy to deal with sophistries when he was discussing the matter with men who sympathized with him, but Maggie's uncompromising honesty baffled him. She would not accept sophistries or devious reasoning. To her a thing was right, or it was wrong, a position was honorable or dishonorable, and in her blunt Yorkshire fashion she did not hesitate to say so.

And yet he wanted more than he could say to justify himself in her eyes. He did not know why, but he longed to win her good opinion. When they had talked together before, he had been able to free himself from her accusation, but now it was not so easy. For the first time he really saw his position as those whom he called "Prots" saw it. Here was a woman, at least his equal in point of education and reasoning, who was uncompromisingly honest, and yet who regarded his position as dishonest, as a violation of the truth. Moreover, he could not explain why, but something in the very depths of his being told him that she was right.

"To me," went on the girl, "it is as though a soldier took an oath that he would defend his country, and then subtly, in such ways as he was able, played into the hands of the enemy."

"But if one felt that Protestantism was a miserable negation," he said passionately, "if one felt that it was blinding the eyes of the people to the

great truths of the Church, if one felt that as a consequence the country was drifting to dissent, and atheism, and devilry, what then, Miss Yorke?"

"I admire your classification," replied Maggie. "It is at least amusing to hear Dissent associated with — the other things you mention. Moreover, you will have a difficult task to prove that Protestantism was a miserable negation, or that it blinded the eyes of the people to the great truths of Christ; but let that pass. If I felt what you said, I would be honest. I would leave the Church that was professedly Protestant, and I would go to the one which I believed in. What would you say of a cricketer who professed to play for one team, and then did all he could to help the other?"

"But you speak of the English Catholic Church as if she were opposed to the Roman Catholic," said Dominic. "Do they not profess to do the same work?"

"I believe they do," replied Margaret; "but it is hardly a fair statement of the case. The Roman Catholic Church disowns the Anglican. She does not admit the validity of her orders; she regards her as an heretical sect, and looks upon her members as a number of disobedient children who have left the true Church. The English Church, on the other hand, looks upon the Roman Church as a Church full of abomination and heresy."

"But should we not seek to heal the breaches, and work for the reunion of Christendom?"

"Not at the sacrifice of truth."

"But when one feels that the Reformation was a mistake?" he said unguardedly.

"Then you are a Romanist at heart?"

"I am an English Catholic," he replied. "At heart we are one with the great Roman Church — although, of course, there are many things in the Roman Church which I do not accept."

"But do you think that the Roman Church will ever alter?"

"No," he said, almost unthinkingly.

"And yet you seek reunion with her?"

He felt he had not justified his position; he realized that she had placed him in an awkward situation. And yet he wanted to stand well in her eyes. He wanted her to think well of him.

"Do you remember when we were children," she went on, "that you came to Barfield with a letter for my father? After you had gone I had a sort of vision of you. I saw in you a sort of defender of the faith, a man who un-

flinchingly declared the truth, no matter what the consequences might be. I thought of you as another Luther."

"Another Luther! God forbid!" he cried.

"Another Luther," repeated Maggie. "A man who would not compromise; one who took a clear, straight course, and defied everything. I am so disappointed."

"But Luther!" he cried. "A clown, a Philistine, a man who tore the Church in twain! A godless wretch."

"Have you ever read a real authoritative history of Luther?" asked Maggie.

"I have read quite enough about him," he answered, almost angrily.

"But an authoritative history?"

He shook his head.

"Will you?"

"No; that is —"

"I wish you would."

"Why?"

"Because I still believe you want to be honest. Come now, will you?"

Their eyes met, and he felt his heart throbbing wildly. Why he could not tell, but he longed for her to think well of him. His heart had burned when she spoke of her vision concerning him.

"Yes, I will," he said.

"But it will make no difference to me," he added presently. "I shall still remain a Catholic."

"I admire men who stand by their convictions, whatever they may be."

"But we English Catholics do that," he said.

"God knows, many of our men have suffered for their convictions. Have they not been maligned, dragged before legal tribunals?"

"Why?"

"Because they would be faithful to their convictions."

"And unfaithful to their ordination vows."

"You still harp on that!"

"How can one help it? All the same, I think they are to be pitied."

"Pitied! Why?"

"Because they are the laughing-stock of the Church whose ways they ape," said Maggie bluntly. "To me there are few things more pathetic than the position of the Ritualists, and those who claim affinity with the Church

of Rome. That Church laughs at them. Rome will not accept the English Church in any way, and yet the Romanizing section of it goes around aping her. To the Church of Rome you are nothing but a schismatic layman, and yet you praise her, and do all you can to bring her back to England. I should have thought Englishmen would have more pride."

Again Dominic looked at Maggie's face, and again his heart beat wildly. How he wished he could convert her; and yet her cold reasoning stood as an impregnable wall against him!

"You are not a member of the Church of England?"

"No," she said, "neither do I pretend to be. Not that I do not admire greatly a large section of that Church. I do. But," she added, "I cannot admire those who have taken her vows, and are yet false to her teaching."

"And what would you do if you believed as I believe?" he stammered.

"I would join the Church of Rome boldly," she said; "but not before I had examined her claims, yes, examined them to the minutest details; in any case I would sail under my true colors — I would at least be to the world what I really was."

He never hated Maggie so much as at that moment. He felt that she scorned him, that she regarded him as a traitor. And worst of all, he did not know how to answer her. All the logic was on her side. It was true that many of his friends who were of his way of thinking pretended that they were helping to save England from Rome, that they were giving people all that Rome could give them, without joining that community. Some of them had even professed to preach against the errors of Rome. And yet he knew that their influence was all on the side of Rome. He could not help admitting that all the tendency of the Community of the Incarnation was Rome-ward. They were for ever scorning the "Prots," whether found in the "Low" Church or in Dissent, and they were for ever copying the ways of Rome. In his heart of hearts he knew that the influence, not only of the order to which he belonged, but of every other order belonging to the Anglican Church, was in the direction of the Church of Rome. If he joined that Church, he would not be the first who had gone there from the Community of the Incarnation. Besides, did not the Order of Corporate Reunion exist for the very purpose of Romanizing England? Were not Romanizers placed in Evangelical parishes, under the guise of Evangelicals, in order that they might subtly and slowly accustom the people to Catholic doctrine and ceremonial, while many Church of England clergymen were believed on good

authority to have taken Rome's ordination, because they did not believe in those of Anglicanism?

And Maggie made him feel this. Her uncompromising honesty had torn aside all sophistical rags, and revealed the heart truth of the matter. She rebuked him while she angered him. She appealed to his honesty, and he a priest!

For the first time he faced the thought of joining Rome. Yes, his Community had paved the way for this step, but could he take it? It meant pulling up the roots of his life, after all had been said. It meant — it meant a complete submission of his mind, it meant mental suicide.

And this girl had unsettled him! She had made him feel a scorn for himself; nay, more, she made him feel as though everything were unreal, uncertain.

"Do you know what you are saying?" he asked hoarsely. "Do you know that I may be obliged to do what you say?"

"And what then?"

"You would despise me more than ever."

"I might despise your intelligence, your powers of reasoning," she said, "and I certainly should pity your state of mind."

"Why?"

"Because you would forever forswear your right to be a free man. You would sacrifice your right to think on religious matters, except as a mediaeval Church dictates; you would place yourself completely under the authority of a Church which has always placed fetters on the mind, and hindered the progress of the world. Yes, I should pity you for that, because you would be intellectually a slave. But I should know you were honest, and true to what you believed to be right."

He stood still and looked at her; and as he looked it seemed to him that the foundations of his life were shaken. Why had God allowed this woman to cross his path? She who was always unsettling his mind, and turning him from the path which he had marked out?

16. Dominic Learns His Secret

DOMINIC'S INTERVIEW with Cuthbert Trevelyan was short. He had no interest in their conversation, and he forgot many of the instructions which Father Townley had given him. Moreover, the young minister confused him. He realized that, intellectually, they lived in different worlds. His (Dominic's) conception of a Church had been, when driven to its logical issue, a visible organized body, subject to rules and regulations. Jesus had come to establish a Church. He had given authority to St. Peter and the other apostles, and they had bestowed on others their authority to administer the sacraments, and perform priestly functions, by the laying-on of hands. A certain body of teaching had been given, and all who accepted this belonged to the Church. They formed the body of the Church. Outside this body all was confusion. The three great sections of Christendom, the Roman, the Greek, and the Anglican Churches, comprised this great body, outside of which there was no Church. It was true there was a great deal of confusion and uncertainty about the validity of the Anglican section, but up to now he had accepted it as a true branch, in spite of a great deal of evil which had been caused by the Reformation. To Cuthbert Trevelyan, however, all was different. The Catholic Church to him knew nothing of the artificial and arbitrary ecclesiastical fences. The organization of the Church was only so much machinery, which had merely a tentative value, and which might be altered and rearranged from time to time. It was simply man-made, and had no Divine authority. All who accepted Christ and tried to live His life were in the Church, whether or not they were recognized by any particular Church.

Thus they had no common ground on which to stand, and their interview quickly came to an end. Moreover, as Maggie had predicted, Trevelyan had been rather late, and they had not talked long, when the young minister found it was time for him to dress for dinner.

Although Dominic did not realize it, that evening formed a new epoch in his life. While he was waiting in the drawing-room, Maggie York joined him, dressed for dinner. Hitherto he had seen her only in outdoor attire. He

had admired her then, admired her gracefulness, her vigor, her abundant health and strength; but now she appeared to him in a new guise. Far be it from me to try and describe her dress, or the beauty of her appearance as she suddenly presented herself before Dominic. It seemed to him that the intervening years were as nothing, and that he was the poor ragged boy again, while she was the great lady of the district. Her hair gleamed in the electric light, her complexion dazzled him. It seemed to him as though she had forgotten the conversation they had had, and was bent on being pleasing to him. She talked of art and music and books; she had ceased to be a rebuke to him, and had become a siren who charmed him.

It was but little after seven when she came into the room; evidently she was desirous that he should not be lonely. He was her father's guest, and she would do her best to entertain him. It was a new Maggie that he saw — a beautiful, gracious-minded maiden, whose face was wreathed with smiles, and whose mouth was filled with pleasant words.

He did not hate her now. He forgot all about the anger he had felt towards her two hours before. He knew next to nothing of the society of women. Since he had stayed at the boarding-house, on that visit to the Yorkshire watering-place, he had scarcely ever spent an hour in a woman's society. He had lived for his work, he had been filled with the passion of his mission. Women were not for him, and he believed with the Fathers, whose writings he had devoured, that any man who would live the life of a priest of the Church must banish all thoughts of women.

"Let him who would live the holy life flee from women," he had been admonished again and again, and he had believed in it. Nay, more, his conversations with Maggie had confirmed the belief. She had turned him aside from his duty, she had unsettled his beliefs, she had almost mocked his vocation. What wonder then that he had hated her as an enemy of his soul!

But all was different now. She smiled upon him, strove to be agreeable to him, and her beauty fascinated him. Moreover, he soon found that they had tastes in common. One of the accomplishments which had been encouraged at the House of the Incarnation was music. It was believed that it would be invaluable to him in his life-work. He had gifts in that direction, and reveled in the old oratorios and masses. He had a fine voice too, and was no mean performer either at the organ or the piano, and Maggie, who had a perfect passion for music, soon found herself forgetting her prejudices against him while talking about one of her favorite studies.

With regard to books, they had less to draw them together. Dominic's reading had been in the main mediaeval and ecclesiastical; but even here they found a common ground of interest. Since Dominic had been away on his mission work, he had read a few modern books, and was able to discuss them with her.

When the dinner-bell sounded, they looked at each other in astonishment; the half-hour had passed like a flash of light.

"I wish dinner could be postponed an hour," said Dominic with a laugh.

"I don't," said Maggie; "I'm frightfully hungry. Never mind; I have insisted that you shall take me in to dinner, then we'll discuss these things fully."

"I'm glad I shall sit by you," he said. "You see," he went on, as if in explanation, "I know so little about the ways of the world."

At that moment Cuthbert Trevelyan entered, and then Dominic had a feeling at his heart like pain. Why, he did not know. Why should Maggie smile on him so sweetly and greet him so kindly? And why should this Dissenting heretic look so handsome and striking? He could not help comparing himself, in his long cassock-like robe and a leathern girdle around his waist, with this tall, scholarly-looking young man, who was attired in the evening dress of an English gentleman. He felt himself shabby and clownish by his side. After all, he was only Dominic Wildthorne, son of the drunken Barnaby Wildthorne, who had been a disgrace to Meremeadows. He did not possess the *savoir faire* of Trevelyan, the man who had passed through a public school and an English University. He had been a kind of wastrel, taken into the Community as a kind of charity boy, and then educated out of the funds of the Community.

For the first time he felt ashamed of these things. Maggie, the well-educated, beautiful, well-dressed woman, and the scholarly, well-dressed man had made him so. Why—?

But he had no time to pursue the question further, for at that moment Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher Yorke and their two sons entered the room.

A few minutes later he found himself sitting by Maggie's side at the dining-table. All around him were evidences of wealth and refinement. Spring-time had barely come, and yet the table was covered with a profusion of flowers. Every appointment of the room betrayed a love for art and beauty. The conversation revealed an outlook on life which was strange to him. He had lived in the world which was shaped and limited by the ideals of his

Community; these people looked wider. He found his conception of things broadening as if by magic. Life, literature, religion were all greater than he had imagined. He yielded to the spell of the hour. By nature he was quick and receptive of new ideas. His mind had great capacities; but he had lived in a groove, a groove of sacerdotalism and ecclesiasticism, and unconsciously he felt the groove was widening. The experience might be only transitory; presently the training and influence of the last few years would assert themselves again; but for the moment he lived in a new world. These Dissenters, whom he had looked upon as ignorant and blatant, lived in a larger world than he, their outlook on life in all its bearings was wider than his, and his own conception looked small and meager.

He was glad now that the debate between him and Cuthbert Trevelyan had not gone on. He would have been beaten out of the field, simply because the other man would have led him into realms of thought and knowledge of which he was profoundly ignorant.

He felt this very keenly when the ladies had gone into the drawing-room and the men sat around smoking. He (Dominic) knew nothing of the books, knew nothing of the great surging thoughts of the world with which Cuthbert Trevelyan and George Yorke were perfectly conversant. And yet George Yorke was a mere business man. How could he (Dominic) and those who had been trained as he was trained expect to influence men whose reading and outlook on life were wider than their own?

But all this was forgotten presently. He was by Maggie's side again, and Cuthbert Trevelyan was asking her to sing. He longed to add his persuasions to those of the young minister, but somehow he was afraid.

Maggie had one of those rare contralto voices which compel attention, and all that training and musical culture could do for her had been lavished upon her. The music which Dominic had heard had been in the main Church music, and he was passionately fond of it; but the chord which Maggie struck in his heart was not altogether religious. She carried him away into the realms of romance and beauty. Her voice thrilled him. He forgot where he was. To him they were away in Arcadia, where all was sunshine and song, while he and Maggie walked beneath the shady bowers. Her voice seemed to arouse in him a thousand hopes and longings unknown to him before. He wanted to cry out in agony, but the rich caressing tones quieted the pain. Oh, there was a world, a life of which he knew nothing!

When Maggie ceased singing there was a gentle murmur of "Thank you!" but Dominic was silent. He knew his secret now. He loved, and his love, while it lifted him to heaven, caused him the most maddening pains. He was madly jealous of Cuthbert Trevelyan, jealous even of her father and mother and brother. But more, he was torn with anguish; he remembered his vows, remembered his vocation!

He dared not stay longer. It is true Father Townley had told him that he need not hurry back early, but he dared not stay. If he did, he would do and say some wild, mad thing. He would break all rules, all conventions. All his promises, hopes, and vows came rushing back to his memory, the dream of his early years asserted itself; but all seemed as nothing as his eyes fed on Maggie's beauty. What was anything, everything, in comparison with those great laughing eyes, the perfect oval of her beautiful face, the gleam of her hair, the witchery of her voice, the magnetism of her presence?

No, no, he must not look on her; it was black, damning sin for him to do so. He must not think of the song she had sung; he must crush all the thoughts and feelings she had aroused. He loved her, and that love blackened his life, made all his dreams impossible. He had taken his vows, vows which hung like chains around his heart — vows of poverty, chastity, obedience. What right had he ever to think of a woman's beauty, of a woman's charm? It was not only sin, it was madness. He was wedded to the Church, to religion. It was for him to go around the country as a preaching monk or friar, having nothing, caring for nothing, except to win souls for the Church.

All protested against his going so early, but he did not heed them.

"I must go — I promised," he said. "Good night!"

He staggered out of the house, and presently found himself on the drive. No, he could not go back to the House of the Incarnation; he must stay out there alone in the night, and face the facts of his life.

The moon was nearly at its full. A high wind blew, and great masses of heavy black clouds rolled across the sky. But it was not cold. The smell of early spring was in the air, and the earth gave promise of waking out of her sleep.

He climbed to the top of the hill where he had met Maggie that same afternoon. What a change had come to his thoughts, his heart since then! Then his work was everything, while now—.

No, no, he had not changed. He hated her then, he hated her now. Yes, he would crush all thoughts of her, he would drive her out of his heart, his life.

She was an emissary of Satan sent to tempt him. He had been warned against her in the past. Had she not paralyzed his tongue, when he was about to proclaim against the sins of the world in that playhouse? Had she not made him love his work less when he met her on the moors on the following day? Yes, he remembered now. He had felt a longing for the world, a longing for his liberty, the world's liberty, a longing to take his place in the great maelstrom of the world's godless life. During the years he had not seen her, her power over him had gone; but when he had met her again, his heart had warned him against her. Did he not recognize her as his enemy — the enemy of his Church? That very day she had been again the emissary of Satan. Under the guise of truth and honor she had made him feel that he was a liar and a traitor. She had bidden him leave the Church which had nurtured him, and go over to Rome. Yes, and her lies had seemed like truth. He could not answer her then, he could not answer now.

But that was not all, nor the worst. That night she had sung to him as the sirens in the old Greek story sang to the heroes of Romance. She was trying to lure him on to the rocks of worldliness and love, and he a priest vowed to celibacy.

Again he forgot his training, his vows. Again he saw the flash of her eyes, the glitter of her hair, the glory of her face; he heard the music of her voice, too, a voice which lured him away from the things to which he had promised to be faithful.

Oh, how he loved her! He would give years of his life to win her love, to know that her heart, her smile were for him. What mattered if she were a schismatic, what did he care about her scorn for his intellectual position? He loved her. Was she not pure, honorable, beautiful; why then should he not cherish the thought of her? Men had called him clever, eloquent. He had been able to sway the multitudes by the charm of his speech, Why could not he become famous, rich perhaps? Then — then he could go boldly to her, and ask her to be his wife!

Wife! How dare he? Had he not promised to drive all thoughts of love from his heart? Had he not pleaded, begged that he might take the vows that now bound him? And were not his vows holy — were they not in accordance with the will of his Church?

Yes, she was the enemy to his soul, and he hated her. An anger such as he had never known before surged in his heart. Rather than encourage love for her, he would strangle her with his own hands. A vow was passed, it

was eternally binding. This woman, fair, beautiful, charming, clever as she was, was only another Eve tempting him to eat of forbidden fruit. He would drive her out of his mind. He would struggle, fight, pray, do penance, work. Ah, yes, his salvation lay in activity, he would plead with Father Townley to send him away to a place where it would be impossible for him to see her. He would ask that he might be sent amidst scenes of poverty, misery, squalor, sin; then he would see what the world meant, see what was the result of having thoughts other than those of the Holy Church.

He hurried back to the House of the Incarnation, and saw a light in Father Townley's study. He would ask for admission, and tell him all. Father Townley was not his confessor, but he would tell him everything, of every meeting he had had with Maggie, and of the influence she had had on his life. Then he would plead that he might be sent to some dark, benighted place, either at home or abroad, where he could forget the doubts she had aroused with regard to his position, forget the mad passion which burnt at his heart.

No, he would not tell him all. How could he? How could he allow Maggie's name to be discussed even by Father Townley? Besides, he did not love her. He hated her, and loathed the passion she had aroused in his heart. No, he could not even tell his confessor of his love. He knew he ought, knew that it was a sin almost unforgivable to keep back anything from him; but he could not help it. Every fiber in his being protested against it — it would be sacrilege. Besides, he did not love her, of course he did not; rather he hated her as an emissary of Satan.

Father Townley met him with a smile.

"Well, Dominic, my son," he said, in a friendly way, "and how did you enjoy your evening at Barstone?"

"I was miserable, Father. We lived in different worlds. I came away early. I hated their riches, their worldliness."

Father Townley looked at him keenly.

"What is the matter?" he said.

"Only this, Father; I want to get back to work. I am restless, eager to be preaching again. You need not fear for me, I will never repeat the Brigfield fiasco. I will undertake nothing of which you would disapprove. Only let me get to work."

"Something is disturbing you, Dominic?"

“Yes, do you know how they regard me up at Barstone? They look upon me as one who is disloyal. They say I have no right to remain in the Church of England while preaching the doctrines which her Prayer-book condemns. That according to Romanists my ordination is false, invalid. I want to let them know how much I value their opinions; I want to get back to work.”

Again Father Townley looked at him searchingly. He knew there was something in Dominic’s mind which had not been told him. He did not even guess at the truth, but he knew there was more than appeared on the surface.

“Perhaps he’s right,” he reflected. “He has suffered enough for his mistake, and he’s penitent. I will not ask him further questions; after all, I am not his confessor. One thing is certain, his faith is not unsettled. He has no inclinations towards Rome, I am glad for that, for I don’t want any scandal. There is enough talk as it is about this being a training ground for Rome, and Dominic is too good an asset to the Catholic party in the Anglican Church to lose. In another five years he will be crowding the cathedrals of England.”

“Very well,” said Father Townley presently, “As fortune or misfortune would have it, I have just received a letter from Father Bingley, of Hendly Clough, which, as you know, is a colliery town, telling me that the doctors have ordered him to the South of France. The fellow has been overworking himself, and has broken down. He wants a *locum*; it’s an awful place, but it is the only one I can think of for you.”

“Send me, send me, please, Father!” cried Dominic. “It will be just the work I want.”

“All right, then; you can go tomorrow. And now it’s time for you to go to bed. You look ill, and worn out. I can see that society does not agree with you.”

By the next evening Dominic had taken up his abode in St. Michael’s Church House, Hendly Clough, and was receiving instructions from Father Bingley about the work. He found that the church was only a shabby room in the worst part of a colliery town, but he did not mind that. Shabby and dirty as the room was. Father Bingley had done his best for the altar. That at least gave evidence that the priest-in-charge was a great lover of Roman ritual, and that he had done all in his power to copy the ways of the Roman Church, of which he was a secret member. Moreover, he had given what he called “definite Church Teaching” to the people, so that Dominic found that the neighborhood was fully prepared to listen to his own views.

He gave his whole soul to the work. Father Bingley, hard as he had worked, was less eager than Dominic. From early morning till late at night he toiled. The little church bell was constantly calling the people to the services, and in the intervals he was visiting from house to house, arranging classes, organizing clubs, and attending to the thousand things which the neighborhood seemed to demand.

“Bingley wur a rare un for work,” remarked the people who attended the church, “but he’s nowt to Dominic. Yon chap’ll kill hissen, if he’s noan careful.”

And indeed this seemed probable. When night came he had scarcely strength to drag himself to bed. He ate but little, and the unhealthy nature of his work, added to the bodily penances he inflicted upon himself, seemed likely to destroy his naturally strong constitution.

One night, after he had been at Hendly Clough for about a fortnight, he felt so ill that he decided to send the woman who looked after him to call a doctor, but just as he was on the point of calling her for this purpose, she came to him bearing a card.

“Rev. Anthony Ritzoom, S.J.,” he read wonderingly.

“Oh! I remember. Will you show him in, Mrs. Burt?”

17. A Priest Of The Roman And A Priest Of The Anglican Church

FATHER RITZOOM allowed his keen, searching eyes to rest on Dominic as he entered. He had come on a somewhat delicate mission, and he wanted to thoroughly understand his man before entering upon it. To those who have met Father Ritzoom in the pages of other narratives, an introduction to this remarkable man is not needed.¹ To other readers of these pages, however, it may be necessary to say that Father Ritzoom was one of the most influential members of the Society of Jesus. His great object in life was to destroy Protestantism in England, and to restore the authority of the Roman Church. To this end he gave all the power of a remarkable mind and personality. He delighted in what was called the Catholic Movement in the Church of England, for while he denied the validity of Anglican orders, and regarded even the Archbishop of Canterbury as a schismatic layman, he saw that all the secret efforts which had been put forth since the days of the Oxford Movement, to “Catholicize” the English Church, was all helping on the conversion of England to Romanism. Indeed, it was reported that he encouraged such societies by his advice, and by sending loving messages from Rome.

“Of course, all these ritualistic fellows who are aping our ways present a very sorry figure,” he sneered, “and should lose the respect of honest men; but what of that? They are doing Rome’s work in a way which is impossible to us.”

On occasions he advised ritualistic ministers of the Anglican Church to come out boldly on the side of Rome, but not often. “They serve us better by accustoming Protestants to our ceremonials and our dogmas,” he would laugh. Moreover, when they grew discontented with Anglican ordination, we made it easy for them to be reordained by a Roman Bishop, even while they retained their positions as ministers of the Protestant Church of Eng-

land. "If they are willing to consent to occupy such a position, that's their affair, not mine," he would say cynically. "The English people are fools, and if they are willing to be gulled by fellows who have taken our orders, and yet parade as members of the English Catholic Church — well, let them. Our work is going on. If England is ever to be converted, the work will be done by the ritualistic party in the English Church. They can do it quietly, subtly. The English Protestants pay these ritualistic fellows to instill Romish doctrines into the minds of their children, thinking all the time that they are maintaining a Church which is a bulwark against Rome. It is the best joke I know, and I'm not going to spoil the fun."

Mostly Father Ritzoom interested himself in affairs involving large financial issues, but sometimes he devoted his energies to different ends. He rarely encouraged those who belonged to the rank and file of the Romanizing section to come out boldly on the side of Rome. They were only names, and did not count much; but when he met a man of note, the son of an English Church dignitary, or some one of striking ability who had leanings in the direction of Rome, then he did his utmost to lead them to take the definite Romeward step, so that he could advertise it in the newspapers.

Father Ritzoom happened to be in Yorkshire when Dominic was going from parish to parish conducting missions. The fame of the young priest was increasing daily, and then Father Ritzoom made it his business to make inquiries concerning him. He went to Father Mullarney at Meremeadows, who told him all he knew; and as occasion occurred, the Jesuit went to hear him. He was immediately struck with Dominic's oratorical gifts and his great power of attracting the multitudes. He saw that when the name of Father Dominic was announced to preach, crowds of all sorts of people thronged to hear him. He realized too that the young man's personal magnetism, his intense passion, and his seemingly unquestioning faith influenced people in spite of themselves.

"Whether the fellow knows it or not, he is really one of us," he reflected. "He will wake up one day to find that his Anglican orders are so much mockery, and then we shall see some very interesting things. The House of the Incarnation has trained him very well. The fellows have really made him a Romanist. He is not an ordinary man, and therefore great care will be needed. He is a fellow who might jump over the traces altogether; but there seems very little danger of that at present. He is one of those who should

‘go over.’ He has made a reputation, and that reputation must be used for Holy Church.”

That was why he spoke to him after the lecture at Brigfield, and that was why he visited him that night. He had learnt everything that had taken place after Trevelyan’s challenge, for, as may be imagined. Father Ritzoom was not without friends among the “Fathers” and “Brothers” in the House of the Incarnation. Indeed, he made it his business to be acquainted with the workings of all the Romeward Movement Societies which owed their existence to the Tractarian Movement in Oxford at the time of Newman.

“The English Church pays the money to do our work; what more satisfactory arrangement can be made?” he would say, with his peculiar smile.

“You remember me?” he said to Dominic, as the young man pointed to a chair.

“Perfectly, and of course I know you by repute. Possibly I may have seen you at the House of the Incarnation.”

“Possibly,” replied Ritzoom, with a smile. By the way, Father Dominic, you don’t look well. You are overworked.”

“I’m afraid I am,” replied Dominic, with a wan smile. “To be perfectly frank, I was on the point of sending Mrs. Burt for a doctor when you arrived.”

“I’ve given some study to medicine myself,” said the Jesuit, “and I always carry a strong tonic with me wherever I go. I find it invaluable after continuous hard work. An Italian savant told me about it, and I have it made up in pilules. It acts like magic. Won’t you try one? I’ll take one myself. I find myself very tired after a hard day’s work.”

He took a small bottle from his pocket and extracted a small white pilule.

“It’s very small, isn’t it?” he said with a smile; “but I find it a most powerful restorative.”

He placed the pilule in his mouth, and passed the bottle to Dominic.

“Try one,” he said; “it can’t hurt you, and I’ll stake my reputation that you’ll feel a new man in five minutes.”

Dominic felt the other’s keen, searching eyes upon him as he followed his example.

“You’ll find the work different here from that which you have been doing lately,” went on the Jesuit.

“Yes, it’s utterly different; but I like it. One gets tired of speaking to great surging crowds. It’s very necessary work too. The vicar of the adjoining parish, which has a very large church, is a strong Prot, and Bingley has had a terrible time here. Still, he made a footing.”

“And nearly killed himself in making it,” suggested Ritzoom.

“Yes, he did. You see, Bingley is not a strong man, either physically or intellectually. He had to make up for these deficiencies by his devotion.”

“You know Bingley?”

“Only a little. He is not one of our men.”

“No. He’s even more advanced than you.”

Dominic looked questioningly at his visitor, but did not reply.

“I know Bingley well,” went on Ritzoom.

“Yes?”

“Yes. I imagine he would call me one of his best friends. He consulted me about a very important question.”

“Indeed?”

“Yes. It’s a secret to all save a few, but becoming dissatisfied with his Anglican orders, he secretly received orders from other sources.”

“And yet remains in the Anglican Church!” cried Dominic.

“Evidently, Of course his continuing to work as an Anglican priest is his affair; but as for the other — well, directly he gave any attention to the matter, he could do nothing else.”

Dominic was silent.

“I think you see that yourself. But, by the way, how do you feel? Am I not right about the restorative effects of my pilules?”

“Upon my word you are,” replied Dominic. “I had forgotten that I felt so unwell. I feel like a new man.”

“I was sure you would,” replied Ritzoom. “I have derived the same advantage from them a hundred times. They are entirely harmless, too, and have none of the deleterious effects of such drugs as morphine and opium. But about Bingley; didn’t you know?”

“I had heard some rumors of it, but I had given them no serious attention. No, I did not know; indeed I should not have believed it, if — if some one who was absolutely sure had not told me.”

“Why?”

“Well, it’s not — not honest.”

“Don’t you think so? But would it have been honest for him to have continued administering the sacraments, knowing all the time that he had no right to do so?”

Dominic was silent. Ritzoom’s question raised the doubt which Maggie Yorke had aroused weeks before, and which ever since he had been trying to crush.

“I could not help thinking of this when I heard you lecturing at Brigfield,” went on Father Ritzoom.

“You fully endorse the idea of the Catholic Church, and yet you stop short of the logical issue. Bingley has not stopped there. That is the difference between you. But you are tired, and don’t feel like facing the matter.”

“Oh I—I don’t feel tired now, thanks to you,” said Dominic, “and — and, I’m terribly interested in what you say; please go on.”

“Of course the whole question appeals in a different way to these Protestant fellows,” went on Ritzoom.

“To a man like, well, say the late Dean Farrar, the whole idea of Apostolical Succession was a sort of fandango of nonsense. He might not admit it in so many words; but to any one who holds the Catholic idea of the Church, Bingley’s action was the only logical one. If the Church which our Lord established was founded on the idea of bishops and priests to whom He gave authority, and if that Church excommunicated what is called the English Church, where do you stand? It may pretend that it is a part of the Catholic Church, but how can it be when the Catholic Church declares it to be excommunicate? And if it is excommunicate, from its archbishops down to the humblest curate, how in Heaven’s name can it belong to the one indivisible Church?”

“Then, according to you, a priest of the Church of Rome, our orders are—?”

Dominic did not complete the sentence, but looked towards Ritzoom, as if for the necessary word.

“What happened when Gladstone made his appeal to the Holy Father?” said Ritzoom. “No language could be plainer than Leo’s. Interpret it how you will, but the Head of the Catholic Church pronounced that all the Anglican clergy, from the archbishop downwards, were only schismatic laymen.”

“Then, according to you, I am only a layman?”

Ritzoom shrugged his shoulders.

"I wonder Bingley had me here," said Dominic.

"I imagine that Father Bingley has received his orders."

"From whom?"

"How can I say?" And Father Ritzoom laughed quietly. "I see Bingley still keeps the books which he was recommended to read on the question," went on the Jesuit, nodding towards the bookcase. "If I were you I would look into them, they are not badly done. Of course they all assume the Catholic position, and argue from the basic truth of the authority of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church founded in the time of our Lord. That position, of course, both you and I accept implicitly."

"The Primacy of the Pope is, of course, a stumbling block," suggested Dominic.

For more than an hour the two talked; the one suggesting difficulties, the other meeting them. Many ancient books and traditions were quoted; the sayings of men, unknown to the reading world, save to a few ecclesiastics and students of ancient writings, were urged. Celsus, Athanasius, Theodoret, St. Augustine, Papias, Irenaeus, and many another teacher, forgotten save by the schoolmen, were brought forward as witnesses to attest to certain theories. But little reference was made to the teaching of the great Founder of Christianity. Neither urged that the word "Church" was mentioned only twice in His teaching, and that even then His meaning was evidently far removed from the sacerdotal idea of the Church. Nor did either of them seem to realize that the great idea in the Master's mind was the establishment of the Kingdom of God, which was the kingdom of truth and love and mercy reigning in the hearts of men. Both of them were eager to discuss what certain Fathers and elders said about an organization which, if the Founder of Christianity mentioned at all. He mentioned only incidentally; while they were willing to forget the great central truths of His teaching, and life and death.

Christianity was something to be interpreted by the Church, and the Church was a mediaeval system, something the authority for which was to be found in copies of musty documents which perished ages ago.

Still they argued it seriously — this young man, whose whole life had been shaped and molded by the Community in whose teachings he had been reared, and the astute priest whose whole life had been cast into a sacerdotal mold. And the Jesuit had the young man at advantage. He spoke in tones of certainty, of authority. Both united in agreeing that the true conception of

the Church of Christ was the sacerdotal conception, and thus Ritzoom held the stronger position.

“There is no stopping-place, my dear fellow,” he said presently. “Once leave the Protestant idea of the Church, which is as vague as a cloud, which has no authoritative system, and which therefore is no Church at all, and there is no resting-place. Your Community teaches that the Reformation was a mistake, and agrees with another society of a similar nature, that it is ‘a dark, and in some sense a damnable spot in our Church’s history’. Well then, where are you? You do not doubt the validity of the Roman priesthood; you do not doubt that she is the one Church which goes back through the ages. And yet this Church with one united voice speaks with no uncertain sound. It declares that the Anglican Church is as much excommunicate as the Nonconforming Bodies; that the fellow who stands up to preach at the street comer has as much authority to administer the sacraments as your so-called Bishops of Manchester or Liverpool or Canterbury. Then where is your stopping-place? Admit the sacerdotal conception of the Church, and there is no resting-place until you reach Rome.”

And Dominic, whose training had prepared him for the reception of this idea, had to admit that it was so. And yet he was not satisfied. Something, he knew not what, made him feel that there was something deeper, something higher, which both he and Ritzoom failed to see.

“What would you advise?” he said presently.

“I should leave what all true Catholics regard as a bastard Church, and come out boldly on the side of truth,” said Ritzoom. “I should prepare for the priesthood of Rome. You do not belong to the order of men who can act secretly, like Bingley.”

“I must consider it further,” said Dominic presently.

“Certainly, my dear fellow,” said the Jesuit. “It is right you should; but let me tell you that I have no doubt about results. I advise you not to work so hard; take it a little easier, and spend an amount of your spare time in reading those books of Bingley’s. And now,” he went on, “I have something else to say to you. I did not call tonight wholly to talk about matters ecclesiastical.”

“No?” And Dominic looked at him questioningly.

“Are you in any way related to the Wildthornes of Cumberland?” asked Ritzoom.

“Why?”

"I am only curious."

"But you must have some reason for being curious?"

"I have always a reason for everything, my dear fellow. The truth is, some information came to me about the Cumberland Wildthornes the other day, and I wondered whether it had any connection with you."

"Before my father died he gave me some old papers, which he declared gave full proof that I did, but I have never read them. Indeed, my mind has been so full of other things that I have hardly given them a thought."

"Have you them here?"

Dominic shook his head.

Ritzoom looked disappointed. "I am sorry for that," he said; "I could then have looked at them, and tested their value."

"What do you mean? What value could they have?"

Ritzoom hesitated. He seemed to be in doubt as to whether he should say more. Presently he pulled a newspaper from his pocket, and pointed to a passage.

"Read that," he said.

This was what Dominic read:

"We regret to record the death of Timothy Wildthorne, Esq., of Wildthorne Barton, Cumberland, which took place yesterday morning. The deceased gentleman never married, and as he was an only son, the estate must necessarily revert to another branch of the family. From an examination of the family records, we learn that the grandfather of the gentleman, just deceased, had a brother named Barnabas, who left the neighborhood of Wildthorne Barton immediately after his brother came into possession, and that nothing was ever heard of him afterwards. If he married and had a family, however, it is evident that one of his descendants is the rightful heir to the estate. As nothing has ever been heard of the said Barnabas Wildthorne, however, the whole matter seems to be left in a condition of delightful uncertainty."

"My father was called Barnabas," said Dominic, when he had finished reading.

"Possibly you are the heir," suggested Ritzoom, watching him closely.

"And if I am," said Dominic thoughtfully, "it is probably to only a very small amount."

"Wildthorne Barton," said Ritzoom, like one musing. "Of course it may be only a small farm, with perhaps a couple of hundred pounds a year. If I remember aright, the word Barton has various meanings, but is generally

supposed to mean a large farm. I should imagine it would mean this in the present case.”

“My father told me that his forefathers were landowners,” said Dominic; “but I never paid any heed to him. You see we lived in a hovel, and he was looked upon as a drunken outcast. It might seem as though there was something in what he said. Besides, he was very particular about these papers. He was very proud of them, too, and declared that they gave proof of his being a descendant from one of the oldest families in Cumberland.

“What religion were they?” asked Ritzoom. “Catholic or Protestant?”

“I don’t know. My father was an atheist, at least, so he said. My mother was a Catholic, and had me baptized in the Catholic Chapel.”

“If you like to get me the papers, I will see if there is anything in it,” said Ritzoom.

Dominic was silent a few seconds, then he said, hurriedly: “Oh! I forgot. It is all nothing to me.”

“Nothing to you. Why?”

“I have taken my vows.”

“What vows?”

“The vows of the Community of the Incarnation.”

Ritzoom looked at him keenly, then he rose to his feet.

“You will have a great deal to think about,” he said slowly — “a great deal. You have come to a kind of cross ways in the road of your life.”

“But my vows,” said Dominic, like one dreaming — “my vows.”

“Yes, vows are binding, but the Church has great power, my son. If I can help you, do not hesitate to use me. Father Mullarney; of Meremeadows, always knows where to find me.”

Then he left St. Michael’s Church House, leaving Dominic alone.

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1. “The Scarlet Woman,” “The Purple Robe,” “The Woman of Babylon.”↩

18. Wildthorne Barton

A FEW DAYS later Dominic Wildthorne was on his way to Cumberland. In spite of Father Ritzoom's remarkable restorative, Dominic had been obliged to call in a doctor, who insisted on him taking at least a fortnight's absolute rest. He had no business, he said, to take up Father Bingley's work at all. His many months of mission work had overtaxed his strength, and work at the present time would mean an utter breakdown. This was communicated to Father Townley, who immediately requested him to come back to the Community. On arriving there Dominic took the opportunity of looking at the papers his father had left him. As far as he could judge, there was no doubt of the fact that he was the only descendant of the Wildthorne family. Barnabas Wildthorne's grandfather was the son of old Timothy Wildthorne, whose eldest son Timothy inherited the estates. The two brothers had quarreled, and Barnabas had left Cumberland, never to return to it. Barnabas, however, had taken a certain sum of money with him, and had eventually married an Irish lady. Three children were born — one son and two daughters. The son was Dominic's grandfather. His father had carefully preserved the documents, which he declared would establish his descent. These documents Dominic examined carefully, and as far as he could see, entirely proved his father's words.

On this Dominic found his way to Father Townley's study.

"A man named Wildthorne has died in Cumberland, who, I am led to believe, is a relation of mine," said Dominic.

Father Townley looked at Dominic's pale face with a smile. He regarded the young man as his spiritual son, and had a great affection for him.

"What are your reasons for believing he is your relation?" he asked.

Dominic gave him some of his reasons, but not all.

"Well," he said, when he had finished speaking, "how does this affect you?"

"Not much, I am afraid," said Dominic, "but I think I would like to go and see the place."

Father Townley was but little influenced by Dominic's narration. He did not believe that he was in any way connected with the Cumberland Wildthornes, but he was thankful that Dominic had something to interest him besides ecclesiastical matters. He felt sure that his mind was troubled. He had not been Superior of the Community of the Incarnation for several years without being an adept in reading men. More than one who had come to the Community had felt that their proper place was in the Church of Rome, and Father Townley had carefully noted the "symptoms" which these "brothers" had shown. He now felt sure that Dominic was exercised in a similar way, and he rejoiced that the matter of family history should have occurred to him. It would give him other interests, and that, in Dominic's present mental condition, was greatly needed. He therefore urged him to take the train for Cumberland without delay, and not to hurry back until he had fully investigated the whole question.

"It might be well for you to place your papers in the hands of a solicitor who is in a position to know the family history," he said; "in any case you have my full permission to do all that is necessary to investigate thoroughly every aspect of the case."

Perhaps, in spite of his lack of faith in Barnabas Wildthorne's claims, he had a secret hope that there might be something in them, in which case the Community of the Incarnation would probably be considerably enriched.

It was a beautiful day in April when Dominic reached Cumberland. The spring in that year was considerably advanced, and already there were signs of bustling life everywhere. The "horse chestnuts" were shooting forth their leaves, while a tinge of green was creeping over the hedgerows. The air, moreover, was soft and balmy, the sky, save for a few light fleecy clouds, was a great dome of blue.

"How lovely the world is," said the young man, as he looked out of the carriage windows, and beheld the vast sweeps of hill and dale.

There was a feeling of freedom in his heart. By order of his Superior he was going to rest. He had no addresses to prepare, no great multitudes to preach to, no inquirers to interview. He was free to enjoy himself! Perhaps this sense of liberty was enhanced by the fact that he did not wear the monkish attire of his community. He was dressed as an ordinary clergyman. He wore a short jacket and a soft hat; but for the fact of the Roman collar around his neck, he might have been taken for a layman. People did not stare at him when they came into his carriage. All this was very pleasant.

He had often been annoyed as he saw people nudge each other at the sight of his long cassock-like gown and leathern girdle.

Presently the train stopped at a little roadside station, where he alighted.

“How far is it from here to Wildthorne Barton?” he asked the porter who collected the tickets.

“A mile, perhaps two,” replied the man.

“Is it a straight road?”

“You can’t miss it,” said the porter, “if you follow yon road. It’s on your right-hand side.”

Dominic would have liked to have asked other questions, but he was afraid. He had thought of Wildthorne Barton as a homely old farmhouse; he pictured large trees all around it, and possibly a hundred or more acres of meadow-land. What, after all, if the porter told him that it was only a small house in a squalid village? It was quite possible. So he refrained from asking for further information.

He had brought a bag with him, but although it was not heavy, he did not feel strong enough to carry it. Besides, he might have to return in an hour or so. Indeed, he had gone so far as to look up a train whereby he might be able to get to Windermere that very evening.

How quiet and restful everything was. There were no mill chimneys, no roar of machinery, no granite paved streets, no suggestion of smoke and grime. The lane in which he walked was deserted, save for the birds which had begun to sing among the tree branches, and an occasional farmer’s cart. The air, too, was sweet and health-giving. Dominic occasionally stopped in the road, and took deep breaths, as though he wanted to fill his lungs with such life-giving elixir.

“If it all ends in nothing,” he said to himself, “I shall still be glad that I came. What was that quotation from Emerson which Trevelyan mentioned. ‘Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of kings ridiculous.’ I did not feel his meaning then; I do now.”

As he trudged along, however, he began to be more keenly interested in the object of his journey. He again called to mind the paragraph Father Ritzoom had showed him. He remembered that his supposed relative had been designated “Esq.,” while the word “estate” had been used. He did not know much about these things, but surely they must imply some sort of local position. Yes, he hoped that Wildthorne Barton would prove to be a comfortable farmhouse, even although he, Dominic, had no claim whatever to it.

Occasionally he put his hand into his overcoat pocket, to assure himself that the papers, of which his father had been so proud, were safe. Although he was not aware of it, the idea of "possession" had entered his soul. He could not tell why, but the life of the Community of the Incarnation became far away, indistinct, and unreal. The feeling of the open air made it so. In a way he could not define, truth seemed to be a matter not of documents written ages ago, but in the life of today. He found himself thinking of Maggie Yorke, and their conversations. He understood, now, something of that attitude of mind which broke down artificial barriers, and looked for the essence of things.

Presently he saw a village, and his heart began to beat wildly. It was only a hamlet, and almost hidden by great trees, but he felt sure this must be Wildthorne Barton. He quickened his footsteps, and ere long saw a little inn, which bore the name of "The Wildthorne Arms." He had had nothing to eat since his early breakfast, and now he felt hungry. He would get some refreshment, and perhaps the people at the inn would be able to tell him something of what he wanted to know.

Could he get some lunch?

"Ay," the woman of the inn said. "Yo' can 'ave a slice of cold meat, and some bread and cheese."

"That'll do," said Dominic; "will you bring me some?"

The little room into which she showed him was sparsely furnished, but spotlessly clean. The sun shone in at the window, and as he threw himself into a not uncomfortable armchair, he felt like singing. Indeed, he found himself humming the song by which Maggie Yorke had so moved his heart a fortnight before.

"This is Wildthorne Barton?" he said to the woman, when she appeared again.

"No," she said. "This is Wildthorne village."

"But there is a Wildthorne Barton?"

"Ay, but it's shut up. It's in the lawyers' hands."

"What lawyers?"

"The lawyers at Westerfield. Coad and Perkins."

"Where is it from here?"

"Just down the lane."

"The late owner is dead?"

“Ay, he died a week or two sin; he lived all alone there, except for three menservants. He left no will, and no one knows if there’s any relations. Folk say it’ll go into Chancery. What that’ll mean I doan’t know, but it’ll be a pity.”

“Is no one there now?”

“Mayhap one of th’ old man’s servants is there. I doan’t know.”

“But the gates are locked?”

“Mayhap yes, mayhap no, I doan’t know. There, will yo’ have tay, or a mug o’ ale with your mait?”

“Tea, please.”

“Yo’ should have towed me afore. It’ll take five minutes to brew the tay.”

But Dominic did not mind this. He knew very little, but enough to make him wonder. He was ignorant of the law; but he had been told that when property was thrown into Chancery, a tremendous amount of legal formalities had to be complied with.

“How far is Westerfield from here?” he asked, when the woman brought the tea.

“Power mile.”

“Is it a—a town?”

“A town! Ay, but where ‘ave yo’ been brought up, not to know that Westerfield is the market town of these parts?”

“If I wanted, could I sleep here tonight?”

The woman looked at him steadily for a few seconds.

“No,” she said.

“Why?”

“Because I’ve no roam good eno’ for yo’.”

“But have you a spare bedroom at all?”

“Ay.”

Dominic finished his lunch and went out. A few minutes later his heart almost stood still. Partly hidden by the trees, but still plainly to be seen, was an old stone house, with lichen-covered walls, mullioned endows, low pitched roof, and a quaint porch. It was not a mansion, but it was evidently large and roomy. Such a place as an artist would rave about — a house that embodied in itself the idea of rest and comfort and home

This was Wildthorne Barton.

A quaint lodge, which accorded with his glimpse of the house, presently met his gaze, while the entrance gateway looked centuries old. Grotesque

figures were carved on the gateposts, a coat-of-arms ornamented the archway. An antiquarian would have traveled a day's journey for such a sight.

But the gate was locked, and no one lived in the lodge. Still, it did not look dilapidated. The drive had evidently been attended to. Everything was in good order.

He clambered over the gate, and a few minutes later found himself in front of the old house.

Not a sound was to be heard save the chirping of the birds and the movement of the spring life. The house stood on a terrace, and when he had climbed the steps and stood by the front door, he turned around. The view almost startled him. Before him was a stretch of country which seemed to embrace everything — wild moorland, towering crags, wooded dells, farmsteads, and rich undulating land. The Wildthornes, who built this house, had selected a site unrivaled in the country. Could it be that this was the home of his fathers, his home!

Nothing denoted neglect or dilapidation. The flower beds were carefully made, and the hyacinths and tulips were beginning to appear. The lawns were green and well cared for. He noted the spreading trees and sheltered nooks, where one could go in days when the sun was hot and scorching. He also heard the babble of a river which wended its way down the valley in the near distance. Its waters gleamed in the sunlight. He found his way to the back of the house, and still saw the same evidences of care and love of beauty.

Evidently Timothy Wildthorne must have been a man of taste and a lover of order.

The blinds of the house were drawn, but he presently discovered a place in a window whereby he could look into one of the rooms. His heart bounded with delight. From floor to ceiling were bookcases filled with books. Timothy Wildthorne must have been a student, probably a scholar.

Was his father right? Were those papers in his pocket a sufficient proof that he was the lawful possessor of what he saw? He must know. The question had become of vital importance.

"Surely some one must be here," he thought. "No lawyer would leave such a place utterly uncared for."

He saw hanging near the porch an iron bell-pull, and eagerly seized it. In response, he heard a clanging sound some distance away. This was followed by uncertain footsteps. Evidently some one was here to look after the place.

“What do you want?”

An old man appeared suddenly. He seemed to have come from behind a huge evergreen.

“I — I should like to see the house.”

The old man shook his head.

Dominic looked at him closely. He looked an old time servant, and was clothed in attire that might have been fashionable three-quarters of a century ago, but now looked very antiquated. It perfectly accorded with the house, however.

“I have special reasons for desiring to see it,” said Dominic.

The old man lifted his eyes slowly to Dominic’s face, and let them rest on it. Slowly a change came ov’r his features. He seemed to be trying to recall something,

“Who are you? What is your name?” he asked.

“Why?”

“Tell me!” And still he looked at him steadily.

Dominic’s appearance had changed much since the night he stood by the cemetery gates sobbing. Then he was ragged, wild-eyed, gaunt, ungainly. Now, while still retaining some of the features of his boyhood, he was anything but gaunt and ungainly. His eyes were large and lustrous, and while he could not be called good-looking in the ordinary sense of the word, he had a striking appearance; there was something about the large, square jaw and somewhat prominent nose that suggested strength. He did not look physically robust, but he was tall and well-proportioned. It was not these things, however, which seemed to attract the old man’s attention. He appeared to find something in Dominic’s face which aroused past memories.

“Tell me,” he repeated, “who are you, and what is your name?”

“Dominic Wildthorne,” replied the young man.

“Wildthorne! The Wildthorne?” He spoke as though moved by a great emotion.

“I cannot tell you — yet. I want to see the house.”

“Tell me what was your father’s name.”

Dominic told him.

“And his father, and his father’s father — who were they?”

Dominic yielded to the man’s entreaty and told him.

“The Wildthorne eyes, the Wildthorne face!” said the old man aloud; “ay, and the names are right. But tell me more,” he went on; “have you the

proofs?"

"I can tell you nothing till I have seen Messrs. Coad and Perkins," he replied.

"But you — you are going to see them — the lawyers?"

"Yes, but I want to see the house — first."

"Come, come," cried the old man. "Jonathan Wagstaff is my name, and I was servant to my master, man and boy, for more than fifty years. He made no will — he wouldn't. Not that he was forgetful of us. He knew he was going to die, and he gave us each more than enough to last us our lifetime. It's all right. He was just and generous; but he would make no will.

'Why should I worry about it?' he would say. 'If there are any Wildthornes alive, they can come and make their claim good. It belongs to them.' He wrote it down in a letter and sent it to the lawyers.

'If there are any Wildthornes,' he said, 'let them come and claim their own; if there are none, what do I care what becomes of everything?' I know this, because I and my son witnessed the letter. And that's as good as a will, I say. But he took care to give us all we needed before he died."

Jonathan Wagstaff seemed to have forgotten Dominic's presence, and went on talking to himself.

"He was a good master, ay, and a clever man. He loved to have the house and grounds kept spic and span; and some said he was hard upon his tenants — but that was because he couldn't abide things being badly done. He was that kind of man, which is wonderful, I say, considering the time he spent with his books. Oh yes, he worked all the morning at his books, then in the afternoon he would go for a ride — he loved his horses even to the last — and then when evening came, he would go back to his books again. But he would see no company — 'no, not he. 'They've no brains, no love for books, the people around here, Jonathan,' he would say; 'even the parson has no love for learning'; but he — ah, he loved his books."

"Let me see the books," said Dominic; "I want to see them very much."

"Oh, yes, forgive me, sir! You shall see everything. God grant that. But have you had lunch, sir? ou will need refreshments."

"No. I had lunch at the inn."

"You should have come here, sir. Only I and my son are here now, and he's in the meadows somewhere. The old master would have no women about him. But if you want something, sir, it shall be got."

He led Dominic to a side door and opened it, A minute later the young man was walking over the house' In the center of the building was a large oak-paneled hall, thirty feet square, and towards this apartment all the rest converged. It was a glorious room, low ceiled, but the very embodiment of comfort. A huge fireplace stood at one side, over which was a stone slab, on which the figures 1643 were carved, the date when the building was erected. The oak paneling was darkened by age, the mullioned, diamond-paned windows accorded with the general feeling of the room.

"Ah, sir, many a notable man has been here. Back in the fifties and the sixties, when master was a young man, scholars came from Oxford and Cambridge. Ay, sir, Pusey and Cardinal Newman have been in this room. But my old master was more than a match for them, and when Newman went over to Rome, my master said: 'Yes, he's gone, gone where he ought to have gone years ago; but before he went he had to commit mental suicide — those were his very words.'

"Your master knew Pusey and Newman?"

"Ay, knew the whole boiling of them. My master used to sit there, and Pusey there, and Newman there. Oh! it was glorious to hear them. I had to come in sometimes at eleven and twelve o'clock at night, but they were still at it, and my master could beat them all. Look, here's the library. Sometimes they used to sit here. Yes, there's fifteen thousand books here. Many of them rare books too. A bookseller from London came here the other day. He wanted to buy them, but, of course, nothing can be sold yet. Thousands of pounds worth of books there are here. They were the only things that master grieved to leave behind. When he grew old and tottering, he used to walk around among them, and take them down from the shelves and fondle them as lovingly as mothers fondle their babies. He loved the books, he did, and he grieved to leave them. But he died peacefully in bed, for all that."

"He was not a Catholic, was he?" asked Dominic.

"Catholic! Not he! Why, he was a great thinker and scholar, was my master. He used to laugh at Newman and Manning — 'just laugh at them. 'Poor fellows,' he used to say, 'they've just committed intellectual suicide. They've just opened their mouths and shut their eyes, and swallowed all they were told to swallow.' Oh, no, my master couldn't stand that kind of thing. Not but what he died a good Christian, sir — yes, a good Christian, if ever there was one. Would you like to go upstairs and look at the bedrooms, sir?"

"No, thank you. How far did you say it was to Westerfield — to the office of Coad and Perkins?"

"Nearly four miles, sir. Do you think of going this afternoon?"

"Yes," replied Dominic, and he felt his heart beating wildly.

"Then, sir, my son must drive you over. The pony chaise is just as master left it; nothing has been touched — nothing. My son is close by, and I can call him in a minute. Then, sir, you must come back and sleep here."

Dominic looked at him in astonishment.

"Possession is nine points of the law, sir. You take possession, sir. You've got the Wildthorne eyes, the Wildthorne face, sir. I noted it the moment I saw you. Yes, you must, sir. I'll get the fires lit, and dinner for you by the time you come back. Have you any luggage, sir?"

"I left my bag at the station."

"If you'll give me the ticket, I'll send for it, sir; and, if you please, will you make yourself at home while I call my son? I was left in charge while Coad and Perkins made inquiries about the heir, sir. Yes, go there right away, and make your claim."

The old man left the house, while Dominic wandered from room to room like one in a dream. Yes, there was the dining-hall, a fine old room, on the walls of which were hung the pictures of previous Wildthornes. Everything had been carefully looked after, everything was clean, although the atmosphere of the room was somewhat close and musty.

Like one in a dream he went upstairs. Yes, everything gave evidence that its late owner was a man of refined tastes and a lover of order. From one of the bedroom windows he again beheld the magnificent panorama of hill and dale. Could it be that this place belonged to him?

Presently he stood in a large bedroom. In it stood a large mahogany bedstead. Could it be that this was the bedroom in which old Timothy Wildthorne had breathed his last? Was this the bed on which he had died?

He saw an ingeniously fitted lighting arrangement, whereby the light could be made to shine upon the bed. Near by also was a bookcase containing a number of books. Yes, it was all plain; the old man often read in bed, and kept his favorite volumes near him. He felt a strange sympathy towards old Timothy Wildthorne. Was it because they belonged to the same family?"

He heard the sound of wheels on the gravel outside. Looking out, he saw an old-fashioned pony chaise, drawn by a well-fed and carefully groomed animal. Evidently it was at his disposal.

A few minutes later he was on his way to Westerdale for the purpose of laying his claims before Messrs. Coad and Perkins.

19. Dominic Takes Possession

DOMINIC WAS closeted in the office of the leading firm of lawyers in Westerfield. Both Mr. Coad and Mr. Perkins were present. Usually Mr. Coad did not see clients, as he preferred to delegate ordinary business matters to his partner. Directly Dominic had given his name, however, word was sent to Mr. Coad, who, rather hurriedly for him, went into Mr. Perkins' office. Mr. Coad was a lawyer of the old school. He was now seventy years of age, and did not take such an active interest in his clients as formerly; nevertheless, he was keenly alive to all that took place. Mr. Perkins had obtained a partnership by marrying Mr. Coad's daughter. Mr. Coad delighted in the fact that his work was of the old-fashioned conveyancing order, and that he had for his clients all the landed gentry of the district. Mr. Perkins, on the other hand, said that he could teach an intelligent dog to do conveyancing work, and longed to be mixed up in cases which were settled in the London Law Courts. Mr. Coad was quiet and reserved, and thought leisurely; Mr. Perkins talked rather more, and was quick to come to conclusions. Nevertheless, clients trusted Mr. Coad most. Although seventy years of age his intellect was remarkably clear, and his judgment as sound as ever. Report had it that whenever he interested himself in a case which required litigation, he invariably won, for the simple reason that he would never take a case if he were not certain of the justice of his client's claims.

He was known for miles around as an honest lawyer, and one "who was a match for any of the London men."

Dominic took the newspaper cutting which Father Ritzoom had given him, and placed it before the lawyers.

"I came about that," he said.

Mr. Perkins was about to speak, but, noting the look on his partner's face, was silent.

"Naturally there are many who are interested in it," said Mr. Coad quietly.

"My name is Dominic Wildthorne, I think I told you?"

"You did."

"Of course," went on Dominic, "my thoughts may be baseless."

"Possibly."

"Nevertheless, I thought I would come and tell you why — why the matter is of interest to me."

To this the lawyers made no reply.

"I presume," went on the young man, "that as far as you are concerned, impressions and opinions count for nothing, and that nothing will have weight but definite proof?"

"The law of the country demands that," replied Mr. Coad gravely. He had been looking steadily at the young man's face, and, like old Jonathan Wagstaff, he was much impressed by the likeness which existed between Dominic and the Wildthorne family, which he had known from a boy. But he gave no suggestion of this by word or look.

"To begin with," said Dominic, "my father told me years ago that I descended from the Wildthornes of Cumberland, and that they were landowners in this country."

"Is your father alive?"

"No. He died when I was about fifteen."

"What was his name?"

"Barnabas — Barnabas Wildthorne."

"And his father's name?"

"His name was also Barnabas, and his father's before him."

"That is very interesting," remarked Mr. Coad.

"Of course, I did not come to you on mere hearsay," went on Dominic. "Before my father died he left me certain papers, which I have brought."

This time Mr. Perkins did not heed Mr. Coad's look.

"Ah!" he said eagerly, "let me see them."

Dominic took them from his pocket, and laid them before the lawyers. They were certificates of marriages and births and other parchments, which the lawyers scanned eagerly. Mr. Coad read them first, and compared date with date and entry with entry, making certain notes as he did so. When he had finished, he passed them to Mr. Perkins with a peculiar look.

As Mr. Perkins read he grew quite excited, and was more than once on the point of speaking, but Mr. Coad's cough silenced him. When the younger man had finished them, after making many notes, he returned them to his senior partner.

Again Mr. Coad read them in dead silence, taking furtive glances at Dominic as he did so.

"You tell me that your name is Dominic," he said.

"According to these papers, the eldest son of your family has been called Barnabas for several generations."

"Yes. I was told that my mother hated the name of Barnabas, and insisted on my being called Dominic. She was a Roman Catholic, and was, I believe, guided by her priest."

"That is very interesting — very. I understand, Mr. Wildthorne, that you put in your claim for this property?"

"Yes," said Dominic.

"Of course, these papers, if true, will have to be verified, and law is expensive. I presume you will be prepared to meet preliminary expenses?"

Dominic shook his head.

"You are a clergyman?"

"Yes."

"Church of England?"

"Yes. But I have no property, and no means of paying legal expense."

"You have been at the house, you say?"

"Yes, I saw one of the old servants, Jonathan Wagstaff, His son drove me here; his father ordered him to do so."

"Did he, though? Jonathan is a character in his way. Did he by any chance offer you any advice?"

"Yes; he advised me to take up residence at the Barton."

"Good. Very sensible advice, Mr. Wildthorne — very sensible advice. I should also advise the same thing, Mr. Wildthorne."

"Then, then?"

"Yes, I should advise the same thing. Wouldn't you, Mr. Perkins?"

"Most emphatically," said Mr. Perkins.

"Meanwhile, Mr. Wildthorne, I assume that you empower us to act for you?"

"I shall be glad if you will — certainly; but, as I told you, I have no means."

"In that case, there are certain questions I should like to ask before we go further."

"Certainly," replied the young man. He could scarcely realize the purport of the lawyer's advice. For the next half-hour he was submitted to a most

searching examination. At the end of that time there were but few circumstances connected with his life that these lawyers did not know.

“Pardon me for asking so many questions,” said Mr. Coad at length, “but this case has given me food for thought for some time past. Already many inquiries have been set on foot in the hope that the true heir to the Wildthorne property might be found.”

Dominic looked at him questioningly.

“The papers you have submitted have cleared up many difficulties,” went on Mr. Coad, as if in answer to a question.

“And?” said Dominic.

“They will have to be verified in every detail. Church registers will have to be examined and official documents inquired into. All the same, I think I can do one thing, Mr. Wildthorne.”

“And that?”

“I can congratulate you.”

“Then— then?”

“What we shall have to do will take time. Many formalities will have to be complied with. Nevertheless, I will say this. Your father, although his life may have been somewhat irregular, was a very sagacious and careful man. If all men were so methodical, so business-like, lawyers would have far less trouble. Of course, there may be new developments, although at present I do not see their possibility. Meanwhile, I go so far as to congratulate you.”

“Thank you. Then you think—”

“That old Jonathan Wagstaff’s advice was sound, perfectly sound. Meanwhile, I should keep my own counsel, Mr. Wildthorne.”

“I am likely to do so. I have no friends in the neighborhood.”

“I was not thinking of this neighborhood. I was thinking of your friends in Yorkshire.”

“You would tell them nothing?”

“I should tell no one anything. I should follow Jonathan Wagstaff’s advice; and if questions are asked, refer the questioners to us.”

Dominic started to his feet. The words of the old lawyer excited him greatly. The old house, the ground, were in all probability his property — his, and he from his childhood had never possessed anything. All he had had was the property of the Community. But in his excitement also he saw difficulties.

“Is the property— valuable?” he stammered.

“Yes. I should say it was. Not great, but certainly a valuable property. Later we shall be prepared to go into that with you.”

“But I have no money. There are servants who will have to be paid, and I—”

“Pardon me, Mr. Wildthorne, but I would like to have a chat with my partner. May Mr. Perkins or myself have the privilege of calling on you tonight, say at eight o’clock? Old Jonathan Wagstaff always prepared dinner for his late master at half-past six, so that he might have a long evening for study. I have little doubt but that he will do the same for you. I also dine very early. Will eight o’clock do? Thank you. We can then talk over various matters.”

When Dominic got into the carriage he was like a man in a dream. He scarcely noticed the sleepy, old fashioned town through which they drove; everything was confusing, bewildering. On his way to Westerfield, Jonathan Wagstaff’s son David had informed him that Messrs. Coad and Perkins were the cleverest and most cautious lawyers in Cumberland. He had expected rebuff and endless difficulties. Indeed, he would not have been surprised if he had left Westerfield with all his fond fancies dispelled. He had expected rival claimants, who, perhaps, could give better reasons for being heir to the Wildthorne estates than he could expect to give. He had reflected that his branch of the family, even if it belonged to the Wildthornes in question, would be out of the line of succession; and that there was only a thousand chances to one that some obscure member of the Timothy Wildthorne side of the family did not claim to be heir of the estate. From Mr. Coad’s remarks during the time he was questioning him, however, he gathered that the old gentleman who had just died had no known relative, and that his side of the Wildthorne family had become extinct. Moreover, both Mr. Coad and Mr. Perkins had seemed quite satisfied that, seeing he was the only son of Barnabas Wildthorne, who was of the direct line of succession of the Barnabas Wildthorne who had left his brother Timothy in possession long years before, there could be no doubt about his right to enter into possession. There was no link missing in the chain of evidence he had given. Evidently his father, drunken ne’er-do-well as he was, had carefully preserved the marriage and birth certificates, which had been handed down from one generation to another.

“I cannot believe it even yet,” he said to himself more than once. “Everything seems too easy, too straightforward. I must be in a dream, from

which I shall presently wake to find myself penniless.”

And yet the feeling which possessed his heart was full of pleasure. The evening was now closing, but the smell of spring was in the air. The birds were chirping all around him, the calm of the evening wrapped him in its embrace. The setting sun lit up the whole countryside with a beauty unknown to him before.

A new force had entered his life, a new influence possessed his soul. He was a possessor of property. It did not touch the depths of his being, but it was a factor in his life; it influenced his thoughts, it colored his outlook.

Old Jonathan Wagstaff stood on the steps of the terrace as the carriage drove up. There was a look of eager expectation in his eyes. Evidently the young man’s coming meant a great deal to him. He seemed to be longing to ask questions, yet afraid to do so.

“You have seen Mr. Coad, sir?” he ventured to remark, as he helped Dominic off with his overcoat.

“Yes.”

He evidently longed to ask further questions, but seemed afraid to do so. Dominic caught the look in his eyes.

“Mr. Coad told me to take your advice, and take up my abode here,” said the young man.

This seemed to settle everything as far as Jonathan was concerned. If Mr. Coad told him to do this, nothing further need be said. Mr. Coad was to him an infallible authority on matters of law.

“Welcome home, sir,” he said, as he opened the door of the great hall. “I have arranged dinner for half-past six, which was my old master’s time. It’ll be ready by the time you’ve washed, sir, I have got your bedroom ready, where will you dine, sir — in the dining-hall, or will you have it in the library? My old master generally dined in the library, except in the summer.”

“In the library by all means, Jonathan,” replied Dominic. His heart was beating rapidly, everything was so strange.

“Thank you, sir. If you will follow me I will show you the room I have prepared.”

Dominic followed Jonathan upstairs. He felt like apologizing to the old man for his intrusion. He could not realize that the old servant of Timothy Wildthorne was also his servant. He was glad he had not prepared the bedroom he had seen that afternoon for him to sleep in. It would have been very eerie to him to be in the bed where old Timothy Wildthorne had died.

When he was left alone he wandered around the apartment like one dazed. The room was large, and furnished similar to the other. A great mahogany bedstead stood in the center, while all the rest of the furniture was of the same rich, sombre order. In the grate a cheerful fire was burning. His portmanteau had been brought, and his belongings had been spread in proper order.

He bathed his fevered brow in cold water, and tried to collect his thoughts, but he could not. His nerves were too highly wrought. He looked out of the window, and again drank in the beauty of the countryside in the light of the dying day.

Downstairs he heard the dinner-gong sounding, and, hastily putting on his coat, he hurried to obey its summons. When he entered the library, he found a table fully laid out for dinner. On the table was an old-fashioned lamp, which threw a soft light around the apartment. In the great fireplace a huge fire burned. He was glad of it. In spite of the fever of excitement he felt cold. Evidently Jonathan had commandeered some help from the village, for the dinner was served quickly, one course following another without intervals. Dominic enjoyed his dinner. In spite of his excitement, the keen pure air of the district had made him hungry. Old Jonathan anticipated his every desire, and seemed overjoyed to be of service.

At last the table was cleared, and Dominic drew up a great armchair before the fire. Although the spring had come, the night was cold, and the warm glow of the fire was very pleasant.

"Here are my old master's cigars, just as he left them, sir," said Jonathan. "He always smoked two after dinner, but never throughout the day. I think you will find them good, sir. He would never have any but the very best. Your coffee will be here in a few minutes, sir. You are sure there is nothing more I can do for you, sir?"

"Nothing, Jonathan. By the way, Mr. Coad or Mr. Perkins will be here about eight o'clock. Will you kindly show him in here?"

"Yes, sir, certainly. Everything is going right I hope, sir?"

"Yes, everything, as far as I know, thank you, Jonathan."

As the old man left the room there were tears in his eyes. He thought he detected not only the Wildthorne features, but also the Wildthorne voice. Besides, Dominic had spoken to him in a very kindly way and had won his heart.

“I shall have something to live for now,” thought the old man. “It will give me new life to have such a pleasant young gentleman to be master here. Perhaps — who knows? — he may bring a wife here, and then I may live to hear children’s voices in the place before I follow my old master. There’s only one thing I am sorry for. I wish he were not a parson. It seems like a fly in the ointment.”

As for Dominic, he realized for the first time that he was in this old house as its master. He cast his eyes around the room. On every band, from floor to ceiling, were books. Presently he would look into them. He had brought with him those volumes which had belonged to Father Bingley, and which Father Ritzoom had urged him to read. These books had convinced Bingley that Anglican orders were invalid, and that it was his duty to take those of Rome. But Dominic did not want to read them at present. For the moment ecclesiastical questions did not interest him.

How quiet and calm everything was! Now and then he heard the winds sighing around the house, but beyond that there was no sound. Early that morning he had left Meremeadows, while now he was installed at Wildthorne Barton as its owner. He could not realize it. And yet the old room, with its well-filled bookshelves, was real, the fire by which he sat was real.

He took one of the cigars from the box which Jonathan had brought and lit it. The tobacco was of the finest quality; it calmed his nerves, and he nestled in the great armchair. He looked at his watch. It yet wanted half an hour to the time the lawyer would arrive, and he had time to collect his thoughts. He cast his mind back over the past, and, as he reflected, certain things stood out plainly. First of all, he had taken the vows of the Community to which he belonged — the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Second, although he had fought against it, and although at times he thought he hated Maggie Yorke, he realized that he loved her. This, he knew, was sin. What right had he, a priest, to allow love for a woman to enter his heart? And yet he knew that Maggie Yorke was to him more than any other woman could be, that when he thought of her his heart burned with a great passion.

But, of course, he must destroy it. He had gone to Bingfield that he might destroy it; and, whatever happened, he must drive all thoughts of Maggie Yorke from him.

He thought of what old Jonathan Wagstaff told him that morning. In that room, perhaps in that chair, Newman and Pusey and Manning had sat and

discussed Church matters with Timothy Wildthorne. Newman, possessing the finest mind of the century in which he had lived, had yielded to the claims of the Catholic Church. Manning also had yielded his intellect to the claims of Rome. As for Pusey — well, Pusey's heart was with Rome, even while he held tenaciously to the Church of England. But if Rome was right, the English Church was wrong; she was excommunicate, and therefore no Church at all.

He again reflected on the position of the Community of the Incarnation. Father Townley had boasted that he had kept many in the English Church who would otherwise have gone to Rome. But was that not mere mockery? The Community was sowing the seeds of Rome every day. It pretended to be loyal to the Church of England, while the whole teaching and atmosphere of the place was saturated with Roman doctrine. Indeed, but for such orders, there would never have been a desire for Rome on the part of many whom it pretended to keep away from Rome. Was he right, holding the views he did, to remain within the fold of the Church of England, to receive her prestige, and to profit by her position? Was not Maggie Yorke right? Was not his position a dishonest one?

He looked at his watch. It was time for one of the lawyers to come, but he turned to one of the books which Father Ritzoom had recommended him to read. As he read, the minutes swept swiftly by. Again the old question gripped his mind. No, if Rome was right, he was acting a dishonest part by staying in the Church of England. Cover up the situation with all the sophistries imaginable, the man who believed as he did in Rome's doctrines was dishonest in staying in the Church of England. Maggie Yorke, who had told him so, spoke the truth.

Again Maggie Yorke! Why did this girl so constantly force herself into his life? He remembered his promise to her, too. He said he would read an authoritative life of Martin Luther, that vulgar Philistine who had torn the Church in twain. After all, that tremendous upheaval at the time of the Reformation could not have been caused altogether by lies. The Protestant movement had drawn to its side the best life of Europe. Was it possible that — that Rome was wrong? Was there any real foundation for the Protestant conception of the Church? Of course there was not, but he would fulfill his promise to Maggie. Surely old Timothy Wildthorne, who, as Jonathan Wagstaff had said, had combated Newman and Manning, must have many books which would—"

“Mr. Coad and Mr. Perkins, sir.” It was old Jonathan Wagstaff who spoke.

“Show them in, Jonathan, please.”

The two lawyers entered the room.

“They have both come,” thought Dominic. “What does this portend? I wonder if some serious matter has arisen which — which nullifies my claim?”

His heart beat wildly at the thought. Nevertheless, he made haste to make his visitors comfortable.

20. The Spider And The Fly

AFTER my partner and I had discussed your visit at some length, we decided that we had better both drive over," said Mr. Coad. "It is a beautiful spring night, and neither of us had any pressing engagement."

"I am glad to see you. I will ring for refreshments."

A few minutes later the three men were comfortably seated by the great fire, and the two lawyers were chatting freely on the object of their visit.

Dominic was not long in seeing that it was not because they doubted their wisdom in giving him very strong reasons for believing that his claim would not be disputed that both of them had come to see him instead of one, but rather because they both wished to pay what they believed would be an important client a due meed of respect. So strong indeed was their assurance that he was the true and rightful heir of the Wildthorne estates that they offered him every facility for making his position secure. They also brought with them documents which gave him some idea as to the extent of his possessions, and which made him open his eyes with wonder. Indeed, Mr. Coad, for once, became quite communicative, so that Dominic felt the ground beneath his feet more secure as each minute passed by.

"But I would say nothing about it, Mr. Wildthorne," urged the old gentleman. "No one need be informed of anything. I have everything in proper order, and I see no reason why, in a few months at most, everything should not be duly settled. But nothing is gained by talk. Therefore, if I were you, I should, in case your best friends should make inquiries of you, tell them that nothing is settled. As you may imagine, a great deal of time must be taken before everything is completed from a legal standpoint; therefore it is always well to remember the old adage that a still tongue makes a wise head. Meanwhile you are in possession; and we, who were your relative's legal advisers, are also yours, I do not, I think, need to assure you that your every interest will be safely guarded."

When they left the house, Dominic accompanied them to the lodge gates, and then slowly returned. The moon sailed in an almost cloudless

sky, and the night was warm and balmy. Never before had he breathed such delicious air. It was laden with the breath of spring, and everything whispered resurrection. He seemed to hear the myriad forms of life expressing themselves in grass and plant and tree. The word "life" seemed to have a new meaning to him. And yet scarcely a sound was to be heard. The silence of the night brooded over everything, while the sky above was wondrous to behold. A feeling of freedom possessed his heart and mind. How could it be otherwise while he stood there beneath the great dome of blue? He thought of the lines of Faber, which spoke of the love of God being broader than the measure of man's mind. How, then, could the truth of God be narrowed down to the limits by which he had been hedged in?

When he reached the terrace upon which the house stood, he remained for a long time looking at the wondrous sight which was spread out before him, and as he looked, his soul seemed to expand.

"Oh, God!" he cried, "help me. Help me to see, help me to know, help me to be true, true to myself, true to Thee!"

Then he went into the house, and presently found his way to his bedroom. A few minutes later he was asleep. The day had been full of excitement and wonder. Every nerve, every power of his mind had been at full tension. But the pure air which he had been breathing helped him. His sleep was peaceful. He never even dreamed of his new surroundings; and so closely did Mother Nature wrap her arms around him, that when he awoke the following morning the sun was high in the heavens, and the great eight-day clock in the hall had struck ten.

For the next week Dominic gave himself over to pure and undiluted enjoyment of his new surroundings. He took long tramps over hill and dale, and reveled in the beauty of the countryside. He was like a child with a new toy. He took great delight in marking the boundaries of the land which he believed to be his, he noted with interest the farms on the estate. He found himself wondering what his income would be when all his affairs were settled and he was publicly acknowledged as the heir to old Timothy Wildthorne's estates. Sometimes he caught himself wondering how the local gentry would receive him, and how he should enjoy the society of the people who lived in the neighborhood.

At present his presence was scarcely recognized. On the advice of Messrs. Coad and Perkins he had not obtruded himself in any way on the notice of the inhabitants of the neighborhood, while his servants were mar-

velously discreet. Nevertheless, boy like, he looked forward to the time when there would have to be some public recognition of his position.

He had written a letter to Father Townley, telling him that he had visited the solicitors of the late Timothy Wildthorne, and that their opinion had led him to hope that his claims would not be altogether futile; but his letter had contained no definite information.

At the end of a week, however, when he had grown somewhat accustomed to his new surroundings, he began to feel lonely. Why he did not know, but he had no desire for reading. Even the books which had so affected Father Bingley did not attract him. Each morning, as soon as breakfast was over, he went out to explore the countryside; and when evening came, he had no desire to read. But he did desire company. More than once he almost made up his mind to write to Father Townley, asking that one of the brothers should come and stay with him; but, remembering Mr. Coad's advice, he desisted. Nevertheless, the longing for society was strong upon him. The change which had come into his life was so great that he hardly realized the change it might make in his future, and he longed for some friend to whom he might speak freely.

It was with almost unmixed pleasure, therefore, that he saw, on returning from one of his long walks, Father Ritzoom waiting in the hall.

"I'm a bird of passage," said the Jesuit. "I happened to be in the neighborhood, and I thought I would find out whether anything had resulted from the conversation we had in the delightful town of Brigfield. May I congratulate you?"

"I don't know," replied Dominic quietly.

"You are the man in possession, anyhow, and possession is nine points of the law."

"So I've been told. Anyhow, someone has to put in a stronger claim than mine, and that claim will have to be substantiated at a court of law before I can be turned out. For that reason, I hope you've come to spend a few days with me."

"Do you mean it?"

"Most sincerely."

"As it happens, I can manage to spare a couple of days," said the Jesuit, "and it will be delightful to spend them here. By the way, let me congratulate you on your improved appearance. You don't look like the same man I saw in the church-house of Brigfield."

"No, a week here has done wonders for me. In fact, I've just lived the life of an animal. I've eaten, taken exercise, and slept; and I feel as strong as a horse. But I'll tell Jonathan to prepare a room for you, and then we can have some dinner and a good long evening together."

That evening proved a memorable one in Dominic's life. Dinner over, the two men drew their chairs before the fire, and when Ritzoom had lit a long cigar, he commenced to talk.

"You have been here a week?" he said.

"A week and two days."

"Quite an old resident," he laughed; "and what have you been doing?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"No, nothing except to roam around the countryside. One conclusion I had come to before I saw you tonight."

"And that?"

"That the supposed or real possession of property is terribly unsettling to the intellectual and spiritual life. Since the first night I came I've had no desire to read a book; moreover, my old life at the Community of the Incarnation seems very vague and far away. If I had been brought up with the idea that I was a rich man, I expect it would have been different; but the suddenness of my new position has unsettled me."

"That will soon pass away," remarked the Jesuit.

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it. You would die of the complaint of Louis XIII if you had to play the part of the country squire. This coming to Cumberland is only an incident in your life."

"Only an incident?"

"That is all. You will have to live in a great world, my friend — the world of ideas, the world of action. Your nature demands that you shall deal with far reaching movements, and, what is more, Providence intended you for such a career."

There was a strange intensity in Ritzoom's voice, and Dominic felt the power of the man's presence.

Involuntarily, too, he remembered the conversation he had had with Maggie Yorke long years before. She had told him that the kind of man she admired was one who was a leader of men, and he had made up his mind that he would fulfill her ideals.

"The truth is, Wildthorne," went on the Jesuit, "the world is made up of two classes of people. Not the good and the bad, because humanity is a very mixed affair; but the leaders and the led. The name of the latter is 'legion,' for they are many, the former are few and rare. Yet, if I am a reader of character, you belong to that rare class."

Dominic shook his head. "I see no evidence of it in my life," he said.

"Two reasons, my friend. The first is because your life so far has been largely probationary. The second is because you have lacked conviction."

"Conviction? I am afraid I don't follow you."

"Conviction, my friend. You've been surrounded by a wrong environment; or, to put it still more plainly, you have been brought up in a Church which calls itself the true Church, and you have never been convinced that it is the true Church. You've been uncertain."

Dominic was silent.

"Another thing," went on the Jesuit; "suppose the claims of the Anglican Church were admitted, it allows no room to move."

"I don't see that."

"No? But think a moment. It's very name limits it. The Church of England — the Church of a little island. You are cribbed, cabined, and confined to one nation. Your laws, your doctrines are determined by the State. The head of your Church is your King, the king of one nation. Do you remember Purcell's *Life of Manning*? He contrasted Manning's career as it would have been if he had remained a Protestant. Possibly a Bishop of some paltry diocese. But as a Cardinal in the Catholic Church he was helping to control the destinies of the world. His outlook was not Anglican, but Catholic. The Church of a nation — what is it? It does not allow room to move. But the Catholic Church! It knows nothing of nations or empires. It is the Church of the world. Why, think — this very Church of yours, when you consider it in its largest aspect, is not a quarter the size of the sect we call Methodists. In a little more than a century, that sect which John Wesley founded has so outgrown the sect from which it sprang that it numbers at least four times its communicants. No, my friend, you could never content yourself in the Anglican Church, even if it were a Church at all."

Dominic did not reply, but he felt something of the old enthusiasm returning. Father Ritzoom was arousing him from his lethargy.

"Think of the order to which I belong," went on the Jesuit. "Even after all its years of persecution and misrepresentation, it dominates the world. Its

power is felt in high places. Unknown to the mass of the people, it controls the policies of nations. No matter to what land you go, its power is felt. And the Jesuit Order is only one segment in the great army.”

For a long time Father Ritzoom talked. He told of men of humble birth and reared amidst poor surroundings, who, through the Church, dictated the policy of kings and emperors. He spoke of Bismarck, the man of steel, who for years controlled the destinies of an empire, and who had to yield to the servants of the Church he hated. He described in glowing terms the men who, under the Church’s guidance, were shaping the history of the world.

“The leaders and the led. There is the world in a nutshell,” concluded Ritzoom, “What if the latter are mostly fools? They are necessary, and act as excellent buffers for the former. But the question each man has to ask himself is. Which is he going to be?”

“A man must be what he can be,” suggested Dominic.

“Exactly. And you can be a leader, my friend. Give you two things — conviction and a true environment and you become a leader, not a leader in a paltry sect like the Church of England, but in the Catholic Church, the Church of the world. Of course, the time is not far distant when the so-called Church of England shall come over to us bodily; but if you wait until then your opportunity will be gone.”

“I do not understand.”

“Well, it’s this way. Suppose you have a General Election in England, what do you find? This — the attention of the nation is diverted from the individual to the party. It’s not a question which man wins, but which party wins; but in a bye-election it is the individual which counts. Suppose the Church of England yields to the Catholic Church, say in ten years, and you go over with the rest. You would be lost, my friend — lost in the crowd. But if you were a pioneer, like Newman or Manning, then the eyes of the world would be on you.”

“But they were great men, and I am a nobody.”

“Father Dominic’s name has almost a magic spell to draw the crowds in Yorkshire,” said Ritzoom, “and Father Dominic is but a boy. Father Dominic’s name is whispered in high places — think of it, it is known in Westminster, but more, it is known in Rome.”

“In Rome?” cried Dominic.

“In Rome. More than one Cardinal in Rome has heard of the lad who attracts multitudes, and who, after his ‘missions,’ is besieged by both men

and women who come to him for confession and for advice and guidance. Dominic's doctrines are discussed there, doctrines which are not distinguishable from those of the Church of Rome, save for one thing."

"The infallibility of the Pope," said Dominic.

"Just that. Besides, do you call Newman and Manning great men?"

"They were accepted as such."

"You never knew them?"

Dominic shook his head. "How could I?" he said.

"But I did. Newman certainly was a man of brain of a sort, but it was a juggling brain. What is his 'Apologia' but juggling and a series of mental gymnastics? But Manning great? A little man, my friend. A little, snuffling man; but still he was necessary — necessary. Therefore he was written up. You see, he was a pioneer; that was why he was noted."

"I see." Somehow Dominic felt uncomfortable. It seemed as though everything were placed on a lower plane. Still, Ritzoom's words influenced him.

The next day the Jesuit and Dominic took a long walk together, when they discussed Bingley's conversion. Ritzoom spoke of the reason which influenced the young ritualist, and proved that it was impossible for any one who accepted the sacerdotal idea of the Church to remain outside the Catholic Church.

"And yet he is still in the Church of England," urged Dominic.

Ritzoom shrugged his shoulders. "When a man has once submitted himself to the all-wise guidance of the Church," said Ritzoom, "then he must do as the Church dictates."

"Then a man becomes a mere pawn on the chess-board when he joins the Catholic Church?" urged Dominic.

"Did we not agree last night, my friend, that the world is made up of the leaders and the led? What is Bingley in any institution? Could he be a leader? But there are others who move the pawns on the chess-board."

"Still, all authority is vested in the Pope."

"Who and what is the Pope, my friend? Is he a man, or is he an office? The Pope stands for some thing, and when the Holy Father speaks, he speaks in a representative capacity. But who tells him what he must say?"

"I don't know."

"But supposing I do, my friend — supposing I do? But here comes the question; when a man feels that instead of belonging to an' excommuni-

cated sect, he should belong to the one true Catholic and Apostolic Church, what course is open to him?"

"When he does, yes," said Dominic.

The next day, after many a long conversation, Ritzoom left Dominic, and then for another week the young man was thrown back on his own resources. Left alone, all the old ecclesiastical questions came back to him. He read the books which had so influenced Father Bingley with great eagerness, and as he read, he realized more than ever that there was a very thin line of partition between the teaching of the Community of the Incarnation and that of the Roman Church. The Community was simply a preparatory school. The road in which he had been taught to walk led straight to Rome.

And yet he was undecided. In fact, his whole mind was in a chaotic condition. One influence battled with another, and in spite of Ritzoom's influence nothing seemed quite plain.

Then a change came. He had been in Cumberland nearly three weeks when he received a letter from Father Townley, telling him to return to Yorkshire immediately. The old habit of obedience strong upon him, he made haste to depart. Having paid a visit to Messrs. Coad and Perkins, he felt free to do this, especially in view of the fact that those gentlemen had told him that everything was going smoothly, and although everything would take time, he need be under no apprehension in relation to the future.

On his way back to Yorkshire he tried for the hundredth time to realize where he stood. He was under the impression that Father Townley had serious reasons for writing him, and that therefore he ought to have some idea of his course of action.

Of one thing he felt certain. He had so far conquered his passion for Maggie Yorke that he would finally drive her from his heart altogether. He had realized that whatever his future might be, he had taken the vow never to marry, and so, little by little, he had hardened his heart against her. She was an enemy to his faith, and she had constantly stood between him and his duty, therefore it was his duty to regard her as a heretic. Perhaps the new experience through which he had passed had helped him in this; anyhow, he thought he had become reconciled to the thought that he must live his life without her. She and he belonged to different worlds, and whenever he entered her world it meant anguish and misery. With regard to the rest, he was still uncertain. He still hoped, and sometimes believed, that the Church of England was the true branch of the Catholic Church, and that therefore he

need not suffer the agony of wrenching himself from her. Of course, he was not sure, and repeatedly the old questions were recurring to him, often with increasing force.

When he arrived at the House of the Incarnation, he found Father Townley in a state bordering on excitement.

"I am glad you have returned so quickly, my son," he said.

"I am very glad to come, Father," replied Dominic; "there are many things I feel I must tell you."

The old man looked at him keenly.

"I gather that the Catholic Church is but little in evidence where you have been?" he said.

"All the parish churches around Wildthorne Barton are Protestant," said the young man, "The incumbents are what is called Evangelical. I did not go near them."

"Then what did you do?"

"I read my breviary every day. and as far as I could, I — I" Here he stopped.

"You did not go to confession?"

"There is a Catholic Church five miles away, belonging to the Roman Branch. It is very small, and but few people go to it, but I confessed to the priest there."

Father Townley was silent.

"I have been thinking a great deal. Father, and I desire very much to speak with you."

"That is well— that is well. But I am afraid that what you have to say must stand over for a little. I have been summoned to London, and I wish you to go with me."

"When?"

"At once. We are just in time to catch the five o'clock train."

"Then I have no need to unpack my bag."

"No, the cab will be at the door in five minutes."

During the journey to London Father Townley scarcely spoke to him; and when at length they arrived at King's Cross, Dominic did not know what the program for the evening was. However, he asked no questions, but entered the cab which Father Townley had ordered, and drove straight to the Hotel Metropole.

"I must be away from you for an hour or two," said Father Townley. "I have an important interview. I should not be surprised if I am not back before midnight, but I may be back earlier. You had better wait here in case I should return earlier and need you."

"Very well, Father."

The old life of the Community was strong upon him. Somehow, in coming under the personal influence of Father Townley again, things had changed. The new life of Wildthorne Barton, with its romances, its long, health-giving walks, its freedom, had gone. Only the night before old Jonathan Wagstaff had waited upon him as a willing servant and tried to anticipate his every desire. Then he was master of a fine old house, he was practically the owner of an estate, but now he was under the old dominion. Of course, too, when the lawyers had done their work, and he was the recognized heir of the Wildthorne property, it must be handed over to the Community. The thought was not altogether pleasant.

Father Townley returned just before midnight, still looking thoughtful and perturbed.

"I fear trouble, Dominic," he said.

"Trouble?"

"Yes, my son. Lord Sowerby has done his best, and so have I; but the man is pigheaded, he intends going forward."

Dominic opened his mouth to ask for an explanation, but he was silent.

"Probably," went on Father Townley, "the Archbishop will wish to examine you."

"Examine me?"

"Yes. At present you are the most prominent member of the Community, and he will wish to speak to you. He has intimated as much. But nothing is settled yet. It will all depend on tomorrow."

"Tomorrow?"

"Yes, in the House of Commons. If Trevelyan persists in his course, then, of course, there is bound to be a disturbance, and the Archbishop will want to speak to you."

"Trevelyan!"

"Yes. He is the brother of the Trevelyan you met at Fletcher Yorke's. He has become a kind of political leader of the Protestant party. A dangerous man — a very dangerous man. Hitherto these extreme Protestants in the House have been men of little ability, little weight; but Trevelyan is a bril-

liant man, I fear trouble. He is rich, educated, and a fine speaker. By the way. I heard something about his being a great friend of Fletcher Yorkers, Lord Sowerby can do nothing with him.”

“I am afraid I do not follow you.”

“No, I forget; you know nothing, and I have been so occupied that I have not been able to tell you. Bat Trevelyan is going to bring the case of the Community of the — before the House of Commons tomorrow. It is almost identical in its aims, teachings, and purposes with the Community of the Incarnation, so much so that we are bound to be involved. We may be mentioned.”

“What about?”

“Oh! the old story. The accusation of Romanizing. Oh! this curse of being a part of a State Church and having to subscribe to the secular law. What has the law to do with the ordinances and doctrines of the Catholic Church? Yet that is our position.”

“We receive the State patronage and emoluments.” The words slipped from Dominic’s lips before he was well aware.

“Yes, I know — that is the curse of it. Even if we were disestablished, the State must have control of most of our cathedrals and churches. But I cannot talk about it tonight. I am too disturbed. I shall have another interview with Lord Sowerby in the morning after he has again seen Trevelyan. If Lord Sowerby fails, everything will be thrashed out in the House of Commons.”

Dominic did not see Father Townley till after lunch the next day, who told him that Lord Sowerby had again failed, and then the two left the hotel together, and walked down to Whitehall towards the Houses of Parliament.

21. The House Of Commons

DOMINIC was utterly ignorant of London, and this was the first time he had entered the great buildings where the destinies of the British Empire were controlled. As he entered the door opposite St. Margaret's Church, he was struck with the stateliness of the historic pile. Every building he had seen before seemed poor and little compared with this. As he passed Westminster Hall, and called to mind the thrilling scenes with which it had been associated, he seemed to be entering an unknown world. In the past, all his interests had been centered around the Church. It had become his world; but here he realized that he was at the hub of that great political world of which he knew practically nothing. Of course, he with others had discussed education, and the position of the Church as viewed from the standpoint of politics, but he had seen everything through the eyes of the Community to which he belonged. But here all was changed. As he entered the lobby he saw a crowd of people, mostly men, eagerly discussing affairs, and this crowd suggested a world of which he was ignorant.

He saw too that Father Townley, the head of his little world at the Community, was unknown here. No one paid him any heed. Even the attendants paid him no respect.

"Got an order, sir?"

"No."

"Then it's impossible for you to get in. The 'Ouse'll be very crowded today; and if you 'av'n't got an order already, I doubt if you can get in."

"Dear me!" said Father Townley. "I forgot all about this difficulty. How foolish I was. But the affair of this afternoon affects me very keenly. I must get in."

"Here you are, sir. Write the name of some member that you know, and state your business. If there's room, he'll get you a permit."

"Thank you! Thank you!" Father Townley wrote the name of the member for the constituency in which the House of the Incarnation was situated, gave the card to the attendant, and then waited. A few minutes later he

heard his name mentioned, and soon the Member of Parliament came into the lobby.

"I am afraid I shall have a difficulty, Father Townley," said Mr. Carr, the member; "there seems to be great interest in this affair, and — yes, of course, you'll be interested. You are in the same box. Ha! Ha! But I doubt if there's room. I wonder now that your friend Lord Sowerby didn't get a permit for you."

"He would have done so, if I had mentioned it, but my mind has been so full of other matters, that I quite forgot — quite forgot."

"Well, as it happens, I have a couple of permits. Ha! Father Dominic, how are you? But mind you, I doubt if you'll find a seat."

It all came as a kind of shock to Dominic. This Member of Parliament even was a very small man. He had no influence, while Father Townley was a mere nobody. And yet the latter was deeply interested in the question which would be under discussion that day. It was terribly humiliating.

They found their way by what seemed a side door up some narrow steps, and then presently came to a room where an attendant gave them a book to sign.

"Yes, you may find a seat; the place is very crowded, but you may squeeze in," said the man, in a free and easy tone. They might have been a couple of day laborers from all the respect he paid them.

A minute later they entered the House in which the political destinies of a large part of the world are decided. At first Dominic was somewhat disappointed in the size of the building. As a church it would seem small and unimportant, and rather suggested the dissenting chapel in which he had heard the sermon which had a great deal to do with making him hate Dissent, rather than a great legislative hall. It was simply an oblong building with a gallery all around it.

But this feeling soon passed away. The place seemed to grow in importance every minute he stayed there. Perhaps this was because every one was intensely interested, and also because every decision passed in that House was so far-reaching in its effect. He felt, too, that the men who crowded the benches were the representatives of the people. They expressed to a large extent the mind of the nation. The voice of many millions of men were heard when those men spoke.

Right opposite him, at the other end of the building, was the Press Gallery, and instinctively he felt how important the men who sat there were.

They were not nameless boys who reported for provincial newspapers, but men who, in some cases, had obtained national reputations. They were guiding, to an extent, at all events, the thoughts of the multitudes. Behind the Press Gallery again, and partly hidden from his view by a kind of grating, he saw the faces and dresses of women. It seemed to him rather unfair that they should be so badly treated. They could not see the Speaker's chair, or the Government benches. Still it was not for him to criticize.

"It's going to be a full House, Dominic," said Father Townley. They had managed to get seats close together, in a far better position than they had dared to hope for, "See, there's the Prime Minister just come in, and there's the Education Minister, and the President of the Local Government Board."

Dominic looked at these men wonderingly. He had seen and heard their names a hundred times, now he beheld them in the flesh. One of these men was a Presbyterian, another a Baptist, and another of no Church at all. Yet they were among the great factors in deciding the work of the Church!

"We are in time, too," went on Father Townley.

"Look, our affair does not come on yet. The question time is not over. In another ten minutes or so it will come on."

Dominic looked at the sea of faces beneath him. As the man at the entrance had said, the house was full, every seat on the Government side was crammed, while even the Opposition made a good muster. Upstairs and down it was the same.

"You see those men underneath us?" went on Father Townley, "those are the Irish members."

"They are nearly all Roman Catholics, are they not?" asked Dominic.

"Yes, nearly all. They support us on the Education question. Most of them are faithful to the Church."

"To the Roman Church?"

"Yes, to the Church. Oh, look!" And Father Townley pointed to the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery, where an old man sat, resting his chin upon his hand.

"Who is that?" asked Dominic.

"The Archbishop. Evidently he is so interested that he has come himself." And Father Townley heaved a deep sigh.

Meanwhile one after another rose from the Government benches, and answered questions which appertained to their department, and then for a

few seconds there was a silence. The topic which had drawn so many people together was about to be discussed.

“Hear! hear! hear!” was the general shout, as a young man arose among the benches on the Government side of the House, but not from the front bench. Evidently the speaker was only a private member, and held no official position whatever. And yet all were prepared to hear him with eagerness and respect. This was either because of the speaker’s fame as an orator, or because the question he was to introduce was of more than ordinary interest.

Dominic could not help being fascinated by the young man’s face. First, because he closely resembled Cuthbert Trevelyan, who had challenged him to debate, and, second, because of his striking appearance. Dominic noted that he could be but little older than himself. His face was of that pale, intellectual class which immediately arrests attention. His forehead was not high, but was broad, and finely developed, and covered by a mass of wavy brown hair.

He stood quietly while his supporters cheered him, but it was evident that he was much moved. Even from the distance Dominic thought that he saw his hands tremble somewhat as he arranged his notes, while he felt sure he saw his lips tremble. That, however, was perhaps fancy. Dominic knew that the speaker was an enemy to the position which he held, and yet he could not help admiring him. There was something watchful in his presence; he had come to the House with something to say, and he meant to say it. Evidently he was a strong man with a purpose in life.

This fact was confirmed when some members of the House gave a derisive laugh, for he saw Horace Trevelyan turn with flashing eyes towards those who derided him. And the look he gave showed Dominic the stuff of which he was made. This was not a man who was to be checked in his purpose by derision.

Presently the shouts died away, and the young man began to speak. At first his manner was slightly hesitating. He seemed anxious to choose the right word, and not to spoil the effect of his speech by hastily formed sentences. He was not there, he said, to speak as a Papist or a Protestant, that was beside the point, especially as he held very strongly that a man’s religious convictions were sacred, and should not be interfered with as long as they did not interfere with his citizenship. But in speaking to the question with which his name was associated, he remembered that the State had laid

down certain laws for the Church Established by the State, under whose patronage she received great emoluments, and under whose favor her ministers received preferment, position, prestige, and power. Moreover, the ministers of the State Church took certain ordination vows, which bound them in all common decency to abide by the laws which had been laid down by the State. Ever since the Reformation settlement these laws and usages had obtained, and up to a comparatively few years ago, these, except in a few rare cases, had been obeyed. But of late years a new spirit had been felt. Not so much by the laymen of the Church, but by those who persisted in calling themselves priests. These men, covertly and secretly at first, but afterwards more openly and audaciously, set themselves to kill Protestantism in the Church of England, and to destroy those things which they had sworn to uphold. He had not the slightest objection to these men changing their views. That was a matter which they must settle for themselves. All religious views were tolerated in the land, and the days of persecution on account of religious conviction were supposed to be over. But that was not the question. The Church of England stood for certain principles. It stood as a protest against the Church of Rome. Its Articles and its homilies were very explicit on these matters, and the laws which the State had framed were intended to safeguard the Protestant position of the Church of England. But from the time the Oxford Movement commenced there had been a steady and growing desire, not on the part of the laity of England, who in the main hated anything in the form of priestcraft, but on the part of the clergy, who were seemingly carried away with the thirst for power which had ever been a characteristic of priestcraft, and which had caused some of the blackest blots on the history of the world, to drag the Church back to the position which she held in the pre-Reformation days. On every hand there had been an aping after, and a pandering to, the ways of Rome. From the highest of Church dignitaries to the most insignificant and ignorant curate this had become common. It was a matter of wonder to him personally that these men had not more pride. The Church of Rome, whose ways they aped, and whose ceremonial they tried to adopt, treated them with the most marked contempt. It refused to accept their ordination, and regarded all Church of England clergy as mere schismatic laymen.

“I wonder,” said the speaker, slowly and with a touch of irony in his voice, “that men calling themselves Englishmen will consent to be so snubbed by an Italian priest living in Rome. But every man to his taste.”

There was a loud shout of laughter at this, and Dominic noticed that Father Townley squirmed in his seat, and looked very angry.

The speaker then went on to show how this movement had spread, and how order after order, institution after institution, and society after society had sprung up, never at the instigation of laymen, but always through the influence of the clergy, and all of them intended to destroy the Protestant nature of the Church. Moreover, throughout the whole country, the Bishops had appointed Ritualistic clergymen in evangelical parishes, and even where the rectors and vicars of parishes were true to their ordination vows, the societies he had mentioned had become so powerful that they had placed curates in these parishes, the avowed object of whom was to imbue the people with Roman Catholic teaching and usages. At last the whole matter became a scandal. The Church of England clergy became a byword for honest men."

"Question! Question!" shouted some.

"I repeat my words," said Horace Trevelyan. "Because of the attitude of these so-called Ritualistic priests, men who had taken the vows of the Protestant Church of England, men who were pledged to maintain the principles of the Reformation, men who owed their position, their prestige, their influence, their emoluments to the fact that they had sworn to maintain those Reformation principles, and because these men have been and are untrue to the most elementary principles of honor, the Church of England clergy have become a byword among honest men."

A great shout went up from the benches, mostly in support of what he had said.

"I do not say," went on the speaker, "that all our clergy belong to this class; there are still, as in olden time, seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, but the unchecked practices of these men have lowered the standard of honesty among the clergy in the eyes of the nation. The question almost invariably asked when a new incumbent comes to a parish is this, 'Does he maintain his ordination vows truthfully and honorably, or is he a traitor to them?' There should be no need to ask such a question, concerning men who are supposed to be ministers of Him whose Name is a synonym for truth and honor."

He then went on to describe how Sir William Harcourt proclaimed these matters, not only in that House, but in the leading journal of the nation, and as a result of his impeachment, and of the interest others took in the matter,

a Commission was appointed. The result of the Commission they all knew. That of which he complained was more widespread even than they had thought. Romish ceremonial, Romish practices, Romish doctrines obtained in thousands of parishes. He had noticed in the papers only a few days before that the Bishop of a great metropolitan diocese had refused to sanction the appointment of a converted Roman Catholic priest to a parish because he was evangelical, and because he observed evening communion, giving as his reason that he wanted to maintain the continuity of teaching in the parish. He had noticed, however, that Bishops were not so anxious about the continuity of teaching when that teaching had been evangelical. Again and again had ritualistic clergymen been appointed to parishes, in spite of the expressed opposition of the people to whom they were supposed to minister.

“Not only that, but institutions and orders and societies existed for the very purpose of training men in Romish doctrine. These orders and communities were under the patronage of the Bishops and Archbishops of the Church. In these places monastic usage was observed, Romish doctrines were taught, and the only candidates eligible for these places were men who were willing to be traitors to the Church whose ordination vows they had taken.”

“Question! question!” cried some; “That is not true,” cried others; while others shouted, “Name! name! Authority! authority!”

“I come here prepared to give names and authorities,” said the speaker. “Of course, you have all heard of the ‘Community of the —’ It was founded by a Bishop who is often quoted as an authority on ecclesiastical matters. This Community, or order, or society, is one of several which receive the patronage of the heads of the Church. Well, what happens? A young clergyman enters it. He bears a well-known name— a name that has stood for a great deal in the English Church, After this young clergyman has been there some time, and by a natural process, he goes over to the Church of Rome. Some time after he joins the Church of Rome, he gives a lecture in a great city on the forces which led him to join the Church of Rome, Mark you, I am saying nothing against his joining the Roman Communion, If that Communion met his needs better than any other, he was, in my judgment, not only justified in joining it, but it was his duty to do so. But that is not the point. This is the thing of importance. In the lecture he described the teaching and usages of this institution — an institution, mark you, which goes

under the name of a Church of England institution, and which has the patronage of her Bishops. And what does he say? Listen. 'We had what we believed to be the Mass; we observed silence during the greater part of the day; we wore a certain habit with a girdle, and some wore a biretta; we used the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, supplementing it with a great part of the Catholic Breviary, and I for months — I may say years — before I became a Catholic, recited my Rosary every day. We taught the doctrine of confession, and I can tell you that at the conclusion of the mission, which I conducted as part of my public work, I used to hear far more confessions than I heard as a Catholic priest.'

A great silence fell upon the House during the time Trevelyan read this extract, and when he had finished exclamations of excitement, mutterings of protest, and cries of "shame" were frequent. Dominic looked at Father Townley's face; it was drawn and white and haggard. Dominic knew, too, that it was true; indeed, it was all a commonplace to him, only, and he wondered why, it had never struck him in the same way before.

"But this is not all," went on the speaker; "neither does what I have read show to the full extent what has been going on, and what is still going on, in our Established Church, a Church which, mark you, is a Reformed Church, a Church which exists as a protest against what used to be called the abominations of Rome. Listen again, 'On practically every point, except the supremacy of the Pope, we believed the teaching of the Catholic Church, taught most of its doctrines, as thousands of Anglican clergy are doing to-day, *and it is this teaching that is building the bridge over which Anglicans will come into the true fold.*'"¹

"Now, mark you, these are not the words of a Protestant, they are the words of a Roman priest; they are the words of one who has lived in one of these Communities, of one who knows the life, the teaching, the influence of the place intimately, and this is what is going on under the patronage of our State Church, which is supposed to exist as a bulwark against those very dogmas and usages which these and other similar places are teaching and practicing every day.

"There are two remarks which I wish to make just here," went on Horace Trevelyan slowly. "The first is this: I am not condemning these men for becoming Roman Catholics and preaching Roman dogmas, if they wish to do so. But this I do say, if the battle between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism is to be fought over again, let it be done fairly and openly. Let us

know where we are. And more, those men, while they have the right to believe and teach what they feel to be their duty to believe and teach, have no right to do so under the patronage and authority of the Protestant Church of England. When the Church of England has become so imbued with the teaching of Rome, that she becomes a bridge over which Anglicans will go into that Communion, then she becomes a mockery of what the Church of England should be, and a violation of what every clergyman of the Church of England swears she shall be. And it is the duty of this House to see, bearing in mind that the Bishops fail in their duty, that the Church of England be purged from those teachings and practices from which we have the right to demand that she shall be free.”

Again a great shout went up from the House, and by this time the feeling was so intense that the spectators in the Strangers’ Gallery had a difficulty in refraining from expressing their feelings. Even those who were opposed to Trevelyan were silent, the case was too damning against them. The Archbishop looked grave and perturbed, whilst Father Townley’s face was positively ghastly.

“The other observation I wish to make,” said Trevelyan, “is one which demands all my power of restraint. I have endeavored to keep from using strong language; and I shall still endeavor to do so, although the task I have set myself is very hard. I wish to draw the attention of the House to the moral standard which obtains in these Romish forcing houses. Let us consider; here are some of the things which these men vow to maintain; and because they have taken vows to maintain these, they are received into the churches and homes of England.”

Here he slowly and with marked emphasis read some passages from the prayer book and homilies of the English Church.

“Now think, sir,” he said, when he had finished reading, “think of the extracts I have read from the lecture of the ex-Anglican clergyman, and then of the things these men swore to uphold when they took their ordination vows, and then try and realize the moral standard of those thousands whom we are told exist in the Church of England, who day by day blatantly, willfully and knowingly violate their oaths in trying to rob the Church of England of its Protestant character. We have heard of the honor of Englishmen, but what becomes of that honor in face of what I have mentioned? Are not honor, truth, fair-play, nay the commonest decencies of life trampled underfoot by men who, in their love for priestly power, betray the principles to

which they were sworn, and who daily break the vows they solemnly made? We can respect the men who through conviction leave one Church and go to another, but no honest man can do any other than despise the men who, taking the vows of the Church, disbelieve her doctrines, and who daily seek to lead her people to accept those beliefs which it is their duty to deny. We are constantly hearing complaints that the people, especially the men, are forsaking the churches; is it any wonder? It is a characteristic, and I trust ever will be a characteristic of Englishmen to 'play our game fairly, and not to foul the pitch.' What wonder, then, that when they see these so-called ministers of religion doing both, they shrug their shoulders, and pass by with sneering contempt. Moreover, these men are by their action bringing into contempt that noble band of pastors in the Church of England who are faithful to their vows, and who day by day are maintaining those principles which have made our nation great and glorious.

"And now comes the question, what are we, the representatives of the people of this land, we who legislate for the nation, to do? It is in order that we may do our duty, that we may see that these State servants obey the State, that I have introduced this matter. It is to urge that while we have a State Church, established to maintain the Reformed faith, that reformed faith must be maintained; and to see that those men who, like Achan, are traitors in the camp, either conform to their vows, or leave the Church which they disgrace."

Dominic remained long after Hector Trevelyan had finished his speech. He knew in a vague way that there was a long and animated discussion, but he paid little heed to it. He felt glad that no one could see him. He was one of the men whom Trevelyan had held up to contempt and scorn and derision. He was a traitor to the vows he had made; he had violated the most elementary ideas of honor, and he felt ashamed. Argue as he might, weave as he did a web of sophistry around his position, the basic truth remained. He had sworn to uphold one set of principles, while day by day he was doing his best to undermine them. No man holding the position he held had a right to remain in the Church of England.

Presently there was a general exodus, and Dominic found his way with Father Townley into the lobby.

"I must see the Archbishop and Lord Sowerby," said Father Townley to him. "The position is very grave, and I feel sure the Archbishop will want

to see you, and talk with you. Be at my room in the hotel in say two hours from now.”

“Yes, Father Townley.”

He spoke the words almost mechanically. His mind was far away. He turned to leave the House, and then stopped suddenly, for coming towards him he saw Maggie Yorke.

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1. The extracts here quoted are taken from a lecture delivered in Liverpool by a Roman Catholic priest who left the English Church in the manner described.↩

22. The Parting Of The Ways

"DID YOU HEAR the debate, Mr. Wildthorne?"

"Yes, Miss Yorke."

"And—?" She stopped suddenly, like one who did not know how to finish the sentence.

He opened his mouth to speak, but did not utter a word.

"I expected to have tea on the terrace with Mr. Trevelyan and my father," she said, "but I fancy Mr. Trevelyan will not be able to spare the time. I saw him surrounded by a host of admirers. Both he and my father will have forgotten me. I have waited for nearly half an hour."

"Will you come and have some tea with me, Miss Yorke, and then come for a walk in the Park? I should like to have a chat with you."

She hesitated a moment, and then accepted his invitation.

During tea, however, little was said, and Dominic was moody and taciturn. Presently, however, they found their way to St. James's Park. It was a beautiful spring evening, and after the heated atmosphere of the House of Commons the air seemed pure and sweet. The birds were singing among the tree branches, and on every hand were evidences that the cold breath of winter had departed, and that the reign of spring had begun.

They walked slowly side by side, neither speaking, and each feeling a restraint because of what they had heard that afternoon.

"Mr. Trevelyan's speech is praised on all hands," said Maggie presently.

"He is evidently a strong Protestant," said Dominic.

"He has the reputation of being a man of high principles, and an exalted conception of honor," she replied.

Her words stung him. Why was he so anxious that she should think well of him? He had told himself that he had driven her from his life. Was he not a sworn celibate?

"It was a tremendous indictment," she went on, "and I noticed that the Archbishop looked very distressed."

“No wonder,” said Dominic almost involuntarily. “Do you think anything will be done?”

“Can you doubt it?” she answered.

“Not that it will affect me,” he went on, like one musing.

She turned to him inquiringly.

“It is not for me to judge others,” went on Dominic, “but I can no longer remain in the Church of England.”

“No?”

“Of course, you cannot understand what it means to me when I say that,” he went on. “How can you? You — you are outside the Church altogether. It will be like pulling out my heartstrings, but it does not matter. The Church of England can no longer be a home for me. That man, bigoted Protestant though he may be, spoke the truth. No Catholic has the right to remain in a Church which is established by law to maintain an alien faith. No, no; he’s right. It is a mean and contemptible thing to use the Church of England as a means to advocate the Catholic faith. We are traitors, traitors to our vows, every one of us who do this. The Church of England is supposed to be Protestant, it stands for that; and I am a Catholic. Yes, and the man was right when he said that such Communities as ours trained men to be Catholics. He did not attack the Community of the Incarnation directly, but that does not matter. Our Community advocates the same teaching as the Community of the —, from which Father went to the Church of Rome. Yes, it is no use denying it, I have for nearly ten years been trained as a Catholic, and to despise Protestantism; and all the time we professed to belong to the Protestant Church of England. I never saw it as I did when Trevelyan was speaking. The man was right; he was right!”

He seemed to be speaking to himself. His eyes had a far-away look, and his face was very pale.

“Yes,” he went on, “we taught every doctrine of the Church of Rome, with the exception of the supremacy of the Pope, and all the time we called ourselves clergymen of the Church of England. We laughed at the ‘Prots,’ and day by day we became more and more avowed as to our position. We seemed to vie with each other as to who should be most Romanist. Of course, the Catholic Church is the only Church; but the man was right; we were traitors, we stood in a false position, we forfeited the right to self-respect. But it is over. I cannot continue in it. No man who had the most elementary feeling of self-respect could.”

He was not speaking to Maggie. He was evidently thinking aloud, regardless of any who might hear him.

"Then what are you going to do?" asked Maggie.

Her question aroused him.

"Do? Ah, yes! I must do as the man said. I must go where I belong. The Church of England has trained me for the Church of Rome, and I must go there."

"As a priest?"

"Yes, to prepare for the priesthood."

"Mr, Wildthorne," said Maggie, "have you fulfilled the promise you made me the last time we met?"

"What promise?"

"You promised me that you would read an authoritative life of Luther, an authoritative history of the Reformation."

"Did I? Oh, yes, I remember. But why should' I? I have read a great deal of Church history."

"Yes; but you admitted that you had not read an authoritative life of Luther; that you only read such books as spoke of him as a Philistine and a clown, and which regarded the Reformation as the result of an appeal to the mob. Besides, you promised."

"I promised. Then I will."

"Before you finally enter the Church of Rome?"

"Yes, I will. But it will make no difference."

"Then you do not keep your mind open to the truth?"

The girl's question stung him, and he looked at her almost angrily.

"Surely," said the girl, "it is worth while considering the position of the not least intelligent half of Europe? If the enlightened nations of the world have broken away from Rome, there must be a reason for it. If the most eminent thinkers and scholars of Europe regard the exclusive claims of Rome as a tissue of fables, surely a young man who has any respect for his intelligence should at least ponder over what they have to say!"

"The revolt against the Church is a revolt against spirituality, against the claims of God," he cried.

"Are you sure?" she asked. "Is not that a groundless charge? Besides, should any man consent to commit intellectual suicide before at least giving his intelligence a chance?"

"No Catholic does that."

“Yet Newman frankly admitted that he did. At least no other intelligible interpretation can be given to his words.”

He remembered Ritzoom’s words. “There are two classes, the leaders, and the led. In the main, men and women are like pawns on the chess-board; but there are those who move the pawns. You can be among those who move the pawns.” For the first time he realised what these words meant, and where they led.

“Of course,” went on Maggie, “every one to his taste. But which is worse, I wonder, the man who is untrue to his vows, or the man who stultifies the mind God has given him?”

Again the girl stung him. She made him angry. Yet why should she? What had he to do with her? In the future their ways must lie apart. And yet she did anger him; she made him feel what he desired to fight against.

“What would you do?” he asked.

“If I were a man, I should try and be one really and truly,” she said. “Before I placed my neck under the foot of an Italian priest, I would at least have the best reasons for doing so. I would investigate the matter to the very bottom. Mr. Trevelyan spoke of some actions being contemptible, but there are others which are pitiable.”

He longed to say something cruel; something which would wound her deeply; but he repressed himself.

“Might one ask whether you, who have been educated as a Protestant Dissenter, have ever considered Catholic claims?” he asked.

“Haven’t I heard you preach?” she laughed. “But, seriously, I have. I chose history as my chief subject at Oxford, so that I might understand something of that great upheaval which we call the Reformation.”

“History!” he cried scornfully, “As though the truth of God could be understood through a study of history!”

“At least that history placed the main issues before me,” she answered, “And after all, is not one of the main issues a question as to the right of private judgment on religious matters? And if one gives up that right, does not one commit intellectual suicide? Every true Romanist must think only within the limits marked out for him by a mediaeval Church, And I — well, I am a Yorkshire girl.”

She laughed as she spoke, and he, still angry, burst out: “Are not the teachers of the Church which has existed from the time of our Lord more likely to be right than you?”

"Not if history is to be relied on," she cried; "why, if I had to choose between the mediaeval Church which you uphold, and no religion at all — I — I — well, I should have to be an atheist. One can only believe in what is believable."

"You speak in ignorance, believe me."

"Possibly, but to show my interest in the matter, I am leaving for Rome tomorrow night."

"You going to Rome!"

"Yes; a party of us are going. My father and mother, and one of my brothers. The two Mr. Trevelyan are going also."

A great pain came into Dominic's heart, he knew not why. He looked at his watch, and he saw it was time for him to go back to the hotel to meet Father Townley. He knew he must go, and yet, much as she angered him, he longed to stay by her side.

"Rome is very interesting just now," she went on. "I hear the Pope is very anxious about the condition of the Church, and there is much intellectual unrest. New societies are springing up, which must mean change. We have introductions to several of the dignitaries there. I am awfully excited about my visit. I wonder that you, who are so keenly interested in such matters, do not go there also."

His heart bounded madly. Of course, he had driven Maggie Yorke from his life; but why might he not visit Rome? He had determined to tell Father Townley that from that day he must cease to be —.

He dared not conclude the thought, even in his own mind; it was too painful.

"I must be going, Miss Yorke," he said. "May I be privileged to take you to your friends before we separate?"

"We are staying at the Carlton," she said; "it is not far from here, and I will not trouble you."

"goodbye, then."

"goodbye."

Still he did not go. He lingered by her side as though unable to tear himself away.

"Do you remember that first conversation we had together?" he said. "I do. You told me the kind of man you admired. He was to be a leader: a man who moved men, who made others think as he thought. Have you forgotten?"

"No," she replied; "but as the years pass by one's thoughts change. I think my ideal is different now."

"What is it? Tell me."

"A man who is true to his conscience at all hazards, whether a leader or not. One who only does what he believes to be right. That first, I think. All the same, he must not be an echo. He must be one who thinks before he acts; one who has the courage to seek the truth until he finds it, and not to rest until he does find it. Having found it, he must be true to it. But I must be going now. goodbye again," and she walked away.

His brain was whirling; his heart seemed to lie like lead within him. Leaving Maggie, much as she angered and pained him, was like leaving sunlight and hope. He tried to drive her from his mind, but could not. He longed to meet Father Townley, and yet he dreaded the meeting. The future was uncertain. He thought of the beautiful home in Cumberland. Oh, to be back there again, to breathe its pure, bracing air, and to rest.

When he reached the hotel, he found Father Townley awaiting him. His face was drawn and haggard, his eye had an anxious look.

"I hope I am not late?" said Dominic,

"No. My interview with Lord Sowerby and the Archbishop was not as long as I anticipated. Dominic, you must go with me to the Archbishop's palace at once."

"Why?"

Father Townley looked at him keenly. It was a new thing for Dominic to question a command. Still, he was so much perturbed that he almost forgot the rule of the Community.

"Because there is bound to be trouble. Unless we are careful, this afternoon's debate may lead to the suppression of our Community. There is nothing to choose between our order and that of the Community of the which Trevelyan mentioned by name this afternoon. Besides, I believe the fellow had you in his mind when he referred to the teachings of the various orders. One of the extracts he read was, I believe, from an address you gave at the mission you held at Brigfield. More than that, you are the most prominent of our members. Your name is almost a household word in Yorkshire, and your advanced statements have been discussed everywhere. Trevelyan will have discussed the whole situation with his brother, who, as you know, challenged you to a debate on the lecture you gave."

“But what will be the good of my seeing the Archbishop?” asked Dominic.

“This. First, he wants to see you, and talk with you. I want you to prove to him that you are a loyal Churchman, and that you are more faithful to the Prayer-book than many who call themselves Protestant. And second, you can show him that the tendency of the Community is not towards Rome, that it is rather to make men see that all that can be got in the Roman Catholic Church is to be found in the Anglican Church. I want you to show him that we have dissuaded many from joining the Church of Rome.”

Dominic was silent.

Father Townley watched the expression on the young man’s face, an expression which puzzled him.

“Come,” he said, “there is no time to waste. The Archbishop will be expecting us in a few minutes.”

“Before we go to the Archbishop, there is something I must tell you,” said Dominic. His voice was tremulous with emotion.

“Yes; what is it?”

“I cannot tell him what you wish me to tell him.”

“What?”

“I cannot tell him what you wish me to tell him,” repeated Dominic. “I am not, neither have I been, a faithful Churchman. The extract which Trevelyan read from the lecture of Father is as true of me, and of the other members of the Community, as it is true of him. We have taught every doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church with the exception of the supremacy of the Pope. The whole tendency of our usages, our life, has been towards Rome. I have been trying to persuade myself that I have been true to the Church of England in all this, but I know I have not. I have been betraying the fundamental principles on which she was founded. In spite of all our sophistries and compromises, the Church of England exists as a Reformed Church, an Evangelical Church, a Protestant Church. We are not Protestants.”

“No, thank God, we are not.”

“Then we have no rights as honest men, to remain in the Church of England.”

“But, Dominic—”

“I could not tell the Archbishop that we are loyal Churchmen. The whole tendency of our life is to disparage those things by which the Church of

England is differentiated from the Church of Rome, and to get nearer and nearer to her. We are seeking to un-Protestantise her. Therefore we are not loyal Churchmen. Call this Erastianism— call it what you will, it is the truth. While the Church of England stands for those things which she does stand for, while she is supposed to obey the laws of the State under which she receives her status, and her position, we cannot be loyal Churchmen if we are day by day disobeying her laws. We may excuse ourselves by saying that there is a law higher than that of the State, and we must obey that law; but we cannot do that as honest men while we are in the Church of the State.”

“Your conversion to these views is very sudden,” said Father Townley.

“I never realized the truth fully until this afternoon in the House of Commons. I felt myself a traitor. The man Trevelyan made me ashamed of myself. I felt that the shouts of derision were for me,” replied Dominic.

But, but—”

“As to the second thing you wish me to assure the Archbishop — that the influence of our Community is to keep men out of the Church of Rome — I cannot do it. If I am anything, I am a Roman Catholic, and I have been made a Roman Catholic through the influence and teaching of the Community. All the influence of our order is in that direction. You know it is. It is true many of our men remain in the Church of England in the hope that we can prepare the way for union with the Church of Rome, but I have been led to see that this is a dishonest attitude. I cannot sail under false colors any longer. The only honorable course for me is to leave the Church of England. Believing, as I do, in the teaching of the Community of the Incarnation, I can do no other. It is the only logical outcome of all I have been taught. Therefore if I go to the Archbishop I must tell him this.”

“But, Dominic, my son, thousands of clergymen believe what you believe, and yet feel it their duty to remain in the Church of England.”

“I cannot judge for them. I can only judge for myself. I must maintain my self-respect. I cannot remain in a Church to whose teachings I am not loyal.”

“Then — then you are going over to the Church of Rome?”

“Yes, that is at present my intention.”

“Have you seen — that is, have you discussed the question with any Roman Catholic priest?”

“Yes, I have spent a great deal of time with Father Ritzoom. He came to see me at Wildthorne Barton.”

“Then what becomes of your vows to our Community?”

“They were taken in ignorance of the truth. Besides, the true Catholic Church can absolve me.”

Dominic stood perfectly still, but Father Townley was pacing to and fro in the room.

“Does Ritzoom know of your decision?”

“No. The truth never came to me until this afternoon, when I felt how honest men must scorn me. Besides, if your idea of the Church is the true one, we are not a Church. We are an excommunicated body. We are cut off from the Covenant of Grace. Neither you nor I are truly priests.”

“I repeat, this is a very sudden conversion.”

“It has been coming to me for months; but today everything was brought to a head, I had looked at everything through a web of sophistry; today I looked at facts through the eyes of a layman. And I must confess his standard of honor is considerably higher than mine has been, I am sorry to pain you. but I must maintain my self-respect.”

“But may not your present frame of mind be transitory? May you not look at things in a different light tomorrow?”

Dominic shook his head.

“Then will you go to the Church of Rome, and take her vows without further consideration? Surely you’re not be so mad as to give yourself to Rome on a sudden impulse?”

“No,” said Dominic, “I shall wait a while.”

“And consult Ritzoom again, or the Archbishop of Westminster?”

“No; neither, I think — at least for the present. I — I shall pay a visit to Rome first.”

Father Townley continued to pace the room, while Dominic stood still, watching him.

“Do you still wish me to go and see the Archbishop?” asked the young man presently.

“No, no, no! — a thousand times no!” cried Father Townley hurriedly. “He has the reputation of for ever sitting on a fence, and compromising in everything possible, but even he would not stand this. Dominic, my son, do you know what this action of yours means?”

“It means recovering my self-respect, at least,” said the young man.

"Yes; but can you not see that it will further compromise the Catholic party in the Church of England? Don't you see that it will make the Protestants shout for joy? We shall become the talk of the nation; we — we — God knows what will happen to us!"

"Does not that prove the truth of my position?" asked the young man. "If you are in the right, your position will bear the fullest investigation. If you are not, then — well, I can no longer occupy a false position."

"But think of the harm you will do to our cause!" cried the older man. "Perhaps — perhaps your decision may be natural — I do not say it is, only perhaps; but the people of England are not prepared for this — yet. The work of the Oxford Movement has not had time to bear its fruit completely yet. Unfortunately Protestantism is too deeply embedded in our national life, and you will hinder our work. Could you not, say — well, go away for a long holiday and say nothing about it? You see, if you went over to Rome there would be a great scandal."

Dominic saw what was in the older man's mind, and although he had learnt to love him, he despised him. He was asked to keep quiet so that they could go on doing their traitorous work subtly, secretly, but surely. It is true this would help on the victory of the Roman Church, and as such it seemed right, but — no, he could not promise what Father Townley desired.

"No, I cannot promise to be silent," he said.

"Ah, but if you join the Church of Rome, I think you will be compelled to," said the other, losing all self-control. "As a fact, I know that the Archbishop of —, the most influential Roman Catholic in England, is anxious that we shall continue our work. He — he declares that —" He did not finish the sentence, for he knew it would only confirm all Dominic had said.

"Do you wish to say anything more to me?" said Dominic after Father Townley had repeatedly besought him to be silent as to his purposes, and to take no definite step until they had further consulted together.

"No, no! I can say no more. You have well nigh broken my heart, Dominic. You will destroy a great deal of the work we have been trying to do — a work which is dearer to me than life itself."

"What is that work? What is the ultimatum of your desires?" asked the young man.

"It is —" But he did not complete his sentence, for he knew that in his heart of hearts he desired that the whole Church of England would do what Dominic had declared to be his purpose as an individual to do.

The young man left the hotel, and walked along the Embankment alone.

“Yes,” he said presently, “I’ll go to Rome. I shall be at the center of things there. I may see the Holy Father, I shall have an opportunity of talking with the most important of the Cardinals, and perhaps — who knows?”

Then he stood for a long time watching the river which sullenly rolled seaward.

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23. Rome

DOMINIC WILDTHORNE stayed in London six days after the events recorded, during which time he roamed around London, and more than once visited the House of Commons. He also wrote two letters of importance. One was to Messrs. Coad and Perkins, the solicitors for the Wildthorne estates, who in their reply informed him that a certain sum of money would be at his disposal if he called at a certain bank in Rome. The other was to Father Ritzoom, asking him to give him letters of introduction to certain Church dignitaries in the Eternal City. He did not refer to his visit to the House of Commons or to the decision which he had made. After all, Maggie Yorke's words had their effect. They made him determine to think for himself, and to take time before he took the step he fully intended to take. And so Father Ritzoom, when replying, did not know the young man's state of mind. He sent the letters of introduction which Dominic desired, but the whole tendency of his own epistle was to dissuade Dominic from going to Rome. He gave no reason for this, but the young man felt that the Jesuit did not wish him to go. Why was it? Rome was the head of the Roman Catholic Church; Rome was the mighty heart which sent its life-blood through the whole of the Catholic Church. The decisions of Rome were obeyed wherever the Church was found. Why, then, should he seem to throw cold water upon his projects? Moreover, the letter was written in such a way as almost to dissuade him from his purpose. It contained an invitation to spend some days with him in Devonshire, amidst some of the most charming scenery in England. It promised him the society of people whom he much desired to meet in an old country house in that county. It spoke of intellectual society amidst the most fascinating environments, and it suggested in the most plausible way that Rome would swarm with trippers, who would make it impossible for him to really the inwardness of the home of the Vatican.

Dominic did not realize it; but for only one fact Ritzoom would have had his way. Moreover, had the Jesuit known of the influence which Maggie Yorke had upon his life, and been aware that she was in Rome, he would

not have contented himself with a letter, but have come to him instead. As it was, however, Dominic was not dissuaded from his original purpose. He would go to Rome; and six days after Trevelyan's speech in the House of Commons, he was actually on his way thither.

Those six days, moreover, were not without their influence. I doubt if any stranger to London can spend even six days in the heart of the great metropolis without undergoing a change. The man born and reared within the precincts of the City takes no notice of it; but no one, ignorant of London life, can walk its streets and catch the spirit of its life without feeling its power. Especially was this true of an impressionable young man like Dominic. Moreover, the great upheaval which had taken place in his life made him particularly susceptible. His mind was no longer running in a fixed groove, his nature was not now cramped by the rules and regulations of the Community of the Incarnation. It is true he thought he would shortly enter a Church whose laws and dogmas were unalterably fixed, but for the moment he felt free. He could not tell why, but his vows did not seem binding. If the Church under whose auspices he had taken those vows was not the true Catholic Church, then the true Church which he proposed entering could absolve him. Ritzoom had hinted as much. Besides, the intellectual freedom which was everywhere manifested made everything different. His visits to the House of Commons were a revelation. In a way he could not understand they widened his horizon. He was able to understand Maggie Yorke better. The men he heard did not accept the authority of dignitaries or conclaves. They debated and criticized positions which he had been taught to accept without question. He did not realize it, but he was passing through an intellectual crisis, and he found himself asking questions which had never occurred to him before. There were certain fundamental positions in his intellectual life upon which he had built the whole structure of his belief. Now, although he did not know it, that structure was shaken, simply because in spite of himself questions arose concerning what he regarded as the fundamental basis of all his thoughts. In many respects his mind was in a state of chaos. Had he put a series of questions to himself concerning those things which he had believed without question, he would have been astonished at his own answers. The decision he had taken affected him far more deeply than he realized.

Truly, Dominic Wildthorne, although he did not know it, was intellectually in a state of great danger; the soul of Dominic Wildthorne was passing

through experiences, the purport of which was an utter mystery to him.

Nevertheless he started for Rome with the full belief that he should take the step which he had mentioned to both Maggie Yorke and to Father Townley. In a few weeks he would be a candidate for the priesthood in the Church of Rome, and then he should enter into peace and rest.

Meanwhile, however, he felt strangely free. He had discarded his clerical attire, and although he felt very strange in a Norfolk suit of grey tweed, it seemed to remove him further from his old life than ever.

Moreover, after he had crossed the Channel, and felt himself on French soil, the change became greater. It was the first time he had ever been out of England. He had forgotten most of the French which he had learnt when under the tuition of Father Trouville, and so when he heard the jabber of unknown words he seemed to be in a new world.

He did not stay in France, He was anxious to get on to Italy, to Rome. Here was the goal of his heart's desires. Here he should find rest and peace. During the last few years he had devoted most of his spare time to the study of Italian. He had for a long time dreamed of visiting Rome, and so he was naturally drawn to the study of that language. He was afraid he would not be very fluent, but he felt he should not be at an utter loss in Italy, as he was in France. He reached Paris about seven o'clock, and then after having gone across the city to the Gare du Lyons, he boarded the train for Turin.

When he awoke the following morning, the train was nearing a little wayside station an hour or two's journey from Modane. The spring here was further advanced than in England, and the sun had risen in a cloudless sky. He felt strangely light-hearted, he knew not why. Perhaps it was because he felt a sense of freedom, perhaps it was because he hoped in the course of a day or two to see Maggie Yorke. When the train stopped he jumped on to the platform, and noticed that a number of peasants had come to the station, and had prepared coffee and rolls and butter for the passengers. He felt ravenously hungry, and was among the first to be supplied with refreshments. Never, surely, had he tasted such delicious coffee! never was bread and butter so sweet! It was worth traveling so far to have an appetite so keen, to enjoy a simple meal so much. The passengers laughed and chatted, while he went to a little water tap, and washed himself, and he — he had never before felt so much a boy. He did not wear clerical attire, he was young, and he was free!

Around him the mountains lifted their giant heads in the sky. Beyond him was Mont Cenis, which divided France from Italy, and he, Dominic Wildthorne, was free to enjoy himself — free to revel in these new and fascinating surroundings!

Presently the train moved on again. The Customs House at Modane was passed, and she began to climb the lower slopes of Mont Cenis. A few minutes later they had entered one of the longest tunnels in the world. Up and up they went for perhaps a quarter of an hour, then suddenly a shaft of light shot through the carriage.

“What is that?” asked some one.

“It is a ray of light which comes from the top of the mountain. A shaft has been sunk just there; and it is the boundary line between France and Italy,” some one replied. Then the train began to go faster. They were no longer ascending, they were descending. Down, down they went, until a few minutes later the train shot into the light.

Oh, the glory of it! On the right and on the left were great ranges of mountains. At the base of these mountains, and far up the slopes, all the land was covered with vines. The country-side was dotted with villages, the air was like some fabled elixir of life, while the villagers sat at their cottage doors singing. This was Italy, the land of sunshine and song and romance!

The train stopped for some minutes. Oh, that it would stay for hours! Dominic felt no fatigue, no weariness. His heart was as light as a feather. He too found himself singing. It was the song he had heard Maggie Yorke sing a few weeks before.

By three o’clock that afternoon they had reached Turin, and the following morning they were again traveling. Italy! Italy! Why did people live in England when there was room in Italy! By noon they reached Genoa, and in the afternoon they passed through Pisa. Everywhere, everywhere was Romance. In Genoa Dominic remembered that Mazzini had dreamed his dream of a new Italy, in Pisa he thought of Savonarola, thinking of the New Kingdom of God which he wanted to establish. Presently the excitement of the day wearied him, and he fell asleep. It was now dark, and there was nothing for which he need keep awake. How long he slept he did not know, but presently he was awakened by a great noise and confusion.

“What’s the matter?” he asked.

“Nothing, except that we are in Rome,” was the reply.

Already the porters were in the train, indiscriminately seizing all the baggage they could lay hands on. Women were protesting, men were shouting, and couriers were trying to look dignified, while they explained to their employers that they had nothing to do but wait.

A few minutes later Dominic was in a cab on his way to the Hotel Quirinal. He knew it was one of the most expensive hotels in Rome, but he was well supplied with money, and he felt sure that Fletcher Yorke would be likely to seek the best hotel.

The next morning he looked eagerly among the faces of those who sat drinking their coffee, but he could see no one that he knew; and so he soon found his way into the street. He hailed a cab, and gave the name of the street in which a Church dignitary whom Father Ritzoom had especially mentioned lived. The driver nodded his head, and lashed his horse.

As Dominic looked around him he was disappointed. He was in a great modern thoroughfare, which was filled with electric cars, and a crowd of people. This, surely, was not Rome! If so there was but little to differentiate it from Paris. A few minutes later, however, he breathed a sigh of satisfaction. They entered the old part of the city, and began to pass through those old squares, which are a delight to all who love art and beauty. Yes, he was in Rome at last. There were the old churches of which he had heard so much. How he should enjoy visiting them! At last he was at the heart of things. This was the head of the great Mother Church of Christendom.

The cab passed over one of the bridges which span the Tiber, and he saw a dome more stupendous, more imposing than any other.

“San Pietro,” said the driver, “e Castello Angelo.”

Dominic’s heart almost stood still, they were nearing the place where the vicegerent of Christ lived.

The cab dashed into a great square, and a full view of the great church burst upon him.

“Vaticano,” said the driver, as for a moment he stopped the horse.

Dominic began to air his Italian. The Pope’s windows were to be seen from here: which were they?

The driver pointed them out, and shrugged his shoulders as he did so.

“You are of course a Catholic?” said Dominic.

“Sono niente.”

“Nothing at all. You do not believe in the Church?”

"I believe in nothing," said the driver. "Who can, if he reads and thinks? The Church is but a big shop, where so-called sacred things are sold. The Church curses the Government, and it was the Government which saved the country.

"But the Pope is a good man?"

The driver shrugged his shoulders.

"He does as he is told," was the reply. "Poor old man, he hardly dares to call his soul his own. But he keeps up the show."

Dominic was not prepared for this. That a cabdriver should dare to talk of the Pope in terms of derision seemed unbelievable.

The cab rattled on again, while Dominic thought of the time when he should see the Holy Father face to face, when he should tell him of the things which had troubled him, and when the old man should give him his benediction and he should find peace.

Presently he stopped at the courtyard of an old palace. Yes, Cardinal Cordova lived here, and Dominic alighted. His first visit in Rome was to a prince of the Church.

Some half an hour elapsed before Dominic was shown into the Cardinal's presence. Evidently his eminence had many visitors, and the young man had to take his turn. When at length he stood before the great man, however, he received something of a shock. He expected to see a tall, dignified man, of commanding appearance, but Cardinal Cordova was short and stout, he waddled as he walked, he took snuff incessantly, and his breath was wheezy.

"Yes, yes, my son, I have read Father Ritzoom's letter. He has told me about you. I am glad to see you. I have also time for a long talk. I caused you to wait a long time, so that I could be absolutely free."

He spoke English fluently, although with a slight Italian accent. He impressed Dominic as a kindhearted man, and one who accepted things as he found them without question.

For some minutes he plied Dominic with questions. He wanted to know the exact condition of the Church in England. Was the Catholic Church as a Church making great progress, and how far had the Church of England accepted the Catholic position?

Dominic told him that he was afraid that the Catholic Church, as a Church, made but little impression on the English mind. The declared Roman Catholics were in the main either foreigners or Irish. There were only a

few hundred thousands of English Catholics. A census of London churchgoers had been taken, and out of several millions of people, only some 90,000 or 100,000 Catholics attended, the main bulk of whom were either foreigners or Irish. As for the Church of England, there was a very large element which was moving steadily towards Rome.

"Ah, yes, yes," said the Cardinal, "the Church of England is doing our work — 'that is well, that is well. Let us pray that this will go on, my son. It is the work of God. Father Ritzoom tells me that you are contemplating coming over to us. I am not sure you are right. He tells me you have great influence in a Protestant part of England, and that thousands hang upon your words. I think perhaps you can best serve the Church by remaining in the Anglican Church. If you become openly a priest, you would lose your power."

"But as I no longer believe in the doctrines of the Church of England," said Dominic, "she is no longer a Church to me. Although it is a Church of compromise, at least to an extent, her ministers are supposed to be Protestants."

"Ah yes, yes. And I do not say you cannot be secretly admitted into the priesthood, but by remaining in the Anglican community you can do more for us than by openly giving up your position. Father Ritzoom does not seem so sure of this, but that is how it strikes me. However we shall see, we shall see."

"But should I not be in a false position? Should I be honest?" asked Dominic.

"Ah, that is a question for the Church to decide, is it not? It is for us to serve the Church's interests. It is such men as you on whom we must depend for bringing over the whole country to us; and it seems to me you do this best by being known as Protestants. You have told me that the Catholic Church as such only touches a very small fringe of the English people, but in so far as you are Catholicizing the Church of the State, you are bringing the whole land to the feet of the Holy Father."

Dominic's heart grew hard. Here was this man encouraging him to continue in the falsehood against which his whole nature revolted, and he was a Prince of the Church — he took part in her most sacred councils!

"Of course, I quite understand your feelings," went on the Cardinal, "You are naturally dissatisfied with being a so-called priest of a Church which is no Church. After all, the so-called English Church is simply a bas-

tard community which is an excommunicated body. Your archbishops and bishops are only schismatic laymen; but what of that? The Church must use the tools at her command. It is the people whom we wish to save, the country which must be brought into obedience to Peter; therefore, although the Church is no Church, it is doing the Church's work."

Had Cardinal Cordova known the state of Dominic's mind, he would not have spoken so plainly. But to him this Jesuitical sophistry was a commonplace, the end justified the means. He accepted the position of one of the leaders of the Oxford Movement who said, "Make yourself clear that you are justified in deception, and then lie like a trooper." He did not know of Dominic's visit to the House of Commons, nor how he had writhed under Trevelyan's denunciations.

"Still, we shall see," went on the Cardinal. "I understand it is your intention to stay in Rome some time. As I said, I am not sure that you are right. Father Ritzoom told me he had written you in the hope that you would stay in England, but on receipt of your letter telling him that you were on the eve of starting, he wrote telling me something of your history. Do you not think you had better return and spend a few weeks with Father Ritzoom?"

He said this hesitatingly, as though he were not sure of his ground, and he watched the young man's face keenly, as if he wanted to judge how far he might go. Dominic was silent, and the Cardinal saw that he was thinking deeply.

"How does it strike you?" he said presently.

"I cannot remain as a minister of the Protestant Church of England, while I no longer believe in her doctrines," said the young man. "It is not honest, it is not straightforward. I took vows in my Community, and I want to be relieved of them. I have come to the true Church so that I may be absolved. Then there are questions which arise in my mind — questions which raise difficulties. I want advice, I want guidance."

For the first time Cardinal Cordova saw the kind of man with which he had to deal. He could not yet be commanded. He must be treated carefully, and with great wisdom.

"Ah! yes, of course the Church can give guidance, and she alone can guide truly," he said; "but if she is to guide, then her children must obey her implicitly, implicitly. All the same, we must remove all doubts first. He that doubteth is in a state of condemnation. When did you come, my son?"

"Late last night."

“And you have come to me first of all. That is well. There are many things in Rome which disappoint us very much. The temporal Sovereignty of the Holy Father seems at present further off than ever, while science, falsely so called, has destroyed the faith of many. The Italians are disobedient children, my son. I must prepare you for this. What is Protestantism in England is Atheism here. Free Masonry is rife; men on every hand openly revile the Church and oppose it. This is their day, and the day of darkness. The Government, the municipality, the press, and a great part of public opinion are against us. More than that, there is a vile thing called Modernism — a kind of free thought which has crept into the Church itself. The Holy Father is considering this latter thing. It is an attempt to reconcile modern discovery with the Church, or rather it is an attempt to make religion square with the discoveries of science and modern thought. Of course, this cannot be done. The dogmas of the Church must remain as the unalterable standard of all thinking and everything must bow to them, everything. The Holy Father is preparing an encyclical which will check these proud and disobedient spirits. Meanwhile, since you have decided to stay for a time in Rome, I thought I had better warn you. Do not be led away by those who are outside the Church, nor by those who at present are within, but who will soon be excommunicated. Meanwhile, I will give you the names of those you must see, and whose advice you must follow.”

Again Dominic’s heart hardened. He did not like this tone of command. He thought of Maggie Yorke’s statement that those who become members of the Church of Rome committed intellectual suicide. Besides, he had promised her that he would think for himself, that before he put his neck under the yoke he would be certain that he was doing right. When he first entered Italy he felt gloriously free, but in the atmosphere of the Cardinal’s palace, the air was oppressive, he felt as though weights were being put upon his mind.

He left the palace soon after, and found his way to St. Peter’s Square. The sun was shining brightly here, and the air was soft and balmy. He turned his face towards the doors of St. Peter’s Church, when his heart stood still. Coming towards him was a group of English people, and in the center of the group, laughing and talking gaily, was Maggie Yorke.

24. Father Tyrone

IN A MOMENT Dominic Wildthorne had forgotten his interview with Cardinal Cordova. They were just under the Pope's window, and yet he did not give the Holy Father a thought. Here was the woman he hated, here was the woman he loved. He had thought more than once that he had driven her from his heart as an enemy to his faith, and a menace to his work; more than once he believed that he had crushed every vestige of his love for her. Now he knew that he had not. He knew it because he felt madly jealous when he saw her look up into the face of the man whose speech in the House of Commons had opened his eyes. Of course she loved this man. How could it be otherwise? He was her ideal of an English gentleman. He was the soul of honor and truth. He had voiced in the House of Commons those opinions which he knew were dear to her; he was a leader of men. What wonder then that she loved him? While he, Dominic, was a creature to be despised. For years he had accepted the prestige, and the position of honor, which he had enjoyed as a minister of the Church of England, while all the time he had been playing that Church false. From her standpoint he was contemplating committing intellectual suicide. How, then, could she think of him, save with contempt?

All the same, he rushed towards her with outstretched hand. She recognized him as he came up, and greeted him warmly. A few minutes later he found himself a member of the party. No one asked him awkward questions. He was on a visit to Rome, just as they were, and they desired to be friendly.

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher Yorke were not with them. Maggie was accompanied by two girl friends who had been with her at Somerville college, the brothers Trevelyan, and her brother George.

"We have just been visiting the Vatican picture galleries," said Maggie. "Of course you have not seen them yet?"

"No," replied Dominic, "I only arrived last night, at midnight."

"Oh! but you have a treat in store, Mr. Wildthorne, We have been here six days, and every day has been more wonderful than the last. I think the wealth of the world's art must have been poured into Rome."

Dominic looked at his watch. It was past noon.

"I am afraid I must be getting back to lunch," he said.

"Where are you staying?" asked Maggie.

"At the Hotel Quirinal."

"Oh! then we shall be close to you. We are at the Continental, and we too must get back. Do you know the way?"

"No, I took a cab here. I am afraid I must get back in the same fashion."

"We can all go back together. Here are hosts of funny little carriages, and we can all get into two of them."

A minute later they were bargaining with cabmen. They did not trouble at all about the few soldi that the cabman was endeavoring to cheat them of, but they did enjoy airing their Italian. Maggie was the gayest of the party.

Presently the two Trevellyans found themselves opposite Maggie's two college friends in one carriage.

while Dominic found himself sitting beside Maggie in another. As for George, he elected to sit by the driver.

Again the sense of freedom which Dominic had felt when he first entered Italy came back to him, while his heart seemed to sing for joy. What, after all, did theological dogmas matter? Was he not young? Was he not sitting by the woman he loved?

Besides, she no longer angered him. She charmed him. No word or suggestion that could wound his feelings passed her lips. Her mouth was wreathed with smiles, her eyes shone with delight. She was in a city which was full of wonders, it was the cradle of modern civilization, it was fascinating beyond words. In Rome the past and the present met. It was a great mystery. Already she had seen that there was more than one Rome — there were many Romes. There was the Rome of the Caesars, there was also the Rome of the Popes, but besides these there was Rome, the center of a new Government, a city striving to vie with the great capitals of the world — a city of visitors, of hotels, and of gay, fashionable life. Although she had been there but a few days, she felt it. She had discovered that it was a great center of intrigue, of warfare. The Church seemed at war with everything. It was at war with the Government, and was daily fighting for lost power; it was at war with the press, it was at war with Free Masonry, it was at war

with all desire for free thought, and free investigation. Thus the many Romes in one fascinated her beyond words. Every day was a revelation, every day was a new delight.

"What is your program while in Rome, Mr. Wildthorne?" she asked, as the cab rattled along.

"I am afraid I have no program," he replied. "I have a few letters of introduction to eminent people — in fact, I have been to see a Cardinal this morning — but my time is my own. I am here to see the sights of Rome."

"We are going to the Church of the Three Fountains this afternoon," said Maggie. "We shall start at three o'clock."

"May I go with you?" asked Dominic impulsively?

"I am sure we shall be all pleased if you will," she replied; and Dominic, his heart burning with joy, formed his plans immediately.

For the next week the young man was constantly thrown into Maggie Yorke's society. He was scarcely ever alone with her, but he saw her often. During that time they discussed politics, art, literature, music, but never theology. They visited St. Peter's together on the first Sunday morning after his arrival, and were in the Gregorian chapel while Mass was celebrated, but only as spectators. Maggie was, owing to her training, and because of the convictions which had become settled in her mind during her study of history, an avowed Protestant, while Dominic did not feel drawn towards the gorgeous ceremonial while Maggie was by his side.

There was not a famous church, or a celebrated relic in Rome, which they did not see. Both were keen lovers of art, both were interested in architecture, and thus each day was a delight.

Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher Yorke seemed to regard him as belonging to their party. It is true he was staying at another hotel, but he dined with them more than once, and even when he did not, he dropped in to smoke a cigar with the Yorke party after dinner. Moreover, Mr. Fletcher Yorke was exceedingly kind to Dominic. He remembered him as a wild-looking, raggedly clothed boy, and he had been interested in him ever since. Therefore, when he knew he was alone in Rome, he did his best to be kind.

To Dominic the days passed like a glad dream. When the ostensible purpose of his coming to Rome occurred to him, he banished it from his mind. Enough for the present that he was happy, that each day was crowded with pleasant sunshine, and that he was seeing the city whose very name had for years fascinated him.

Still another week passed, and yet he had paid no further visits to the men whom Ritzoom and Cardinal Cordova had mentioned to him. There was plenty of time, he reflected. He had told Father Townley that he should never again return to the Community of the Incarnation, and it was surely wise to wait before taking definite steps concerning the matter on which his mind was settled. He did not analyze his feelings; if he had done so, he would have known that it was because he saw Maggie Yorke daily that he waited. One thing he did, however, during the second week of his stay. He fulfilled his promise to Maggie in reading a history of the Reformation. First of all he read Carlyle's "Lecture on Luther," then, although he was much prejudiced against Froude, he read that writer's study on the "Life and Times of Erasmus and Luther."

When he had finished these he admitted that while these men had presented a new aspect of the question to him, both were partisans. If any one had spoken to him about his reading, he would have told the inquirer that they had not affected his views in the slightest. Doubtless a great deal of evil existed at the time of the Reformation, but this did not affect the essential claims of the Church.

After this he commenced reading the story of the Reformation as told by a scholar, who, while ostensibly a Roman Catholic, belonged to that class which has since been placed under the ban of the Church. This writer, while condemning the radical measures of Luther and the other Reformers, admitted the necessity of a Reformation. He also, while describing the great upheaval of the time, outlined his own ideas of what the Church of Christ should be. These ideas were more liberal than Dominic had ever dared to entertain. The writer urged that all who strove after the Christian ideal, in the Christ spirit, belonged to the Church of Christ. That Christianity was not a set of dogmas, but a spirit which should pervade the life of men. He also urged free inquiry, scientific research, and a broad Catholicity. Moreover, he tried to prove that such a conception of the Church was part and parcel of the Catholic Church. He gave his reasons for believing that the Church, over which the successor of Peter reigned, was sufficiently Catholic to embrace his ideals.

Dominic's heart warmed as he read, in spite of his doubts. If this man was right, the Catholic Church had been maligned, and misunderstood. She had been misunderstood even by the Community of the Incarnation, and by the many Ritualistic clergymen whom he knew. This was indeed a Catholic

Church — but it was not the Church of Rome as he understood it. If this were true, then all his views concerning the sacraments and the priesthood were so much wind. And yet the man was a priest, and was held in high esteem as an authority on history, and as an eminent scholar.

Dominic was not aware that this man was at that moment under the ban of the Church, and that the Church had demanded the withdrawal of the book. Neither was he aware that owing to the author's refusal to do this, the congregation of the Index were at that moment considering the book with a view of placing it on the Index.

So interested did he become in the work, however, that instead of joining the party in one of its excursions, he had spent the whole day at the hotel in order to finish it.

"She can no longer say that the Church is narrow after she has read this," said Dominic to himself. "I will go over to their hotel after dinner, and ask her to read it."

Accordingly that night, after dinner, he called at The Continental. He found the Yorke party sitting together in the lounge.

"Hulloa, truant," said Mr. Fletcher Yorke, "come and explain your behavior. We almost missed the train this morning, because we waited for you."

"But you did not miss it?" said Dominic.

"Well, no; but I clambered into the train while it was in motion, and thereby risked my neck. Come, now, tell me what you have been doing to-day."

Mr. Fletcher Yorke passed him his cigar case while he spoke, and then rang for coffee.

"I have been reading Father Tyrone's book on the Catholic Church."

"Have you?" exclaimed Maggie. "I am so glad."

"Have you read it?"

"Oh, yes, I read it in England."

"And you agree with it?"

"In the main, yes."

"Then I might have saved myself the trouble of bringing it with me," he said presently. "You seem to forestall me in everything."

"Did you enjoy it?" asked Maggie.

"Oh! immensely, I should like to meet Father Tyrone very much."

“Should you? Well, that can be easily arranged. Father Tyrone is in Rome at the present time. A friend of ours is giving a reception tomorrow night, and Father Tyrone is going to be there. Should you like to come?”

“There are few things I should like better,” said Dominic.

“Then you may consider the matter settled. We have already seen him. He is a delightful man. By the way, have you read ‘The Saint’?”

“No, but I hope to do so soon. I tried yesterday to get the English edition, but the demand for it is so great that I could not get it, I bought the Italian edition, however, but I am afraid my Italian is not good enough to read it easily.”

“Do you know that it is on the Index?”

“I heard something about it.”

“Well, it is. Do you still intend to read it?”

“Yes,” implied Dominic, almost angrily. He wanted to prove to Maggie that he intended to be true to his promise.

Dominic looked eagerly forward to meeting Father Tyrone. Somehow, his book had made entrance into the Roman Church easy. It had swept away many of the barriers which had arisen in his mind during his stay in Rome. For, in spite of himself, barriers had been raised. Although he would not have admitted it, Rome disappointed him. First of all the Church did not command the respect in the city which he expected. Leading Italians treated it with contempt. On all hands he found it called the “sacred shop”; and even less respectful titles. The clergy were regarded with scant favor by scholars and thinkers, while the priests’ position among the Italian people was utterly different from that held by an English minister among his congregation. All sorts of rumors about the morality of the clergy were bandied on all hands. In addition to this, he could not help realizing that the Church encouraged the most childish superstitions, if those superstitions meant filling the Church’s coffers. He had been led to believe, while at the Community of the Incarnation, that the Catholicizing of the Anglican Church would mean bringing the people back to faith. Yet, here in Italy, where the Church had been for hundreds of years all-powerful, the great mass of the people had drifted to atheism.

Father Tyrone’s book, however, placed everything in a new light. He had portrayed, after giving an outline of the Church’s history, what the Catholic Church really was. It was as broad as human needs, it encouraged all rever-

ent thinking, it aimed at emphasizing the spirit of religion, rather than the letter.

The next day he received a letter from the lady Maggie had mentioned, inviting him to the reception at her house. He discovered that this lady occupied a high position in Roman Society, but that she was held in great disfavor by “the blacks,” owing to her loyal support of the claims of the king.

Dominic accompanied the Yorke party to Mrs. Fairfax’s reception, and received a very gracious welcome from that lady. Evidently some one had told her something of his history, for she referred to several people who had lived in that part of Yorkshire where the House of the Incarnation was situated, and asked after Father Townley.

Just as he realized that he had already occupied too much of her time, Dominic saw coming towards them a tall, distinguished looking man in clerical attire.

“Ah, Father Tyrone,” exclaimed Mrs. Fairfax, “I am so glad to see you, especially because I want you to know Mr. Dominic Wildthorne. Please do not contaminate him. He is an English clergyman, and therefore orthodox.”

Father Tyrone laughed pleasantly. “Surely orthodoxy belongs alone to the Catholic Church, Mrs. Fairfax,” he said. “How can a poor Catholic priest be anything but orthodox?”

A few minutes later Dominic found himself seated in an alcove, eagerly talking with the priest. Father Tyrone was still a young man. He did not look more than forty-five years of age, but he had evidently traveled much and seen much. His reading, too, had been on a generous scale. He had studied in the universities of three countries, and had acquainted himself with the best thoughts of European scholars and thinkers, Dominic’s heart grew warm as he spoke with him. For a few minutes they discussed Father Tyrone’s book. This led to Dominic asking certain questions, and then Dominic opened his heart to the priest, and told him of his previous history, his present relations to the English Church, and his purpose in coming to Rome.

“You think of joining the Church of Rome?” asked the priest.

“It was for that purpose I came to Rome — at least I think so,” said Dominic. “I must confess that my fortnight’s stay here has not strengthened that purpose. That is, until I read your book.”

Father Tyrone was silent a few seconds. He was evidently studying the young man.

“What would you advise me to do?” asked Dominic.

“I should advise you to wait,” was the reply.

“I don’t quite understand.”

“Well, I think your mind is in a state of transition. You are evidently unsettled.”

“No, I do not think so,” said Dominic eagerly.

“Your book has removed many of my difficulties. I never really understood the Catholic Church till I read it. It has answered a thousand objections. It has shown me that it is wrong to stay outside what is not only in name but in reality the Catholic Church. It has answered the objections of those who say that to become a Roman Catholic is to commit intellectual suicide. The Church you portray is as broad as the needs of humanity — intellectual, social, spiritual.”

“I still advise you to wait,” said Father Tyrone.

“But why?”

The priest looked at the eager young face, and noted the yearning look in his eyes. At that moment Maggie Yorke passed by, and Dominic saw her. Father Tyrone saw the young man’s face flush, saw his lip tremble. The priest’s face became troubled.

“No harm can come by waiting, surely,” said Tyrone, “and it is always well to think carefully before taking such an important step.”

“I have waited long,” said Dominic. “For years I have been yearning; for what I knew not. I have had temptations to meet, I have had my devils to fight, I want rest.”

“Perhaps you ought to know that I am not regarded with great favor in clerical circles,” he said presently.

Dominic looked at him questioningly.

“Indeed, I am not sure that I shall not have to withdraw the book.”

“But why?”

“I have been commanded to do so. It is regarded as a dangerous book.”

“But you believe in it?”

“Yes—no.”

“But—but—”

“My young friend,” said Father Tyrone, “I believe that my picture of the Church is what the Church ought to be; but I am afraid it is not a picture of what the Church is. Neither do I believe any longer that the Vatican will ever allow the Church to become what I believe the Church should be. I

was younger than I am now when I wrote it, for it has been the work of many years. Indeed, unless I withdraw the book I shall be excommunicated."

Dominic looked at the priest in astonishment.

"And will you withdraw it?"

"I think so—yes."

"In obedience to the Church?"

"I shall withdraw it, not because I am commanded to do so," said the priest proudly, "although obedience is supposed to be a badge of all my tribe, but because I have dreamt an impressible dream. Because the Church of Rome as it exists today, and has existed for centuries, is a huge machine, crushing all who do not conform to its workings, and because it will never allow my dream to become a reality' That is why I shall withdraw it."

After that, Dominic and the priest talked together for more than an hour. At the end of their conversation the priest looked very sad, while in Dominic's eyes was an expression of sorrowful longing

The next morning a letter was brought to Dominic at his hotel

"Dear Sir (it ran), —

"I have received a letter from a very dear friend of mine in England, telling me of your visit to Rome, and asking me to make that visit as pleasant as possible, and also to arrange for a personal interview with the Holy Father. To this request I gladly concede. I am afraid it will be impossible for me to call on you today, but if you could come and lunch with me here at midday, I should regard it as a great honor.

"Awaiting the pleasure of your reply,

"I am, yours faithfully,

“CARLO DI VINCI.”

Dominic could hardly believe his eyes. Cardinal de Vinci was one of the most influential men at the Vatican, one whose words carried almost as much weight as that of the Holy Father himself. The letter itself might have been written by one Englishman to another, so free was it from ecclesiastical convention. His heart warmed as he read it again and again.

“I would not miss it for worlds,” he said to himself, as he wrote his acceptance.

25. Towards The End

DOMINIC did not go to the Hotel Continental that morning as he had intended. An excursion to Tivoli had been planned, and he had fully made up his mind to go. This was the last day of the Trevelyans' stay in Italy. On the morrow they had both arranged to return to England, leaving the Yorke family alone with Maggie's two Somerville friends. He had rejoiced at this. The reason why he would not confess to himself, but in his heart of hearts he knew. During these two weeks his love for Maggie Yorke had been growing. He did not stop to question himself about it, he dared not. He told himself that ere long she would return to England, and that then he would cut himself free from the society of the world. Meanwhile, he allowed himself to be with her daily. Never once during his stay had they spoken of controversial matters appertaining to religion, and no word fell from her lips which reminded him of the days when she drove him to mad anger. Sometimes he told himself that he hated her as he had hated her in the old days; and yet he knew it was not so. She fascinated him more than ever. Day by day she charmed him by sweet, unaffected girlish ways, by her love of fun, by her keen wit, and by her guileless nature. Moreover, he admired her greatly. Her healthful beauty appealed to him, while her knowledge of Rome and its history, together with her acquaintance with the intellectual problems which were engaging the best minds of the city, made him realize that she possessed a mind equal to, if not superior to, his own. He admired her honest hatred for shams and unworthy things of all sorts, and even though he did not agree with her, he rejoiced in her mental freedom, and in her determination to think her own thoughts, and live her own life. He realized that here was a pure English girl, who had been reared amidst the healthiest associations, and who had enjoyed the advantages of liberal education — one who appealed to all that was beautiful and true in life.

And so for a fortnight he had allowed her to exercise dominion over him without realizing it. He had been content to forget those things which would have made it wise for him to shun her society. His momentary freedom

from the influences under which he had been trained made him forget that he was the child of his training, that the life of the Community of the Incarnation had become almost an integral part of his life.

During breakfast that morning he had fully intended going to the Hotel Continental, and joining the Yorke party in their excursion to Tivoli; but the letter from Cardinal di Vinci changed his thoughts. It had aroused old hopes, old longings; but besides all that, it had made him hope that the impressions which he had received from Father Tyrone would be removed. For Father Tyrone had struck a staggering blow to many of his thoughts. He had made him fear lest the gossip of Rome concerning the Church might be true.

He sent a note to Mr. Fletcher Yorke asking that he might be excused from joining his party that day, owing to unforeseen circumstances, and then, scarcely knowing what he did, picked up the Italian version of Fogazzaro's "The Saint." He discovered that his know

ledge of Italian was greater than he thought. He was able to read the book easily. He had scarcely read fifty pages, however, when he found that it was time for him to start for Cardinal di Vinci's palazzo.

The building was far more imposing and stately than that of Cardinal Cordova. Cardinal di Vinci belonged to an ancient Italian family, and was one of the richest princes of the Church. Dominic noticed, too, that every appointment of the palazzo evidenced not only a love of comfort, but of luxury. The servants wore gorgeous liveries, the furniture was costly, everywhere wealth had been lavished by a prodigal hand.

Cardinal di Vinci was in every way the extreme opposite of Cordova. He was tall and commanding, and walked with a stately step. At first his face suggested the ascetic, but this impression was modified when he began to speak. His full, thick lips and double chin could not belong to a man of that order. It was the Grecian nose and high narrow forehead which seemed to be in contradiction to the lower part of the face, and which gave the false impression. Nevertheless, he was a very handsome man, one who would be noticed in any crowd. Moreover, it was evident that he was a man of strong personality, one born to command. It was easy to see, too, that he was accustomed to obedience. The inferior clergy stood in awe of him; and no man ever thought of questioning his will. When he spoke, his opinions were almost invariably regarded as *ex cathedra*. His views on ecclesiastical questions were ultramontane, and the wonder among many was that he had not

been elected to the pontifical chair rather than the Venetian peasant who sat there. But they who wondered did not know all that took place on the day that the Pope was elected.

Still, his position was unique, so much so that Dominic wondered greatly at his condescension in inviting him to his palazzo. He knew, however, that Father Ritzoom had great influence, even in Rome, and that a word from him would go a long way.

Cardinal di Vinci was very gracious to Dominic, He did not speak English well, and often lapsed into Italian, but Dominic was able to converse with him with comparative ease. At first their conversation was of a general nature, but presently it became more personal. Little by little the Cardinal impressed his strong personality upon the young man, and almost unconsciously he felt the influence of his life at the Community of the Incarnation growing sharper,

“You say that for years you have felt the desire to join the Catholic Church grow stronger?” said the older man.

“For years, your Eminence.”

“And why did you not take that step?”

“First of all there was the hope that the Anglican Church was a branch of the Catholic Church, and second, I suppose, it is very hard to break the chains which bind one.”

“And what led you to break from the Anglican Church?”

“I felt I was not acting honestly. During the debate in the House of Commons of which I spoke to you, I realized that I was not acting honestly. For one thing, I felt that the Anglican Church was only a sect, although established by the State, but more, I felt it dishonest to do the work of the Catholic Church while I was, as by law established, supposed to be a Protestant.”

“Yes, I see your position. Of course, the Anglican Church is only a sect. It is no Church. It has, of course, drifted nearer and nearer the Church ever since Newman’s days; but it is no Church. The pretension of the English clergy to be priests would make one laugh if it were not such blasphemy. The late Pope was very pronounced on that question when Gladstone appealed to him to declare that Anglican orders were valid. No, you did quite right. You could not remain in the Anglican Church in spite of the pretension of the so-called High Church party, after your eyes had been opened to the truth. But what do you intend to do now, my son?”

"I thought I was a priest in the Anglican Church," said Dominic; "now—"

"You wish to be a priest in the Catholic Church," said Cardinal di Vinci. "That is right, it is natural. Of course, a period of training will be necessary. Your heresies will have to be corrected."

"One thing troubles me," said Dominic.

"Yes; and what, my son?"

"It is this, your Eminence. After I had passed through my probationary period in the Community of the Incarnation, I took the vows, first for a period, then lifelong vows."

His voice sank as he mentioned the last words. The meaning of his deed came to him with full force now. The vows became like iron fetters on his soul. During the last fortnight he had forgotten them. Now they were terribly real.

"And you have been faithful to them, my son?"

"I am afraid not, your Eminence. I disobeyed my Superior when I refused to go back to the Community. While I have been in Rome, I have not lived in poverty. As for the other vow, I have always been faithful to that."

The Cardinal was silent a few seconds while he looked at the young man's face.

"I think I understand, my son," he said presently. "But I bid you be of good cheer. Do not think, however, that I regard your vows lightly. I do not. It is true you took them while your eyes were yet blinded; nevertheless, they are binding."

"Binding, your Eminence?"

"Yes, binding. You have taken the threefold vow to God, and it must bind you for ever."

In spite of himself Dominic's face paled. All the old monastic influences asserted their power. Rather, they were increased as this prince of the Roman Church spoke.

"The vows were made to God, therefore they must be kept for God," went on the Cardinal. "I do not say that they hold good as far as the place in which you made them is concerned; how can they when it is not a part of the true Church? But they must be transferred to the true Church. The vows you took to God to serve, as you mistakenly thought, the Church, must be transferred to the Catholic Church. Thus, your vows remain. They were solemn vows, and nothing can nullify them."

“Then — then —” stammered the young man.

“Since your eyes are opened, you must come into the true Church. You must yield your obedience to her, you must give all you have to her. As far as the past is concerned in disobeying your Superior, and living in a fashionable hotel in Rome, I will make arrangements for you to be placed under the directorship of Monsignor Tosci. He also will instruct you as to the future. But always remember your vows are final. The holy bonds of poverty, chastity, and obedience are upon you; it is at the peril, ay, the loss, of your immortal soul that you obey. You are a priest in intention; you have taken the vows in intention. It is for the Church to ratify the intention, and to make good what is wanting. What you have been in name, you must be in reality.”

Dominic’s heart was cold, he knew not why. He had come to Rome in order that what the Cardinal suggested might come to pass. He had come hither, too, at least he thought he had, that the last remaining doubts concerning the Church of Rome might be removed. And yet now that the Cardinal spoke to him so definitely, his heart was cold and heavy, instead of being, as he expected, light and joyous.

“That being settled, my son,” went on the Cardinal, “is there anything else?”

“I have had an interview with Father Tyrone, since I have been in Rome,” said Dominic hesitatingly.

The Cardinal held up his hands as if in horror.

“Tyrone! — Tyrone!” he cried, “and have you read his infamous book?”

“Yes, your Eminence.”

“Drive it from your mind. Cast it from you. It is poison, poison! The man is under ecclesiastical censure, the book is venom and lies. It is more dangerous even than the writings of that arch-heretic Luther, whose work he half praised. He paints a false, an impossible, picture of the Church. He preaches a sinful liberalism. If the teaching of that book were carried out, the Church would cease to be. The Rock of Peter would be rent. The Church cannot allow the liberty of which he writes, it is only Protestantism in another form. Already the book is condemned, and if he does not withdraw it, he will be excommunicated, crushed — mind that, crushed. Meanwhile, it is a forbidden book, mind that!”

The Cardinal started to his feet as he spoke. His ordinarily calm and dignified face was excited, angry.

“And that other book,” he went on — “that novel by Fogazzaro, ‘The Saint’; it is specious, and plausible, but it is poison. The Church will not have such things. The Church is of God, and must not be tampered with. It demands obedience, absolute obedience, from all her children. It is not for them to make suggestions, or to try and reform her, but to obey. It is not for the children to understand the Great Mother, it is for them to kneel at her feet in humble obedience.”

Dominic could not help thinking of Ritzoom’s words. “There are two classes of people in the world, those who lead and those who follow. It is for you to be one of the leaders,” Did Cardinal di Vinci obey? Was he not one who interpreted the Church’s law’s? Did he not even dictate to the Holy Father himself?

It was late that afternoon when he left the Cardinal’s palazzo, and as he stepped out into the sunshine he felt that Rome had changed. The Italian had thrown a spell upon him. His parting words rung in his ears, “You must say ‘goodbye’ to the past, my son. All old affections and associations must be destroyed. You must be obedient to the Church. Now that you are in Rome you must stay here, so as to be under the guidance of those I have mentioned. Whatever stands in the way of the fulfillment of the vows which now belong to the Church must be removed. Obedience, my son, obedience. That is the yoke which the Church lays on you.”

And Dominic felt the truth of his words. They rung the death-knell to all he had been unwittingly cherishing for the last two weeks. It was for him to obey.

He thought of Maggie Yorke. Yes, he had been playing with the fire, he had been placing himself in danger; but the renunciation must be made. He must bid goodbye to her for ever. The next day he would place himself under the directorship of Monsignor Tosci, and, meanwhile, he would write a letter to Mr. Fletcher Yorke, excusing himself for his rudeness, and telling him that circumstances would not permit him seeing his family again.

For hours he wandered among the streets of Rome, pondering over his interview with the great Cardinal. Yes, he had made the truth concerning his vows known to him. They could never be nullified. He had made the three-fold vow to God, and it must be kept — kept under the authority of the one true Church. The vow was not annulled, it had not changed, it was only transferred from what was not the Church, to what was. He tried to persuade himself to believe that he was glad of this. Was not Maggie Yorke the

enemy to his soul, had she not been all his life seeking to drag him away from duty, had she not always made him think lightly of the Church? Yes, he was glad his way was plain at last. Nevertheless, his heart was very cold and heavy.

When he returned to his hotel he packed his trunks, after which he went down to dinner. During dinner he was silent, and after the meal was over he made his way to the lounge, where he tried to compose a letter to Mr. Fletcher Yorke. In this he was very unsuccessful. Sheet after sheet of paper had he destroyed, and was almost inclined to give up his task altogether, when he heard a voice which set his nerves tingling, and his blood surging. Turning, he saw Mr. and Mrs. Yorke, together with Maggie, making their way towards him.

Mechanically he rose and greeted them, and placed chairs for them beside the table where he had been sitting. A minute later he had so far forgotten his interview with Cardinal di Vinci as to be talking almost gaily with Maggie. For the moment the spell cast upon him by the great cardinal was broken by the spell of a young girl's eyes. In the battle between the human heart and the claims of ecclesiasticism, the human heart had won a passing victory. Never had Maggie seemed so beautiful, so charming, as she seemed that night. She had thrown a light cloak over her evening dress, and he, although little versed in woman's attire, felt that the effect was perfect. Her eyes sparkled with pleasure; she was the personification of the young man's dream of beautiful womanhood.

"My real reason for calling tonight," said Mr. Fletcher Yorke presently, "is to tell you something of our plans. The two Mr. Trevelyans leave us tomorrow; both find it necessary to return to England. It seems that the matter which Mr. Hector Trevelyan introduced in the House of Commons is to crop up again. The case he brought was so strong that the Government can no longer adopt a neutral attitude, while of course Mr. Cuthbert Trevelyan has a large Church which demands his attention. But we don't desire to return. We are all of us in love with Italy, and intend staying until the hot weather comes. Well, this is our plan. Tomorrow we propose going to Naples. We shall take up our abode at Bertolini's hotel, one of the most charming houses in the world. It is situated on the side of a mountain. You ascend to it by means of a lift which elevates you so high above the town that the view is unrivaled. The air, too, is glorious. Well, from there we intend making excursions. Of course Pompeii and Vesuvius are only a few

miles away, both of which we naturally desire to see. Then there is Capri; of course we cannot miss that. It is only just a few miles out from the Bay of Naples. But besides these there is another delightful excursion, and Maggie here is tremendously excited about it. It is to a place called Amalfi, one of the quaintest places in the world. At one time the place seems to have been of great importance to the Neapolitan kingdom. There is a fine cathedral there, and a most wonderful village. The hotel at which we propose staying was at one time a monastery, and the bedrooms were all hewn out of the rock. The place is built on terraces cut out of the side of a mountain. As you know, the Italian Government suppressed monasteries, as they were supposed to be inimical to the well-being of the State; and this is one of the many hundreds which were suppressed. Well, now, it struck us that you might care to join us. If you would we shall be delighted. We propose being away about a fortnight, at the end of which time we shall return to Rome."

Dominic's heart beat fast. The thought of spending a fortnight with the Yorke party, to be daily in Maggie's society, was fascinating beyond words.

"It would be very delightful," he murmured, "and I thank you very sincerely for thinking of me."

"The pleasure will be ours," urged Mr. Fletcher Yorke heartily. "Besides, I am sure you would enjoy it. Fancy staying in real monks' cells in an old monastery. The ghosts of dead monks must surely appear to us during the nights. Then the scenery there is simply magnificent. Hill cities abound; the neighborhood teems with romance."

"The very thought of it is like a beautiful dream," said the young man. "I remember reading a description of Amalfi some time ago. If I remember aright, there is a famous village two thousand feet above it, a village which has hosts of romantic associations."

"Yes, there is," said Maggie. "Among the many romantic stories told is one about a certain count, who because he believed his fiancée was unfaithful, renounced his wealth and title, and went into a monastery, but one night, as he lay in his cell, he dreamed a dream, and when he awoke from it he left the monastery at Amalfi, the very one at which we propose staying, and climbed the mountain alone. The story has it that he reached his one-time fiancée's home, just in time to save her from a cruel doom. Then they discovered that both had been deceived, and that each loved and had been faithful to the other. But it was too late. The young man had taken monastic vows, and, being a faithful Roman Catholic, could not break them. The girl

also went into religion, but the story has it that their spirits haunt the place, especially on midsummer night, when they are to be seen walking hand in hand in a garden, which now belongs to one of the hotels.”

Fletcher Yorke laughed gaily.

“If I loved a lass, not all the monkish vows in the world would keep me from her,” he said.

“Fancy you being a monk at all, Fletcher,” said Mrs. Yorke, who was a liberalist.

“Ay, I’d make a poor monk, mother,” said the Yorkshireman. “But come now, Mr. Wildthorne, what do you say? You at least are a monk no longer. You’ve got rid of all that nonsense, thank God! What do you say to joining us? George, who is going with us, told me to beg you to come, else he and I would just be the slaves of the ladies. Two men against four women, for Maggie’s two Somerville friends are going with us, is, he declares, not fair, and he trusts to your chivalry to help us out.”

Dominic longed to say yes. At that moment the bonds which the Church laid upon him were grievous indeed, but with his longing also came a great fear. He remembered Cardinal di Vinci’s words. If he broke his vows, he did so at the loss of his immortal soul. Better be like the young count of whom Maggie spoke, than to lose his soul for this world’s happiness.

He looked at Maggie. Fair and beautiful as she was, was she not the tool of the devil? was she not an enemy to his faith? She must be, for she was tempting him to sin, tempting him to break the vows he had made to God. He felt that if he accepted their invitation it would mean breaking with the Church for ever. He could not be in her company for another fortnight without giving up all thoughts of the Catholic priesthood, without breaking the vows he had made to God. Oh, why did God put such a terrible temptation in his way? From the standpoint of wealth and position he had a right to approach her, and ask her to be his wife. Only two days before he had received a letter from Messrs. Coad and Perkin, telling him that his right to the Wildthorne estates would be established. He thought of living with Maggie in the beautiful old house, amidst meadows and dales, and rivers, and moors, and mountains. But his vows! His Immortal Soul!

“Come, Mr. Wildthorne, you’ll come, won’t you?” said Mr. Fletcher Yorke, as he rose to go back to his hotel.

“May I walk back with you?” he said.

“Delighted, if you will,” said Mr. Fletcher Yorke.

“We can then show you some views of the places we propose to visit.”

They left the hotel, and walked up the thoroughfare. Presently Dominic found himself by Maggie’s side.

“There’s a quiet square yonder,” he said, as he pointed to a fountain whose water sparkled in the light of a great electric arc lamp. “I want to tell you something, something which — which you must hear. Let us get away from this surging crowd. It is deafening, maddening.”

His voice shook with passion, so much so that Maggie almost felt afraid.

“I don’t understand you, Mr. Wildthorne,” she said.

“You will in a minute. Let us get away from this noise. Let God speak, let God be heard!”

Almost in spite of herself she walked into the quiet square. But few people were there, and the roar and rash of Via del Garibaldi no longer disturbed them.

“Your father asked me to accompany you to Naples,” he said. “I want to tell you, and you only, why I cannot go.”

26. The Renunciation

"MISS YORKE," he said presently, "I have committed a great sin."

The girl's heart beat fast; still she retained control over herself.

"Have you brought me here to tell me that?" And she laughed nervously.

"I am not your confessor."

"No," he said, "you are not my confessor, but you are the cause of my sin."

The girl did not speak. The intensity of his tones silenced her.

"In spite of myself I have been continuing in my sin," he said. "I have been cherishing sinful thoughts. I have been nourishing sinful desires, and you have been my temptress."

"Excuse me," said Maggie, "I think I must return to the hotel."

"No," said Dominic, "not yet. I must speak tonight. I must cast this devil out of me, or I must take him to my heart, and keep him there for ever."

"Mr. Wildthorne," she said, "I am sure you are not well, and I am sure I ought to return to my father and mother. Besides, they will all be wondering where I am."

"What does that matter?" he laughed. "What does anything matter when an immortal soul is at stake, when it is a question whether God or the devil is triumphant!"

Maggie looked at him nervously. The light from an arc-lamp fell upon his features, and revealed the workings of his strong dark face. His eyes flashed dangerously. If she was afraid, she was also curious to know what he wanted to say to her.

"Which would be the greater sin, I wonder," he said, like one musing "to kill you or to let you destroy me? When one feels that a woman is destroying one's immortal soul, is not one justified in murdering her? Would not God be pleased?"

"When you have recovered your reason, Mr. Wildthorne, I will listen to you," said Maggie, "meanwhile, I will go to my people."

But she did not leave him. The look on his face fascinated her, the tones of his voice made her long to know what was in his mind.

"You must listen to me now," he said. "Not only am I fighting for my soul, but God and the devil are fighting for it. I wonder which will win. What a fuss about a man's paltry little soul!"

This was too much for Maggie. Either he was mad, or he was laughing at her. She turned to leave him; but he laid his hand upon her arm.

"No, don't go, Miss Yorke. Be patient with me. Yes, I'm very nearly mad, but you need not be afraid. I will not harm you. Much as I ought to kill you, I would die a thousand deaths rather than a hair of your head should be injured."

Maggie Yorke stayed by his side. An engine whistled in the station not far away, the people shouted in the Via Garibaldi, the fountain played close by them, but Maggie was oblivious of them all. For a moment she had forgotten that she was in Rome. The great city with its tremendous history, Rome the home of the Caesars, of the Popes, of intrigue, persecution, Rome with its past and present and future was nothing to her. There was only she and another in the world.

"Miss Yorke, I cannot go to Naples with you because every day in your company will drag me deeper into hell. I have taken vows, the great three-fold vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience. That vow I have broken, because I love you! Great God, how I love you!"

Maggie was glad they were at this moment in a shadow. She felt the blood rush to her face, she knew that her lips were trembling.

"You thought I had broken away from the Church," he went on, "Never! I have broken away from the Church of England, I have realized that that is no Church! My training in that Church has proved to me that it is not the Church at all. It led me to see that the Church of Rome is the only true Church, But I took my vows, and they remain. And yet I have for a long time loved you. Perhaps I have loved you ever since the night you first saw me, a ragged vagabond, by Meremeadows cemetery gates; but I never realized it till that night I dined at your house. Then I knew. I have fought against it ever since. I have tried to hate you — oh! how I have tried! You have always made me think less of my duty to the Church, always made it unreal to me. You remember our conversation, don't you? Ever and always it has been the same, whenever I have been in your company, my duty has become hateful, my vows have been like lead weights upon my soul. Al-

ways, always you have stood between me and duty, always yours has been a finger beckoning me away from the Church, which is everything.”

“Excuse me if I do not see the reason why you have brought me here to tell me this,” said the girl, in a hard, metallic voice. “If I have been such an evil influence in our life, pray let me leave you, and let there be an end to this foolish talk.”

“And yet you do not know,” said Dominic. “In one way, you have opened the gates of paradise to me. Oh, you do not know how I love you! Only through you shall I ever know earthly happiness. In my heart of hearts I know that I am shutting out heaven in shutting you out of my life. That is — supposing you would ever think of me, save as — one who has committed intellectual suicide. Could you, Maggie Yorke? Humanly speaking, you are everything to me, everything. Even as it is, not knowing whether you ever give me more than a passing thought, I know I am your slave. If I had reason to think you cared for me, that you could ever love me — do you, Maggie Yorke? Could you ever love me? Oh, I almost lose my reason at the thought of it? But do you, could you ever love me?”

“Why mock me with such a question, when you admit that you have shut me out of your life?” said the girl, almost angrily. “Supposing I said that I — I — but you say that your vows are binding.”

“Yes, yes, they are!”

“Then how dare you?”

“Because, oh! I long to know. Because the thought of your love is sweeter to me than the joys of heaven. Because — oh! I know, and the thought drives me mad. I have vowed my vows. I took them for life. I vowed that I would have no money of my own. I vowed that I would never even cherish the thoughts of a woman’s love. I vowed absolute obedience! And Cardinal di Vinci told me this morning that nothing could ever nullify those vows. They were made to God, and they must be kept for ever and ever.”

“But you say you have left the Community of the Incarnation?”

“Yes, that is true. The teachings of that Community prepared me for the Church of Rome. There is no other logical course to the teaching given to the life there. And I could not remain as a so-called Protestant, when I am not a Protestant. I hate the very word, even while I long for the freedom which it promises. But Cardinal di Vinci proved to me today that my vows must be transferred to the true Church, that there is no escape for me. I took

a priest's vows, and although I took them wrongfully, they cannot be annulled, I am a priest by intention, and now I must take them really in the Roman Catholic Church' That is why I cannot go to Naples with you. That is why I cannot see you again. I must place myself under the guidance of Monsignor Tosci. If I were to go to Naples with you, I should not have strength to resist. I should send my soul into hell."

"That is all you have to tell me?"

"That is all, I think, I thought there was more, but that is all I can think of now, I love you madly, and I must not encourage that sinful love by remaining longer in your company. If I went to Naples I should —"

"Good-night."

"You forgive me?"

"I have nothing to forgive. Good-night."

"You will never see me again. You will forget me? No, not that, not that!"

"You have declared this to be your wish. Goodnight, and goodbye."

Dominic thought he was going to fall to the ground, but he retained his control over himself.

"Tell me you do not despise me," he said. "I must do the will of God — that is all. I have taken my vows to God, and I must keep them."

"Then there is nothing more to be said. I will tell my father that you will not go to Naples with us."

"But do you not care? Is this nothing to you? Tell me."

"Whether I care is nothing to you, since you are determined to be true to your vows. goodbye."

She held out her hand as she spoke, which he grasped eagerly.

"Oh, God help me!" he cried. "I did not think it would be so hard."

She tried to draw her hand away, but he held it fast. It seemed to him as though he were bidding goodbye to everything worth living for.

"Stay with me a few minutes more," he said beseechingly.

"No, certainly not! Good-night, and goodbye. I — I trust you may — be — be happy."

The word ended in a sob; but he did not heed it. He relinquished her hand, and he was left alone. For a few minutes he seemed like one dazed; and when he came to himself he was standing near the fountain, while the olive leaves glistened in the light of the great arc-lamps.

“God help me, I did not think it would be so hard!” he repeated again and again, and then like a man in a dream he found his way back to the hotel.

The next day he took up his abode at the house of a priest. This was the advice of Monsignor Tosci, who seemed to take a great interest in the young English clergyman who avowed his intentions to come over to the Church of Rome. The priest under whose care Dominic was placed was a kind, fatherly old man, very devout, and a very obedient slave to Monsignor Tosci. He was regarded as being a suitable person to deal with such a convert as Dominic. The course marked out for him was not usual when a young man comes over to Rome from the Church of England, but it was thought wise to place Dominic on a different footing from the rest. When he had passed some time under Don Pedro’s care, he could then go into a seminary in order that any error in his theology might be corrected, and then be admitted into the priesthood.

Don Pedro formed a very high opinion of Dominic.

The young man was eager to be instructed, he asked many questions, and accepted meekly all the instructions given. At least this was the impression left upon the old priest’s mind.

“He can be a great man,” said Don Pedro to Monsignor Tosci. “He sucks up truth like a sponge. He absorbs the doctrines and discipline of the Church like a piece of blotting-paper, and yet he has great convictions of his own. He will win many converts in England, He has been with me only a few weeks, and yet he is ready for anything.”

“Keep him with you longer,” said Monsignor Tosci; “he is not fit for a Roman seminary yet. We must remember that the atmosphere and routine and habits of one of our seminaries are utterly different from those of an English College. In England the clergy are in the main drawn from the educated and well-to-do classes. With us it is different, utterly different. Do not forget it. He might get disgusted with the habits, the ideas, and ideals of some of the students in Rome, the shock might be too great. Keep him with you. You are an Italian gentleman, and know how to treat a man who has been associated with gentlemen. His fellow-students in one of the seminaries would not.”

So Dominic stayed with Don Pedro until June, when Rome became hotter and hotter. He knew little or nothing of what went on in the city, nor of

the doings at the Vatican. It was for him to accept the teaching offered to him, and to accept the philosophy of a mediaeval Church.

Don Pedro was only partly right in his estimate of Dominic's condition of mind. Because the young fellow seemed eager to be satisfied, the old priest thought he was satisfied. But it was not altogether true. The last few weeks had changed him more than he realized. Much as he tried to see otherwise he could not help realizing that a Roman Catholic priest, if he were true to his views, could not be a personality. He could only be an echo of the teachings of others. Indeed, the ordinary priest was not a teacher at all. He was only a kind of channel through which the sacraments became efficacious. It was not for him to think, but to obey. Still, he did not really doubt. The Church was the mouthpiece of God: what had he to do, then, but to accept the findings of the Church without question?"

During his stay with Don Pedro he often noticed a young priest who seemed to act as a secretary. He was in constant association with the old Don, and was evidently entrusted with missions to Monsignor Tosci, and to the Vatican. He was much superior to the ordinary standard of the young Italian priest. He was cleanly in his habits, and spoke pure Italian. There was a look on his face, too, which interested Dominic.

More than once, too, the young Englishman thought the other was trying to make signs, as though he desired intercourse. As Dominic did not think this could be the case, he made no advances, but presently, when one evening he was leaving Don Pedro's house, this young priest met him near the door.

"I want to speak to you," he whispered.

"That is very kind of you," replied Dominic.

"Not here. Listen and make no sound. Via della Quattr Fontane, chiesa della Santa Maria. Otto ore. Si? Say you will, quick!"

"Yes," said Dominic, "I will meet you where and when you say. But why?"

But he got no answer. The young man glided noiselessly away as though frightened. At first Dominic doubted the wisdom of meeting him, but when he reflected that he was Don Pedro's secretary, and a priest, he saw no reason against it.

Accordingly at eight o'clock that night he was at the Church of Mary in the road of the four fountains. He had barely arrived there when he felt his arm touched.

"Take no apparent notice of me, but follow," said a voice. Turning he saw the young priest mingling with the crowd in the street, and wondering at the strange behavior, he followed. In a few minutes they had passed the Presbyterian Church, and then Dominic saw the young man turn into a narrow alley. Still wondering, he kept fairly close to him until he found himself in what was evidently a private garden, where the shrubbery grew so luxuriously that they were completely hidden from view.

"Grazia molto," said the young Italian.

"Why do you thank me?" asked Dominic.

The young priest heaved a sigh as of relief.

"Here we can be unwatched for half an hour; here we can be free and alone," he said.

"What do you want?"

"I want to speak to you as one man to another," said the young priest. "We are both young, we both have our lives before us, and I have felt drawn towards you. But before I go further let us understand. I am running a great risk in taking this course; but I can trust you, I am sure?"

"Trust me," said Dominic, "what do you mean?"

"You may well ask that?" said the young fellow bitterly; "but if you were trained as a tale-teller, as every man who has passed through a Roman seminary is, if you were led to regard it as your duty to tell your superior everything, if you were reared in the atmosphere of espionage, as I have been, you would not wonder that I ask the question. For mind, what I tell you, although it is only to serve you, would ruin me if it were repeated."

"Tell me nothing except what you wish," said Dominic, "but rest assured that I shall regard your communications as sacred."

"I know you will. You are an Englishman, and you have not been in a priest's seminary in Rome. But I must be quick, for I have a suspicion that I am watched. No one can get in here, however. The garden gate is locked, and we are hidden."

"But it is a private garden," said Dominic.

"It belongs to one of the few people I can trust," said the young man, "and I have free access. I can tell you no more. But enough. Am I right in thinking that it is your intention to be a priest?"

"I am with Don Pedro for that purpose."

"Then think, think, wait, reflect again and again before you take the fatal step."

The young fellow spoke like one in pain, evidently he was deeply moved.

“Let me tell you what I have heard about you,” he went on, and thereupon he gave Dominic a dear and fairly detailed history of his own life.

“Is this correct?” he asked, when he had finished.

“Yes, but how did you know?” asked Dominic surprised.

“What is the use of my telling you that?” replied the young Italian. “Enough that it is true. Now then, let me tell you something. If you wish to cease to be a man, and become a machine, then enter the priesthood. If you wish to cease to think for yourself, and let others do your thinking for you, become a priest. If you wish to lose your intellectual self-respect, become a priest. If you wish to lose what faith you may have in the Divine Carpenter of Nazareth, become a priest. For remember this, if you become a priest, and are faithful to your calling, your chief duty will not be to be a truth seeker, but to obey without question. Unless you are a disobedient priest, you must ask no questions, raise no objections, read no books beyond those marked out for you, nor think any thoughts outside the beaten track. Your first duty, your second duty, your third duty will be to obey, to obey without question, to obey blindly and unreasoningly, to obey I although your whole soul, your whole manhood revolts against obedience. If you disobey you are a marked man, you are watched as though you are a criminal; if you dare to think for yourself, you are crushed by the great machine called the Church. Remember this, there is forgiveness for almost every sin in the Church save the demand for liberty to exercise the power God has given you. There are priests in Rome today of such a nature that you would feel contaminated if you touched them; but they are forgiven, they utter the shibboleth, they conform. They may be beasts, but they ask no questions. They support the demands of the Church. They cry ‘Down with the King.’ But a man like Father Tyrone, whose life is as pure as that of a little child, whose mind has soared to God, he is condemned and persecuted; upon him the curses of the Church rest. Oh! if you were another kind of man, I would have said nothing; if you were of the ‘open your mouth and shut your eyes’ order, I would not have troubled; but I think I have seen into your soul, and I know that if you become a priest the time will come when you will curse the day you put on the shackles. The priesthood, my friend, is not for free men who demand the right to think, to investigate, to interpret all truth in the light of eternal

truth; it is for slaves who will do as they are told, who will obey without question.”

“Who told you to tell me this? What is your reason for it?” asked Dominic.

“I have told you because I could not help it, because I would save you.”

“But you are a priest!”

“Yes, I am a priest! Holy Mother, I am! I gave myself to it with all the ardor of a pure, devoted, faithful nature. When I saw intrigue, lying, meanness among my fellow students at the seminary, I did not heed. The thought of being a priest was enough for me. But now I Ah, Signor, what would I give to be free!”

“Then be free!”

“Oh! you advise that, do you? Be free! It is not easy, Signor, it is next to impossible! What am I fit for? I have no trade, no calling. I gave up all my money when I became a priest, all! Where can I go for bread, what can I do? Ah, yes, and my faith is well-nigh gone!”

“What, you have given up your faith in Christianity?”

“How can a man really believe when he is not allowed to think? I have outgrown the dogmas of the Church. I tell you they are a travesty of the truth; I have seen and I know. For two years I read hard, read in secret; but when there was a suspicion of what I had been doing, then came the heavy hand of the Church. And now — oh, yes, I despise myself, I despise myself; but I pretend to believe, yes, pretend, while every fiber of my being revolts. Oh; yes, believe, believe, obey, obey. That is the order. Believe in the so-called miracles at Lourdes, believe in the efficacy of relics, wallow in a thousand ridiculous but moneymaking superstitions, and you have the Church’s smiles; but dare to think, to examine history, to test dogma by reason, and then comes the Church’s curse.”

“But surely this is not true?”

“Listen,” said the young priest earnestly. “Let me tell you what is going on at the Vatican now.”

He spoke long and earnestly. Again and again Dominic asked questions, which the other answered.

“Then what are you going to do?” asked Dominic presently.

“I cannot bear it much longer,” was the reply. “I feel that I must be free. Little by little I am breaking the chain by which I have been bound, and soon — ah, you do not know what it means— I will either drown myself in

the Tiber, or I will live a life of intellectual and moral self-respect, even though I become a day laborer.”

“And what would you advise me to do?” asked Dominic,

“Ah, yes; I note the tone in which you speak. You do not believe me. But wait, at least wait, and still wait before you take the fatal step. You have not been placed in a seminary — well, because Tosci knew it would open your eyes. But prove whether what I say is true, prove it with your own eyes, and ears.”

“How can I prove it?”

“It is not so difficult for you. You are not yet in their clutches, you are not a priest. Listen, Rome is getting unbearably hot, and Don Pedro is longing to get away to the mountains. At present you are a hindrance to his plans. But Don Pedro has a brother who is a priest of a parish above a town called Amalfi, south of the Bay of Naples. Tell Don Pedro that you desire to study a priest’s work in the life of a parish. He will swallow the bait. And it will give you time, it will allow you to see.”

A week later Dominic was on his way to Naples, doubting much what Don Tagliati, the young priest, had told him, yet with a troubled look in his eyes.

27. The New Lourdes

THE LITTLE VILLAGE OF SAN PIETRO, situated a few miles from Amalfi, is high up on the mountains, and situated amidst glorious scenery. It is reached from Amalfi by a mountainous track, and is far removed from any main thoroughfare. The church there is large and important for the size of the village, and Dominic discovered soon after his arrival that it occupied an unique position. The parish of San Pietro was important because of its history. Not only was the church famed for its many relics, but it had also among its marvels two wonderful grottos which had been visited, so it was declared, by Joseph and the Virgin Mary. These were not world-famous like those at Lourdes, but they were famous in the district. It was stated that Joseph and the Virgin visited these grottos at rare intervals, and then within a year from their visit, the waters which flowed from them possessed miraculous power. After their last apparition in these holy grottos the sick had been healed, the lame had walked, the blind had seen, the paralyzed had received life and strength in their withered limbs, and great manifestation of divine power had been seen. It was now years since Joseph and the Holy Mother had favored them, but it was believed among the villagers that the time of their next appearance drew near.

Hence it was that the village of the parish of, and especially the Church of San Pietro, was held in great esteem for miles around. Indeed, even when there were no evidences that Joseph and Mary had paid special attention to the place, people still brought the sick and their diseased to bathe in and drink the water, while even lovers visited the fountains, in the hope that thereby they would be able to soften the hearts of those who would not smile on them. What the waters of St. Winifred of Holywell, in Wales, are to faithful Catholics in that part of our land, the grottos of San Pietro are to the people in the region of Amalfi. With this difference. In Wales, the inhabitants look upon the so-called miracles with good-humored skepticism, while in Italy the great mass of the people regard it as a sin to doubt their efficacy. Moreover, in Wales everything has to be done decently and in or-

der, in view of the fact that an intelligent populace would quickly quell anything like disorder, while in Italy there is an eager longing after sensationalism of this order.

The Church of San Pietro, then, was well known in the district, and it was visited by many hundreds whose homes were far removed from it.

It was late at night when Dominic arrived at the little Presbytery connected with the church. He had not made any stay at Naples, but had rushed on as quickly as possible. The journey from Rome to Naples had been hot and unpleasant, while Naples itself was like a furnace. He therefore caught a steamer bound for Sorrento, and there obtained a carriage in order to push on to San Pietro the same night. Although it was late in the afternoon when he arrived at Sorrento, that town seemed hotter even than Naples, and so he rejoiced in the cool air which he breathed when at length the carriage took him up among the hills.

He had a five hours' journey, but he did not mind. The sky was cloudless, and the moon had risen. A journey among the mountains would cool his brain and help him to think collectedly. Presently he got into conversation with the driver, who was an intelligent man for his class, and prided himself on reading the newspapers.

"Do you know San Pietro?" asked Dominic.

The driver shrugged his shoulders.

"Who does not?" he responded.

"Have you ever been there?"

"Si, Signor. I have been. I was born among the hills, and we have little amusement there. A traveling show, lean men, and fat women now and then. A fire-eater or two, and a snake charmer, that is about all. So we were all glad of San Pietro."

"Why?"

"The grottos, signor, and the visit of San Joseph and Santa Maria."

The driver laughed as he spoke.

"Of course," he went on, "we had miracles in other parishes, but none like those at San Pietro. I belonged to Avissi, and our priest. Father Fosco, he was jealous of San Pietro, because he could get no miracles at Avissi; so he wrote a letter to a newspaper, in which he proved that the miracles at San Pietro were so much nonsense. Hey, presto! What a commotion! Down came word from headquarters, and Father Fosco was suspended *à divinus*. How dare he prove to be lies what brought Holy Church money?"

“And did Father Fosco confess himself to be in the wrong?”

“Ah, si, Signor, what else could he do? Father Fosco was poor and weak, and the Church all powerful, so he recanted everything, he confessed contrition, he professed belief, he even proved that his very reasons for condemning the miracles were really reasons for believing, and so at length he was received back again. It did good to San Pietro too, for Father Fosco preached an eloquent sermon at Avissi, in which he thanked God for the manifestations of San Joseph and Santa Maria at San Pietro.”

The driver laughed and cracked his whip again.

“Do you know Don Giovanni Carissi, the priest at San Pietro?”

“Un poco, Signor, that is a little. Don Giovanni is very popular. All the priests for miles around come and see him. Are you staying with him?”

“Yes, for a few weeks. Perhaps until the end of August.”

“Ha! you should be happy *eccellenza*; the air there is cool and beautiful, especially at night. There is good company there too, *Il Dottore* is a very clever, learned man.”

“What is the doctor’s name?”

“Pecci.”

“Any relation to the late Pope?”

“So it is said. I know not.”

“And is he friendly with Don Giovanni Carissi?”

“Friendly with the Padre! What a joke! Is the devil friendly with the Archangel Gabriel? Tell me that.”

“Is the doctor so bad, then?”

“*Il Dottore* bad! But you will see, Signor.”

After that Dominic could not get the driver to say any more about Don Carissi; but he spoke freely of the parish, also of the beauties of Amalfi, and the wellbeing of Italy.

“Our land is being reborn,” he said. “The people are being educated. My father could not read nor write; but now every boy and girl is taught to read and write, and know the history of their land. That is why so many spit upon the priest and laugh at the sacred shop.”

“But the priests are good men?”

“Oh! yes. some of them. So are other people, Signor.”

“But you are a Catholic?”

“Si, si, Sono Cattolica. All of us are, in name. It pays even yet to conform.”

It was nearly midnight when they arrived at San Pietro, and there Dominic received a hearty welcome from Don Giovanni Carissi.

“My brother has told me to give you a royal welcome,” said the old priest. “I gladly do so. Here among the mountains the air is sweet and pure, here in the Church of San Pietro the body of Christ is uplifted. May you be happy here, Signor.”

Dominic stayed at San Pietro for several weeks, and his stay was in many respects momentous. In spite of himself he had been influenced by his conversation with Don Tagliati, the young priest who had spoken with him in the garden near the Presbyterian Church. He had told himself again and again that what the young priest had said did not affect the truth of the Roman Catholic Church, and that he had been taught in the school of obedience for many years. After all, what right had the individual to question the findings of the Church, with its divinely guided Councils and infallible Popes? And yet he was influenced. Although he had been received into the Church of Rome, he was not yet a priest, and therefore he felt a certain freedom. Of course he accepted all that the Church taught, and yet he found himself asking questions. Why was it that in a country untouched by Protestantism the spread of education had meant the loosening of the Church’s power? The man who drove him from Sorrento was, after all, the representative of a class, and that class laughed at priestly claims, and the curses of the Church. The power of the Church was largely gone, except the power she still wielded over her priests, and over the ignorant classes.

Perhaps this led Dominic to regard everything he saw at San Pietro with a questioning eye. He liked Don Giovanni, as he was called by the people. He was a simple old man, very trustful, and very devout; but Dominic was appalled at his ignorance. He knew nothing of science, nothing of history, as understood by scholars, nothing of the thoughts which were revolutionizing Europe.

“Ah, no, Signor Dominic,” he would say; “why should I trouble? Why should I know? The desire to know caused the fall of our first parents, and the ruin of the world. If Eve had not desired to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, the world would be a Paradise, sinless.”

“You believe that?”

“Believe what?”

“Believe in the literal truth of the first chapters of Genesis?”

“Holy Mother, yes. Has not the Church taught it is true? What more, then, is there to be said?”

“But you are acquainted with the work of the Biblical Scholars?”

“Biblical Scholars? Not I. What has a priest to do with these things? Questionings lead to doubt, doubt to the devil. What would you? It is for me to accept the Church’s teachings, to obey. I preach the Gospel, I say masses, I hear confessions; is not that enough?”

“But even the peasants ask questions. What do you do then?”

“I shut their mouths. I tell them that if they doubt they are damned. That’s good scripture, and that’s the Church’s dictum. Why should I read and think, when reading and thinking leads to doubt, and worry? I let the scholars do that — it is their work. But they think according to the Church’s beliefs, which are unalterable. It is for me to help people to be pious, not to think. What has education done for the peasants of Italy? It has driven them away from the Church. Is any stronger condemnation needed?”

This was a sample of many conversations they had together, and while Dominic felt it was the logical issue of the Church’s teachings, he was not satisfied.

The Presbytery of San Pietro was often visited by neighboring priests, and Dominic was simply astounded at their mental calibre, and their intellectual attainments. They had read a little of the Church’s Moral Philosophy as laid down by the Church; they knew something of the scholasticism of the Fathers, and enough Latin to mumble masses, but in the realm of true education they were ignoramuses. Of the science of history they knew nothing, of the thoughts of leading minds they had never heard.

Moreover, their habits were far from cleanly, and an English plow boy knew more of the etiquette of the table than they. They gobbled their food, expectorated on the floor while they were eating, and seemed to have an aversion to soap and water.

On more than one occasion Dominic tried to lead the conversation to the subjects which interested him, but he saw by their yawns that they were not interested. When some spicy gossip was discussed, however, they were all eagerness.

When Dominic had been at San Pietro for three weeks, he saw that something was on foot. They spoke confidently of the appearance of San Joseph and Santa Maria at their grottos, and discussed the pilgrimages which would have to be arranged. More than once, moreover, when Do-

minic came into the room where several priests had gathered, he noticed a sudden lull in the conversation, as though they did not feel free to speak in his presence.

Dominic often took long walks alone. He loved to go away into the villages and converse with the peasants. He found them affable, kind, and polite. It is true that they were inferior to the English peasant, but he loved them for their simple faith and their sunny dispositions. On his return from one of his many long excursions, he was overtaken by a man driving an old fashioned vehicle.

The man stopped his horse as he came up to Dominic's side.

"Going back to San Pietro, Signor?" he said

"Yes."

"Then let me give you a lift. That is, if you are not afraid."

"Afraid! Afraid of what?"

"Afraid of the devil. I am Doctor Tomasso Pecci, and I daresay you have heard no good of me."

Dominic jumped into the vehicle by the doctor's side. He was a little man, but was evidently lithe and strong. A merry twinkle sparkled in his eye, and a humorous, kindly smile played around his mouth."

"That is my answer," said Dominic.

"Ah, you are English, and in England people are not priest-ridden. Come, now, tell me what Don Giovanni and his brother priests say about me?"

"Oh, you know."

"Ha! ha! Yes, I daresay I know. That I am an unbeliever, and that I spread unbelief. You know they have excommunicated me. But still I live. I still cure people. I teach them to be clean and moral. I tell them to use their common sense."

"Good advice too."

"But tell me, Signor. What in Heaven's name are you doing at the Presbytery? I have heard that you think of becoming a priest. It cannot be. You would not destroy your immortal soul!"

"What do you mean?"

"Mean! It is only the ignorant, the blind that are willing to shut out light and truth, and who accept worn-out myths and played-out fallacies. As though the God who made the glorious sun and these mighty mountains can be interpreted by the men who visit dear old Don Giovanni — men who

pretend to recreate Him in the churches by repeating a sort of mumbo, jumbo. Surely you cannot contemplate such a thing!"

Dominic was silent.

"Excuse me for speaking to you. I have seen you several times, and I have often thought I would like a word with you. I am not such an atheist as they make out. I believe in the sublime teaching of Jesus Christ, but that has nothing to do with the teaching and claims of these black soutaned fellows. It is good, too, that the people should be instructed in the truths of God; but Christianity and priestcraft, or the Church, are two different things. Have you read the history of Italy, Signor Englishman? Ah, poor Italy! How she bled herself to gain freedom, light, truth, education! But who were the greatest enemies to all these things — these things which are of Jesus Christ, Signor? Always the Church, the priests. On the other hand they have encouraged every tawdry lying superstition which has taken money from the pockets of the peasants, and poured it into the coffers of the Church.

"Keep the people in ignorance, in darkness!' that has always been the aim of the Church."

"You are embittered by your excommunication," said Dominic.

"But why was I excommunicated, Signor? Tell me that. For years I laughed at their pretensions, and they let me alone. They thought they had better. But years ago they got up the grotto miracle business. It was a piece of imposition from end to end, but the silly people were deluded. They pretended to work miracles, and throngs of people came. It was like a fair every day. Some got hysterical, some pretended to get well. You have read Zola's 'Lourdes'? Well, we had the same thing, only in a small way. But with this difference. The people around here have less self-control than the French. The Neapolitan is passionate, sensuous. I tell you it was hell let loose, in spite of the pious talk. Then I took the matter up. I brought common sense to bear on the matter, I let in daylight. Then the papers, instead of being in favor of it turned against it. The whole thing became a scandal. It was proved beyond a doubt that good old Don Giovanni was fooled, and gave his support to a fraud. But what did they do at headquarters? The Vatican organ published leading articles on the gracious visit of Joseph and Mary, it spoke of the whole thing as a help to piety and virtue, and I—I, il povero dottore, I was excommunicated as an enemy to the faith. I was cursed by bell, book, and candle. The people were forbidden to call me in,

even if they were dying, and they attributed all my enmity to the business to jealousy for my craft,, and a fear that I might lose my practice.”

“But things have improved since then, surely?”

The doctor looked at Dominic keenly.

“You are a Catholic?”

“Yes, I am a Catholic.”

“You go to confession, then?”

“I confess nothing but my sins.”

“And you are an English gentleman?”

“I hope so.”

“Then if you promise to tell nothing I say to you, I may trust you?”

“Certainly.”

“Word of an Englishman?”

“Word of an Englishman.”

“That’s all right. Then let me tell you this, Signor; they are working up for another visit of Joseph and Mary. They think I don’t know, that I shall be quiet; that I shall take no notice. I should like you to see things as they really are.”

At this Dominic asked the doctor many questions, which were answered readily.

“I cannot believe it,” said Dominic, almost angrily.

“But will you investigate fairly? Signor, I have heard something about you. Your history is not unknown among the people. When I saw you, I liked you. I said to myself, it is a pity for a young fellow like him not to know the truth. Let me tell you exactly what I have found out, and what will take place. Then let me tell you what I propose to do.”

For the next quarter of an hour Dominic listened in amazement. “I cannot believe it,” he said again and again.

“But you will investigate? You will put the thing to the test?”

“Yes,” he said, “I will.”

“That is all I ask. Now then, we are nearing San Pietro. You had better get off. Even now, I am afraid you will receive the censure of dear old Don Giovanni for riding with me.”

“No,” said Dominic. “I want you to drop me at his door.”

“But not a word of what I have told you?”

“Certainly not.”

A few minutes later Dominic was met by the old priest, who saw him riding with the doctor. When they were alone together, Don Giovanni held up his hands in dismay.

“My son! — my son!” he said, “I could scarce believe my eyes when I saw you with that enemy of God.”

“What, you mean the doctor? What harm has he done?”

“He is the greatest enemy of God for miles around. The curse of God is upon him. He is excommunicate, and therefore outside the covenant of grace.”

“Surely all the more reason for seeking to convert him!”

“He is past conversion. He is a son of perdition,” cried the simple old priest.

“And yet I hear he is the best friend the poor have for miles around here.”

“He sows the seeds of doubt everywhere, I forbid you, if you love your soul, to have any further intercourse with him.”

At that moment Dominic’s combative side was uppermost, “Why was he excommunicated?” he asked,

“Because he blasphemed our Holy Mother. Because he took the side of the devil when last Joseph and Mary visited our sacred grotto,” cried the old man. “If ever there was a gracious outpouring of the Spirit of God upon the neighborhood it was then. The church was crowded, every one came to mass and confession; the Church was gaining its old ascendancy, because it was proved beyond doubt that especially the Holy Mother of God deigned to visit her grotto; and yet through him the Divine manifestation was made a scandal, the Church was robbed of the gifts of the faithful, and the devil was made triumphant. What wonder that the Church cast him out?”

Whereupon Dominic asked many questions, and Don Giovanni, from the Church’s standpoint, corroborated all the doctor had said.

A week later San Pietro was in a state of ferment. It was declared that both Joseph and Mary had been again seen in their grotto. A bright light had pervaded dense holy places, and people eager for excitement came from afar. Special missionaries came to assist Don Giovanni in his work, and the priests from neighboring parishes accompanied their flocks. Dominic noticed that the priests were jubilant. No word of doubt had been uttered. The old doctor had passed the crowds in silence, never uttering a word of

protest. Excited multitudes drank the water, masses were being constantly said, and money poured into the Church's coffers.

For a week these manifestations continued, and each day the crowds grew greater. It was urged that everything was beyond the realm of doubt, and that a new revival of religion had begun which would pervade the whole of Italy. At the end of the week, an article appeared in one of the Catholic papers, giving its blessing on the holy work that was being done, and the miracles that were worked.

As for Dominic, he witnessed everything in silence. He was not a priest, so he was not asked to take any part in what was going on. He was a stranger, and so it was not regarded as strange that he was not moved to enthusiasm.

He read the article entitled "The New Lourdes" with a heavy heart. Still he said nothing. He kept his promise to Dr. Pecci.

"This is not the Church," he kept on repeating to himself. "It is only a local movement. Presently the authorities at the Vatican will condemn this, and put a stop to it. A representative from the Vatican was here two days ago. He is an intelligent man, he cannot help seeing the truth.

A day or so later, a special edition of the paper sanctioned by the Vatican was published. It was wholly devoted to the New Lourdes. It declared that God was silencing the voice of atheists by a new manifestation of His power. That if men disbelieved, they did so against light and knowledge. What God and the Holy Virgin had done in France, they were doing in Italy. In a few weeks the whole of the country would flock to San Pietro to see, believe, and be blessed.

Then came a bolt from the blue. Unseen, and unknown, the doctor had been collecting evidence and preparing a statement of the truth. He published his article in the most widely circulated of the newspapers, and proved that the whole "visitation" was a piece of hocus-pocus, from end to end; that there were no miracles, no heavenly visitations, but that instead there had been a strange mixture of fraud and credulity.

"Did I not tell you what Doctor Pecci was?" said Don Giovanni. "But never mind! The Church will triumph yet. I have no fears. The Church has ever gained by persecution, and we shall triumph. The great question now is, what shall we do next?"

"I know what I am going to do next," said Dominic.

"What, my son?"

“I am going back to Rome,” he said.
Three days later he again reached the Eternal City.

28. The Pope's Encyclical

WHEN DOMINIC REACHED Rome his mind was in a tumult. For the first time he was really in a state of doubt. His conversation with Don Tagliati had troubled him somewhat, but it had not affected what he regarded as fundamental truth. If the Church was divine, if it was the depository of the truth of Christ, then obedience was an essential. What weight or authority had individuals, when brought into collision with the will of the Church? If the Church were infallible, then nothing was to be said. Men were but pawns on the chess-board, people must accept its word without question — at least this was what he told himself, and in a sense he believed it. Yet when the suggestion was made that he should go away into the country and see the work of a priest in his own parish, and think over all he had seen and heard while under the care of Don Pedro, he quickly made use of it. He reflected that if he once placed himself in a monastery, or seminary, where he would take the first steps towards the ratification of his vows, he would be finally committing himself. Not but what this was his duty and the goal of his life; yet he hesitated. He had promised Maggie Yorke that he would be true to the mind God had given him, and although he had bidden her goodbye for ever, he felt he must keep his promise. Nevertheless, he hoped that a quiet stay in a country parish, among the Italian mountains, would satisfy all his desires. Here he would be among saintly priests who gave their lives for the people; here he would be among peasants who lived a life of simple faith, and who were made pure by that faith.

But his visit there was not satisfactory. Not only had he been disappointed in the condition of the villagers, but the priests he had met had placed the priesthood before him in a new aspect. In Rome he had met the elect of the priesthood, and they had appealed to him more favorably, but in San Pietro their ideas and ideals had simply shocked him. He and they lived in different worlds. He could not help wondering what Cuthbert Trevelyan or Maggie Yorke would say about them.

But in addition to all this his many conversations with Doctor Pecci had affected him still more deeply. The doctor was, in his way, a cultured man. He had acquainted himself with the best thought of the age, he was a scientist, he was a student of history. These conversations had led Dominic's mind into channels hitherto unknown to him. It was true the reading of the Community of the Incarnation was broad and liberal compared with that of the Italian priesthood, but even there his reading had been confined to definite lines. The doctor's plain straightforward speech had broken down many barriers, and led him to look beyond those, which had confined his reading and thinking.

Then the fiasco of the visitation of Joseph and Mary disgusted him. He had been faithful to his promise to the doctor, and had investigated them. How could a man reared among English gentlemen pay any respect to the wretched balderdash which the priests had proclaimed to the people? It was fraud from end to end, and could deceive only the ignorant and the credulous. And yet the peasants were deceived, and the priests either believed in the veriest foolishness, or they connived at the deceit.

Still, he again reflected that this was not the Church. When those in authority knew the facts they would condemn the whole thing as the baseless and harmful imposture that it was, and put a stop to it for ever. He had promised the doctor that he would stand by and watch, without in any way letting the priests know his feelings about the matter. Hard as it was, he did this. He was even silent when the Vatican organ rejoiced in the Holy Visitation, and declared that San Pietro would become a second Lourdes. When the special edition of the paper appeared he could stay there no longer, however. He must go back to Rome, and tell what he had seen, and the conclusions to which he had come.

He went straight to the house of Don Pedro, but Don Pedro had not yet returned to Rome; the weather was too hot, and the housekeeper told him that he intended to remain away until the end of September. On the following morning he went to the palazzo of Cardinal di Vinci, but he also was at his villa among the mountains. The only other dignitary he knew was Cardinal Cordova, to whose residence he next made his way. It was past noon, and after a long, weary wait that gentleman condescended to grant him an interview.

"Ah, it is hot, very hot. I am simply exhausted," said the Cardinal to Dominic. "I heard you were among the mountains. I would get away myself if

I could, but important matters have prevented me. Oh yes, grave, very grave matters. But tell me how you are getting on. Well, I trust?"

"Yes, your Eminence. I am very well. The air at San Pietro is wonderful."

"That is well, that is well. You found Don Giovanni all you could desire?"

"He was very kind to me."

"Oh! that is good; and you were especially fortunate in being there during the wonderful Visitation, It must have been a glorious experience, and have led you to see how gracious God still is to His Church. Of course the lies of that atheist doctor will soon be destroyed. He is excommunicate, and ought not to be allowed to live, but the work still goes forward, in spite of a scurrilous press and the godless atheism of the people who think they have a right to judge in these matters. But you saw, did you not? It must have been very beautiful."

"Yes. I saw."

"Ah! it must have been beautiful, beautiful. Tell me, how did the people regard it?"

"They are much excited, the whole countryside is moved. San Pietro is thronged with people."

"Ah, yes. This will be a great gain for the Church, a gain to piety, a blow to unbelievers. You think so, do you not?"

"The people, at least the great part of them, accept everything without question. San Pietro is like a fair, and every sort of people have gathered there. I can assure you it is not altogether a religious movement."

"Just so, just so. Of course the simple peasants will be amused. There is no harm in that — the Church has always advocated amusements; but they go there because of the Visitation?"

"Yes, that is the center of attraction."

"And did you witness any cures?"

"Ye — es, that is I saw what were called cures."

"What do you mean?" asked the Cardinal sharply.

"Your Eminence, have you given the so-called Visitation of St. Joseph and the Holy Mother careful attention?"

"So-called! So-called! What does this mean? Of course attention, most careful attention, has been given to it. Every test has been applied. Why, Father Chiavenna, who has had much experience in such matters, was sent

from Rome, and examined every detail. He questioned those who had seen St. Joseph and our Blessed Lady very closely, and he is absolutely convinced of the genuineness of the visitation. Moreover, he took a doctor with him, a most eminent man, and the doctor declared there can be no doubt. Besides, the Bishop has given his blessing to the great work that is being done. What do you mean by such a question?"

Dominic opened his heart. He told of what he had seen, and the tests he had applied. He recorded what the best-informed and most influential people were saying, and gave as his conviction that there was no visitation, that there were no miracles, but that everything could be explained by the most simple means.

When Dominic left the Cardinal's palazzo his heart was like lead; his brain was dizzy. The Church had accepted the so-called miracles at San Pietro, and it was the duty of all faithful Catholics to accept without question. Unbelief was rife, the Cardinal declared; they were even doubting the miraculous power of the blessed and renowned Bambino in Ara Caeile. Of course, sinful doubters would raise difficulties, and excommunicated men like Dr. Pecci sought to harm the Church, but that was all the more reason why faithful Catholics should implicitly trust the Church. Did it not cause the people to come to church and hear masses? Did it not mean the gifts of the people to the Church? God had worked miracles for the Church all through the ages, and He had given this another manifestation of His love and grace. No, no. All reasonable tests had been applied, for the Church accepted nothing on hearsay; but the authorities of the Church had been satisfied, and a great Revival of religion had been realized.

It was in vain Dominic told of what he saw and what he knew. There was no room for doubt, the Cardinal said, and it was a virtue to accept what was manifestly for the good of religion, and for the refutation of unbelievers.

When he came into the street, he bought an evening paper. There was an article on the San Pietro miracles, and the writer laughed at the whole business, calling it a pocket edition of the Lourdes fiasco. It was a flippant piece of journalism, and written not without venom.

"Can either pope or cardinals believe that educated men and women can respect religion when it gives its blessing to such evident foolishness?" The article concluded: "Italy has been fed for many generations on lies, is it any wonder that she is now spewing them out of her mouth? Because of this,

what can the intelligence of the nation do but regard Christianity as one of the many worn-out religions of the world, a something which had meaning in the days of ignorance, but which is but an idle tale in these latter days, when the world is being flooded with light?"

A few months ago Dominic would have found many answers to this diatribe, but now he could find no answer. Little by little he had been led to regard the Roman Catholic Church as identical with Christianity, and yet he could not help admitting that that Church sanctioned what was repugnant to reverence and truth.

"But it is only a phase, it will pass presently," he kept on repeating to himself as he found his way towards St. Peter's. "I am unsettled, I am not able to think clearly, I must get away into silence, and think it over."

When he reached the square outside St. Peter's, he looked up at the great Vatican building. Behind those walls lived the successor of Peter, the Vicegerent of Christ. When this man spoke *ex cathedra*, he spoke infallible truth. The simple Venetian peasant who reigned there could speak as it were with the voice of God! The thought was stupendous. And yet Leo XIII, his predecessor, had declared that every word of the Douay version of the Bible was infallibly true. Discrepancies in translations, in printing, changes which the meaning of words undergo, were as nothing. Manifest contradictions were nothing. This man had declared a thing to be true, and although it was false, it was for faithful Catholics to believe.

There the great Church stood. The money to build it was raised largely by the sales of indulgences, of pardon for sins. These indulgences were hawked around as a cheap jack hawks his wares, and an infallible pope had given his blessing on this traffic!

After all, on what a slender foundation the superstructure of the Roman Catholic Church rested! How could it be that?"

He turned away. The turmoil of his thoughts was driving him to distraction. He would cease thinking! He would drive all doubts from his mind.

He walked rapidly by the Castella del Angelo, and presently crossed the Tiber. He would find his way to the Corso, and get a cup of tea. He had had no lunch, and he felt faint and hungry. He had barely reached the Corso, however, when he felt a hand upon his arm.

"Signor Wildthorne," said a pleasant voice in his ear.

"Father Tyrone!"

"No, no. Call me no longer Father Tyrone."

“Why?”

“Because, my friend, I am excommunicate.”

“Excommunicate!”

“Yes. I told you it might come. It has come. I withdrew my book, but I would not withdraw it as a whole. I withdrew my statement that I believed the Church could be sufficiently Catholic to embrace all truth but not the rest. I could not withdraw what I knew were attested facts of history and science.”

“And?”

“I was excommunicated. I asked to be refuted. I pleaded to be told where I was wrong. I demanded that it should be pointed out wherein I was untrue to truth. The reply was that I was untrue to Catholic teaching, and so—” The Italian shrugged his shoulders with a laugh.

“You had better leave me, my friend,” he went on. “I am a marked man. I am watched wherever I go— so will you be, if you associate with such as I”

“Let us go in here together and have some tea,” said Dominic. At that moment he cared nothing for the opinions of others. What did they matter in the face of the great black clouds which were rising before him, grim and terrible?

“It does not matter,” went on Father Tyrone, when they were sitting together in the corner of a tearoom.

“I could not have remained a Catholic.”

“Why?”

“Because I had little by little to confess that no man could maintain his intellectual, and therefore his moral self-respect, and still be loyal to the Church. Ah, it has been a battle, Signor, and as I faced the future I was often tempted to play the coward.”

“But are you serious in all this?” asked Dominic.

“In what?”

“That a man cannot keep his intellectual, and therefore his moral self-respect while remaining in the Church?”

“Ask yourself, my friend. Is there any room for a man in the Catholic Church who will be true to the dictates of truth? Is there any room for the candid student of history, for example? Just remember this — the teachings of the Church are unalterable. It maintains, in spite of the advancement of truth, all that it maintained a thousand years ago. This applies to everything.

Don't you see where this leads? This means that God made the world in six days, that Moses wrote an account of his own death, that Eve was made out of Adam's rib, that the Flood covered the whole globe, and so on, and on. If you say you don't believe in this, you are damned. This is A B C talk, but it shows what I mean; when the honest student faces these elementary things the Catholic Church says you must believe in what is manifestly myth."

"But is not yours a tremendous condemnation? Do you mean to say that there are no honest scholars in the Church of Rome? Are all Romanists either ignoramuses or dishonest men?"

"Just think, my friend. How many times have you heard of a Catholic who has written an honest book? Then comes pressure from the Congregation of the Index. He is commanded to withdraw his book. For a time he holds out, but in the end he generally withdraws. He obeys. Truth must always be found within the limits of Catholic dogma, he is told, and there is a so-called victory for the Church. But then' truth is not always found there. I speak what I know' The Church will not allow free investigation, independent thought."¹

"Because it is Divine, because it is the truth," urged Dominic.

"Is it? The textbooks of the children in the day schools are disproving that every day. I speak what I know, my friend. Many years ago I said, I will, prove that the Church is the friend to truth, to light, to investigation, to science. I was enthusiastic for the Church, and I determined to be true to the truth. Well, you see where it has led me. I am cursed with all the curses of the Church. That is the result of trying to be honest."

Dominic was silent.

"Oh! I tried hard. I fought my doubts, but they rose again and again, and when I asked questions I was told it was not a priest's duty to think, but to obey. You can believe in every childish superstition, you can wallow in stories about the Bambinos, and the Winking Madonna, the Holy Coat of Treves, the miracles of Lourdes, and San Pietro, you can believe in the efficacy of relics; but be a truth-seeker, and then comes excommunication."

"Then what have you to say concerning Liberal Catholicism?" asked Dominic. "There is a movement in that direction spreading all over the world. Think of the class of minds which Mivart represented."

"Mivart was excommunicated."

"But there are many more who believed as he believed, and yet they are not excommunicated."

Father Tyrone hesitated a few seconds before he replied. "Ask yourself two questions," he said at length. "Where will what is called Liberal Catholicism lead you? At present its real issues are hidden in high-sounding phrases. But how are its teachings compatible with Catholic dogma? To those men the sacraments have no real meaning. They are not facts, realities, they are only symbols of hidden truths. Work that thought out to its logical issue, and then ask how long Catholic dogmas can remain."

"Yes, but these men exist. How, then, can you be right when you say there is no room for liberal thinkers?"

"That leads me to the second question I want you to ask yourself," said Tyrone. "It is this. How long is the Church going to allow these men to occupy this attitude, even although they cloak their words, and protest their loyalty. A week longer?"

"What do you mean?"

"Wait a week," said Tyrone, "a week, and then we will talk again."

For the next few days Dominic scarcely ate or slept. He was facing what was to him the greatest problem of life. In the past the things that troubled him were mainly matters of millinery. They did not touch the heart of things, but now it seemed as though the foundations of life were torn up.

Again and again he reviewed the history of his life. He thought of his early boyhood with his drunken father, he recalled his death, and then he thought of his meeting with Maggie Yorke. That was the beginning of the new era. He had gone to the Community of the Incarnation with Father Trouville, and had, after a long probation, been admitted into that order. The Fathers there were very kind to him, and they were doubtless sincere, good men. They wanted to destroy the Protestantism of the Church of England, and to claim for it that it was a branch of the great Catholic Church. All his early education had gone to assure him that the Reformation was, in the words of the President of the English Church Union "a black, and in some respects a damnable spot in the history of the Church." Thus it was the duty of all good Christians to become again united with the Roman See. It was all plain at length. The Church of England was professedly a Protestant Church, and therefore not Catholic, as he had become, could honestly stay within her fold. She was only a schismatic sect, and therefore a menace to the true Church. Everything had led him to see this. Christianity and the Catholic Church were identical. The Community of the Incarnation had

done its work. It had been a bridge whereby he had gone over to the Church of Rome.

In order to do that he had been obliged to sacrifice the woman he loved, to sacrifice human liberty. Still, Maggie Yorke had influenced him; she had made him promise that before taking the final step he would investigate, he would be true to the mind God had given to him. He thought he had done this before he had been received into the Roman Communion.

But since! It seemed to him as though the foundations of faith and life were slipping away from beneath his feet. The talk with Father Tyrone, with Father Tagliati, the experiences at San Pietro, the influence of Roman life and thought! What was true? If Roman Catholicism was identical with Christianity, then it was divine. But what of its ghastly history — what of its tawdry superstitions, what of the fetters it placed on the mind? What had he to say to the fact that the very supremacy of the Pope rested on the forged decretals of Isidore? Was this divine? Was it the Church of truth?

He was told that to doubt was to sin; but did not blind credulity mean greater sin? Did God give him his intelligence to stultify it at the command of a Church which had again and again contradicted its own so called infallible judgments? Ay, and which had for ages put fetters on the mind and soul!

But what could he do? What was right?

He talked with two or three educated Italians with whom he had met. They had been born in the Church, nursed in the bosom of the Church, and yet when they had reached maturity they had cast aside its teaching as an outworn garment.

Hour after hour did he fight and struggle; day after day seek the light. He visited many churches, and prayed for guidance. He went to Confession, and asked for advice, and the advice was, "Crush your doubts, accept, believe, and obey without question." But this he could not do. Whenever he said he would cease to ask questions, his own self-respect arose and condemned him as a coward, and one who for a false peace would stultify the noblest powers of his being.

Then one day there was a bolt from the blue, and Rome was in a state of wild excitement. The successor of Peter spoke, and the fact was advertised everywhere.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL. MOMENTOUS PRONOUNCEMENT. FREEDOM OF
THOUGHT CONDEMNED. SUSPECTS AMONG THE CARDINALS. THE HOLY FA-
THER DETERMINED.

So ran the headlines of the newspapers.

Dominic eagerly bought the papers, and then, not satisfied, he made his way to a purveyor of Roman Catholic literature, who was also a friend of Don Pedro.

Yes, he could let the Signor have a copy of the Holy Father's encyclical. It was in Latin, but doubtless that did not matter.

When Dominic had obtained this fateful document he went away alone, so that he might read it in silence.

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1. The Abbé Loisy, one of the ablest of the scholars and thinkers in France, has been excommunicated during the present year (1908), because he refused to deny the truth of his writings.↩

29. Chaos

MANY HOURS LATER Dominic rose from his chair with a strange look in his eyes. He had read the Pope's encyclical over again and again. It was an uncompromising attack on the freedom of the mind. It was more. It was, to Catholics, a prohibition to thinking. It was a carefully thought out scheme to enforce orthodoxy, it was in very truth a condemnation of all honest study of history or science. It set up as an eternal standard of truth a worn-out mediaeval scholasticism, to which every priest, every professor, every teacher must conform. The Catholic Church was to become more than ever a huge machine to crush out all advancement, progress, and free investigation. Those who did not conform to the most unbelievable of her dogmas were to be, if they did not repent, excommunicated and excommunication meant eternal fires in hell.

The personal instructions of the Pope at the end of the encyclical simply appalled him, for every one of them was framed with the express purpose of crushing all independent thought, all liberty of speech or action. There were seven in number, and the spirit in which they were conceived reminded him of the Middle Ages. They were, briefly summed up, as follows:¹

First, the education of the clergy was to be based exclusively on scholastic philosophy, and thus the clergy of the future would go forth to evangelize the twentieth century in utter ignorance of its problems and difficulties, speaking only in the language of a past age.

Second, that no person suspected of the sin of thinking for himself, or investigating truth on independent lines, should be appointed as teacher or professor in any Catholic seminary or university, and any such person who held a position of this nature was to be immediately expelled from it.

The third and fourth of the instructions related to the repression of books and other publications tainted with the foul thing called Modernism. These writings, the Pope declared, were worse than immoral books; and this was also true of any books which tried to reconcile faith with modern philoso-

phy. This being so, every student in the seminaries or universities was to be deprived of any book in this category.

The fifth instruction was to the effect that freedom of speech was to be destroyed in a similar way. All conferences for the free interchange of opinion were to be suppressed.

The sixth instruction was that a system of espionage was to be established. A vigilance committee was to be appointed without delay, and its members were to discover and report any suggestion of independent thinking on religious matters. They were to see, moreover, that there were to be no discussions on "pious local traditions and relics." Thus all freedom of speech and action would be checked by this system of spying.

The seventh and last instruction laid down that a year from the time of the publication of the encyclical, and subsequently every three years, all the Bishops throughout the world were to send to the Holy See a statement confirmed on oath concerning the way all these ordinances were kept.

This, then, after the Pope's condemnation of all liberty of thought, all free investigation, all efforts to understand truth in the light of science and history, was his method for repressing freedom. It was a system of a gag, a system of shutting out light, of condemning men to live in darkness.

There could no longer be any doubt about the voice of the Church. The Pope had spoken, and doubtless his word was corroborated by those of the Cardinals who had been daily visiting the Vatican. It was an official statement, it expressed the mind of the Catholic Church.

Reared even as Dominic had been, in the atmosphere of ecclesiasticism, it staggered him, it struck him dumb. For a long time he could not realize the full purport of what he had read. But after a while it came to him little by little, and this was how it came:

The Church, according to the Pope, was a great Juggernaut to crush out all individuality, all independent thought. It would have no mercy on those who dared to think outside the beaten track of Medievalism. This was the Roman Catholic church.

What it had been in the past it was still. In the dark ages it had endeavored to check and punish free inquiry and reform by the thumbscrew, the rack, the dungeon, the faggot. The spirit was still the same. Now it attempted to silence these same things by threats of excommunication and curses. This was the Church.

It encouraged, nay, even commanded, belief in the most childish superstitions; it pleaded that the most manifest frauds were helps to piety, and necessary to the Church's advancement. It encouraged the worship of relics, the mechanical process of making saints, and the upholding of so-called miracles, like those at Lourdes, or San Pietro, while it damned all unfettered advances into the realms of truth. This was the Church.

It was true that holy men had existed within her borders, saints had lived pure and holy lives, and millions had drawn comfort and strength from her breast. But this was not because of her distinctly Catholic doctrines. This was in spite of her dogmas, in spite of those things which had made a great part of the intelligence of the world leave her. Besides, people had obtained comfort from every religion. Buddhists, Mohammedans, Sun-worshippers, all could tell of their saints, and their miracles. But had the race advanced in honor and truth because of a belief in the mass, and the absolution of the priests? If so, why was it that Italy and France and, above all, England began to advance directly they had cast from them the power of the priest? Why was it that the standard of Protestant countries was higher than that of Catholic countries? And yet Roman Catholicism cursed Protestantism as vile and devilish heresy. Even now, if the Church knew, the Church would damn him for the thoughts he was entertaining. This was the Church.

But more, were not Roman Catholicism and Christianity identical? He had become convinced that it was. It was not Roman Catholicism simply which had hidden truth and light; it was Christianity. The thought burned itself like fire into his brain. That encyclical which Pius X had just issued, the encyclical which, if universally obeyed, would mean death to the progress of the world, and which would make every nation a nation of slaves, was the edict of Christianity. If the Roman Church and Christianity were one, and this had become a conviction to him through years of training, then all this oppression and cruelty and fraud and slavery and ignorance were wrought by Christianity. In condemning the Church, he was condemning Christianity! In giving up his faith in the Church, he was giving up his faith in Christ.

And he had vowed loyalty to the Catholic faith. In the name of God he had vowed to give up all for the Church. He had vowed to give up honest love for a woman. He had vowed to obey!

What was the God he had been taught to worship? It was a God made in the image of man. What was the Church? It was a huge machine intended to

create a miserable uniformity, and to terrorize men into obedience! And all the while nature, truth, history, and the eternal longings of man laughed at its claims. And yet the Church bound him, body and soul!

He thought he was going mad. His brain seemed on fire!

Then suddenly, as if by a miracle, he felt a change come over him. It seemed to him as though he were like one of the fabled genii in the "Arabian Nights." The think in which he had been confined ceased to exist. He felt strangely free. The shell in which he had lived had broken. The death-garments in which he had been bound had gone! He was free. He did not believe!

It was a tremendous shock. All the foundations of his life were broken up. All the superstructure which had been built upon it was shattered into atoms. The Church was nothing but a tissue of fables, Christianity an outward creed, religion itself only a vague longing of the heart. Priestcraft, masses, sacraments, prayer, faith, all were as worthless as thistledown. Nothing seemed to remain. God, if there were a God at all, was a great eternal force at the back of things, unknown and unknowable. Jesus Christ was simply a man who lived nineteen hundred years ago – if he ever lived at all. Christianity was a mistaken endeavor to express man's vague yearnings after God, which men had forged into an unbelievable system. It was simply the relic of some other faith.

He felt himself strangely free! His vows had lost meaning, he laughed at them. Nothing remained but the fact that he had his life to live. No, that was not all. He still loved. He rejoiced as he thought of it. He still lived, Maggie Yorke still lived. He was young, she was young, and he still loved her with all his heart and soul. The foundations of faith had nothing to do with the foundations of love. And he believed that she cared for him. Else why that sob as she bade him goodbye?

It seemed to him that he had nothing to trouble about. Why should he trouble? There was no truth in all he had been taught. It was a mere phantasmagoria of the mind. But life was real; love was real. In spite of everything, Maggie Yorke had saved him. She had made him promise to be true to his mind-powers, true to his convictions, and that he would not stultify his reason in becoming a Roman Catholic priest. Ah, how he thanked her! But for her he would have been bound by chains of steel; but for her he would have given all he possessed to the Church. But he had not. The old

house at Wildthorne was his. He would go home a free man. He would again ask her to be his wife.

He went out into the street. People were talking eagerly about the Pope's encyclical, they were debating the probable results. He knew what it had done for him. It had knocked down his castle of cards — it had broken every tie by which he was bound.

He was an atheist, or, if not an atheist, an agnostic; but it brought him no sorrow. It only meant freedom, life, love. Death! he would not think of that; it was too far off. He was young, and, in spite of all his soul travail, he was healthy and strong. Let who would trouble about the millinery of religion, he had broken with it for ever.

The air was hot and sultry; but he did not heed it. His step was buoyant, his heart beat with joy. He began to make his plans. He would leave for England the next day, and in forty-eight hours later he would see Maggie Yorke again.

As he wended his way through the crowded streets he saw the priests or various orders; he saw people finding their way into the churches. He shrugged his shoulders; what had any freedom-loving soul to do with a system that meant slavery? He was free from it, free for ever. It was for him to rejoice in this newfound freedom. The reaction had not yet set in. His heart was light and buoyant. No marks of his claims were upon him. He nodded to a few acquaintances whom he happened to meet, and laughed with the gayest.

Presently he began to feel tired, and he found his way back to the house of Don Pedro, where he was still staying. He found a letter lying on the table for him. It was from Father Ritzoom. At first he read with an amused smile on his lips, then his face grew pale even to the lips. This was the passage in Ritzoom's letter which caused the change:

“You will be interested to hear that Miss Yorke, of whom, I am given to understand, you saw a great deal in Rome, was married yesterday to Trevelyan, but whether it is Trevelyan the member of Parliament or his brother, I am not sure. At any rate, I suppose the affair created quite a sensation. She is said to be one of the richest girls in Yorkshire, and is a great favorite in the district where she resides. Father Mullarney saw the wedding guests coming out of the dissenting chapel where the ceremony took place. He says that the building was crowded.”

It seemed to him as though his heart grew cold, a film came over his eyes, while he thought the furniture acted strangely. Then there was a sound in his ears like the sound of many waters, everything became less and less distinct, afterwards all became dark.

When he awoke to consciousness, it was to feel a pain in his head, and a great gnawing at his heart. He asked himself why he was lying on the floor, and why he felt so strange. The past was an utter blank, he could remember nothing. He had a vague feeling that some terrible calamity had happened, but he did not know what it was.

Then his eye fell upon the letter that lay on the floor beside him, and he remembered everything. He slowly rose to his feet.

"I am gong to be ill," he said, "I must get away from here."

He groped his way to the wall, and pulled the bell handle. Don Pedro's old housekeeper appeared.

"Signora," he said, "something has happened. I am compelled to leave."

"But the signor is ill," protested the old woman, "he cannot go away."

"No, I am all right," urged Dominic. "Look, here are twenty lire. I want you to pack up all my things and send them after me."

"But where, Signor?"

"Where? Ah yes, I forgot. Send them to the Hotel Quirinal."

"But Don Pedro? He will be home in two days. He has written to tell me."

"Ah, yes. Tell Don Pedro I was obliged to go. That is all."

The old woman watched him anxiously. She had grown to like him during the few weeks he had lived under the old priest's roof. She had been given to understand that the young Englishman paid her master handsomely.

"The Albergo Qurinale," said the old woman at length. "Yes, I will tell him — but the signor ought not to go."

Dominic tried to collect his scattered senses. Yes, he would need money, and he must collect his papers.

He staggered around the room like a drunken man, but at length he was ready. He found his way to the street, and called a cab.

"Hotel Quirinal," he said. He was only half conscious of what he was doing.

"I want a room," he said to the man at the office of the hotel. "A back room where I can be quiet, and where the sun does not shine."

The young man remembered him, and selected a room without hesitation. "It is the coolest and quietest room in the hotel, Signor Wildthorne," he said.

A man led the way to the lift.

"Let me take hold of your arm," said Dominic. "My head is whirling. Beastly hot, isn't it?"

Presently he found himself alone. He threw himself on the bed. Nothing was quite clear to him, but he had an idea that nothing mattered.

When the porter brought up the portmanteau which Don Pedro's house-keeper had sent, Dominic's strange behavior frightened him. He communicated what he had seen to the manager, who, after visiting the room, sent for a doctor. The doctor looked grave.

Three days later he was better. His mind was perfectly clear again, but he was very weak and languid.

"A narrow escape from brain fever," the doctor said, "but he'll do all right now."

"I'm all right, doctor," said Dominic, "I — I think I want to get out of Rome, it is very hot."

"We'll talk about it in a week. Meanwhile, you are well off here. The sun does not get here, and the room is cool and pleasant. Keep quiet, and you'll be all right. By the way, an old priest was asking for you yesterday. I told him he could not see you until tomorrow. Do you want to see him? He gave his name as Don Pedro something."

Dominic hesitated. "Yes, I'd better," he said.

The next day Don Pedro came. At first he could not believe his ears.

"An apostate! an atheist!" he cried.

"Just that!" said Dominic. "Look here, I don't want to argue — it would do no good: I simply don't believe, that's all. I tried as long as I could; but I had to give it up. The whole thing is a tissue of fables."

The old man argued, entreated, scolded, threatened, indeed he used all the weapons in his armory, but to no effect.

"Come back to the Church," he pleaded as he left, "it is your only shelter, your only friend."

But Dominic only laughed bitterly. He hated the Church, hated it because it had robbed him of his boyhood, robbed him of life's sunlight, robbed him of the only woman he had ever loved, or could love. It was an enemy to progress, an enemy to light. No one would ever have listened to

its claims even for a day, but for the fact of the world's morbid fear of what would come after death. And this was the bogey which the Church had held up before the eyes of the world. It had tried to frighten the world with the torments of everlasting hell fire.

Oh, what a fool he had been!

"Can I do nothing, say nothing to persuade you?" asked the old priest.

"Nothing. Faith has gone out of me. I do not believe, I could not if I would."

"Then beware of the Church's anger."

"What can it do?"

"What can it do? It has power to bless, it has power to curse."

"Let it curse," said Dominic.

"But think. Do you not believe in God?"

"No, you have killed God for me. What is your God? A little paltry vindictive creature who narrows down truth to an unbelievable system. A thing that's cruel, ignorant, hateful. No, no. If there is a God who cares, the Church has done its utmost to kill faith in Him."

"Then I must leave you to your fate."

Two days later Tyrone came to see him. He had sent a messenger to Don Pedro's house, and had learnt that Dominic had returned to the Hotel Quirinal.

The ex-priest listened eagerly to Dominic's story, and as he listened there was a look of pity in his eyes.

"And what are you going to do now, Wildthorne?" he said at length.

"What is there to do?" asked Dominic

"Is there nothing left to you?"

"Nothing. Yes there is, though. My youth is left; and as it happens, I have enough for the necessities of life. My eyes were opened before I made that over to the Church."

"But you have no faith?"

"Not a scrap. That day after I had read the Pope's precious document, and I saw what it really meant, something seemed to snap. I emerged into the light, I saw. The whole business of the Church is a man made thing; a poor little bogey which lost its meaning and terrors in the light of eternal truth."

"It is a tremendous institution."

"A huge, cruel machine. A ghastly thing which crushes out the best life of man."

"I can quite understand you, my friend. I have felt what you feel now. Everything is chaos to you."

"Everything."

"And everything in which you have believed seems like lies."

"Everything."

"Nevertheless, the world has not lived on negations. There is some positive truth in the world."

Dominic shrugged his shoulders.

"Look you, Wildthorne. What has lived through the centuries has lived because of the truth there is in it. The Roman Church has truth in it, or it could not have existed for nineteen hundred years. It must have met the eternal needs of man, or it must have died."

"*You* talk like this!"

"Oh, yes. I can quite understand your scorn. And I feel that the Church as an institution is pretty much what you think. But there are elements of truth in it; in a very real sense it was built on eternal truth. But as the years have gone by, lies have hidden the truth; ay, and lies have taken the place of truth. But there is eternal truth buried beneath the heaps of lies. There is something eternally divine in Christianity, even although what we call the Church has hidden it. It has hidden it in its creeds and dogmas. All this talk about the Immaculate Conception, Virgin Birth, priestcraft, masses, transubstantiation, absolution, hell-fire, and all the rest of the paraphernalia of the Church, has just hidden the eternal truth which lies embedded."

"Eternal truth. Bah!"

"Yes, my friend, eternal truth. When your eyes were opened the other day, when the great shock came, everything became chaos. All was lies. I know the feeling. But it is for all truth-lovers to sift the grain from the chaff, to remove the rubbish and find the thing that is eternally true."

"I am sick of the whole business, my friend. Never again will I trouble about this inflated bogey called Christianity. I am free of it, and I am going to remain free."

"And yet the heart cries out for the living God!" said Tyrone.

"My heart is dead," said Dominic.

"It has only been numbed by what you have gone through. Presently it will awaken again. The living spirit in you will cry out for the great Eternal

Spirit from whom you came. There is the eternal truth of religion. Back in the early days of Christianity it was fluid, it was a living spirit. Then it was a power. It swept over the nations like wildfire. But when Christianity became a system, a theology, a set of dogmas, an institution with laws and orders and regulations, then the lies began to heap up like mountains. Priestcraft, traffic in the forgiveness of sins, limitations to research, weights upon the mind, bogeys to frighten the ignorant, sensuous performances to appeal to man's childishness, to his love for tawdry displays, all this came to be. Just as paganism deified the passions, until it had a god to whom every part of man's nature could appeal, so the Roman Church sought mechanical contrivances to meet human needs. This has led to abuse, to lies, to slavery, to all that has made the Roman Church what it is. Still, there is eternal truth at the heart of things, and it is for honest men to sift, and sift, and accept only what is eternally true."

But Dominic only laughed bitterly. Nothing was true to him, the dust which rose when his dungeon walls were broken down still blinded his eyes; and although Tyrone talked wisely and well, he made no impression.

"What are you going to do?" repeated the Italian at length.

"Live my life," said Dominic. "I have already written for more money. I am going to travel. I shall return to England by way of Berlin and Paris. I am going to give my nature liberty. I have lived in chains too long.

"Remember, there is a difference between liberty and license," said the Italian. "In your new-found liberty you will be tempted to forget this. There is no such thing as absolute liberty. There are eternal laws of right and wrong; there are the higher and lower parts of a man's being fighting against each other. And if we allow the lower to gain the victory, we curse ourselves, and we pay the penalty. Shall I give you a piece of advice?"

"If you wish," said Dominic, and his voice was hard and uninviting.

"Go home to England. Go to that quiet old country-house of which you have told me. Read those old books which that far-off relation of yours had gathered together. Let your soul rest. Let nature do her own work, and remember that there is an Eternal God who lives."

At the end of ten days Dominic's health was restored, and with the return of health came the desire to carry out the program he had mentioned to Tyrone. He would live his life, he would not be troubled about man-made conventions and moralities. He would listen only to the voice of nature. He

hated the Church and its laws, and this made the desire to defy them all the stronger.

He talked with young Italians, who lived free, loose lives, and whose actions were bounded by no moral laws, but who followed whither pleasure led them. Why could he not do the same? There was nothing to restrain him. He had youth and health and money. Religion, with its man-made creeds, he scorned.

One thing saved him. He loved a good woman. True, she had married another man; but if ever he met her again, he wanted to meet her as one who had not sullied his life with the world's filth.

Towards the end of September, therefore, he set out for England, and before the English summer had passed away, or the leaves had fallen from the trees which surrounded Wildthorne Barton, he was on his way from London to the old house amidst the Cumberland hills.

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1. The “instructions” here summarized are in exact accordance with those given in the encyclical of Pius X issued in 1907.↩

30. Towards The Light

DOMINIC ARRIVED at Wildthorne Barton as the shadows of evening were gathering. He had telegraphed from London, announcing the time of his arrival, and when he reached the station he found David Wagstaff awaiting him. It was more than six months since he had left Wildthorne Barton, and yet he felt a changed man. The last six months had revolutionized his life.

"This is all your luggage sir?" said David, touching his cap.

"Yes, this is all. Are you quite well, David?"

"Quite well, thank you, sir. I hope you are well, sir?" And David looked anxiously at his young master's face.

"Yes. I have been ill; but I am quite well now. Do you think I look ill, David?"

"No, sir; but you look different; and you look older, sir."

Dominic laughed in spite of himself.

"I expect," went on David, "it is because you are dressed differently. When you were here before, you wore parson's clothes, and now —"

"I wear grey tweeds," laughed Dominic.

"Yes, sir; perhaps that's it."

"I am no longer a parson, David."

"No, sir?"

David looked as though he longed to ask questions, but he felt he had already gone beyond what a servant should go.

"I am very glad to see you, sir," was all he said.

"And I am very glad to be back, David."

"Mr. Perkins was inquiring for you yesterday, sir. He wanted to know when you would be home."

"Yes?" said Dominic eagerly.

"He's coming again tomorrow, sir. He said there were important papers to sign."

Dominic heaved a sigh of relief. He feared lest there should be difficulties about the estate.

How quiet, how restful everything was. Although September was nearly at an end the countryside still retained its summer glory. Honeysuckle climbed along the hedges, the birds twittered in the branches of the trees, the cattle lazily chewed their cuds in the meadows.

At last he reached the lodge gates. A trimly dressed woman opened them, and curtsied to him as he passed. He gave her a smile which made her curtsy again.

No, Italy had nothing like this. The mountains above Amalfi were grander and more rugged, but Italy did not possess the rustic loveliness of England. Its trees were not so green, its air was not so life-giving.

"Welcome home, sir," said Jonathan Wagstaff tremulously.

"I am glad to see you, Jonathan."

"And I think this is the proudest day of my life, sir. Welcome home, and may God bless you! Please forgive an old servant, sir. I hope you are well, sir; although, if you'll forgive me for sayin' so, you look pale and tired, sir."

"Do I, Jonathan?"

"You do, sir. But never mind, sir; we'll soon get you all right again, sir. It's the native air of your family, sir. I hope you are pleased with the way the grounds have been kept, sir."

"They are very beautiful, Jonathan; as for the countryside, it looks heavenly."

He heaved a deep sigh as he spoke. Oh, if he had only known; if—if, but the woman he loved was married to another man. His homecoming was robbed of nearly all its happiness. But for those foolish, mad vows, but for the fact that— But he would not think of it. It was too late now, and he would drive her from his mind. Oh, but his heart was very sore; there was no other woman in the world for him!

During the next few days he was deeply engrossed in law matters, so much so that he had but little time to think of other things. He felt very glad, they saved him from foolish brooding.

Then, when all formalities in connection with the estate were settled, his neighbors began to call on him. But Dominic did not receive them enthusiastically. He was also invited to many of the festivities of the countryside, but he never went. This caused great disappointment. It was understood that he had ceased being a clergyman, and that although he took vows of some sort in his youth, he was not free to seek a wife. But when he declined invitation after invitation, matchmaking mothers began to gossip about him.

But Dominic knew nothing of this; and if he had known he would not have cared. He was too engrossed with other matters. He remembered Signor Tyrone's words: "There is eternal truth at the heart of falsehoods, and it is the duty of truth seekers to sift the truth from the lies.

He had declared that he had given up religion forever: that it was a curse to life, and a bogey to frighten ignorant people. Nevertheless, he found himself constantly thinking about it. His was a nature which could find no rest in a blank negation, or in blind materialism.

Sometimes he found himself almost shuddering as he thought of the days when he was on the brink of moral ruin. It seemed to him that only a gossamer thread stood between him and a life of sin. He had lost all faith, and all his being cried out for excitement, for gratification. What was there worth living for, but a life of the senses?

Then he realized that Maggie Yorke had been his saviour. Wedded to another though she was, her pure womanhood, and the love which for years he had borne for her, stood like an impregnable barrier between him and ruin. Then, as he cast his mind back over the years, he realized that she had always been his saviour. He had thought her an enemy to his soul, and yet she had ever been an influence on the side of liberty and truth. She had been always pointing to the hills where the sun shone. He had lost her, lost her for ever; but she was his saviour still. Even now, as in the dark days of temptation, she had led him to look towards the light.

He possessed one of the finest libraries in the country, and as the short days came on he grew fond of reading again. In the mornings and afternoons he either went riding or took long walks, but at night he read and thought.

One book influenced him greatly. It was written by old Timothy Wildthorne. He had never heard of it, although he found it had passed through three editions. It was called "The Heart of Things." It was a strange medley of a book. Mainly it was autobiographical. It described many of the conversations which took place between the writer and Newman, Pusey, Manning, Darwin, Tennyson, and Huxley. Evidently Wildthorne Barton had been visited by the foremost thinkers of the nineteenth century, and they had had long intercourse together. Old Timothy Wildthorne had analyzed the positions held by Manning and Newman on the one hand, and those of Darwin and Huxley on the other. The plea of the book was identical with that of Signor Tyrone. At the heart of things was eternal truth. Ecclesiasti-

cism had hidden this eternal truth by its unbelievable systems, and its claim to absolute authority. Materialistic science had also hidden it by seeking to find the explanation of everything in matter.

Thus Dominic found there could be no rest for him in a negative position. The secret of all progress and advance was positive truth. As the months passed away, he found that Tennyson had described his own position in describing that of his friend, Arthur Hallam:

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the specters of the mind—

But beyond that he could not go. Sometimes he felt that a “larger faith” was becoming his own, but only rarely. The experiences through which he had passed made him afraid to believe anything.

He understood now why the thinking men of Italy and France discarded religion. The only religion of which they knew was Roman Catholicism, a religion which at every turn contradicted their reason. Thus they turned their backs on it as an idle tale.

He also understood what a doctor had once said to him in Rome, and this doctor was an ardent Roman Catholic.

“If I were to follow my reason,” he said, “I should cease to be a Catholic. But religion has nothing to do with reason. It is a matter of faith. I accept it, and refuse to ask any questions about it.”¹

But Dominic could not be contented with this attitude. He *must* ask questions; and he could accept nothing that did not appeal to him as eternally true.

As the winter passed on. Signer Tyrone kept him well posted in news from Rome. The Pope was enforcing his encyclical. He excommunicated the editors, proprietors, and printers of a review which existed for the purpose of showing that religion, rightly understood, was in harmony with the truths of history and science.

One liberal thinker after another was cursed by bell, book, and candle. Dominic laughed as he read. It did not matter now. Ecclesiasticism of any sort had lost its hold on him. If there was any truth in religion, or in Christianity, that truth was above and beyond the creed-bound thoughts of the Churches.

As the winter passed away, he passed into a sort of negative peace. Possibly there was a spiritual interpretation of the universe, possibly, too, the Man Jesus came nearer the truth than any thinker in the world. After all, there was but little connection between the sublime teaching of the Galilean Carpenter and that huge hierarchy called the Church. The transcendent glory of His death was hidden by the dogmas of men. But He did stand for truth.

With the coming of the spring a great yearning came into Dominic's heart. He had not heard a word from the Community of the Incarnation, nor indeed from Yorkshire; and he wanted to see the old place again. He wanted to go to his father's grave. He wanted to be brought again into contact with the scenes of his boyhood.

One morning, therefore, he started for Yorkshire. He left by an early train, so as to be able to make arrangements for a tombstone to be placed above Barnabas Wildthorne's grave. He was not a good father to him, and yet his heart went out to his memory.

He stood by the place where he had first seen Maggie Yorke. Even now she was Maggie Yorke to him. He could not bring himself to call her Mrs. Trevelyan. Away in the distance he saw the House of the Incarnation, while in the other direction was Barstone, the house where the woman he still loved was reared.

A thousand memories came flooding back to him. It seemed ages since he had stood by those cemetery gates, a ragged boy, his heart bleeding because his father was dead.

He went into the cemetery, and found the grave. He remembered the number. There could be no doubt about it.

"He loved me in his own way," he said. "Yes, he loved me. I wonder where he is now?" The question which faced him long years before had not been answered, in spite of all the experiences through which he had passed. And yet, deep down in his being was a kind of consciousness that all was well. Hell fire, purgatory, masses for the repose of souls – all that had passed away like so many childish fables. But yes, perhaps –.

He had got so far.

When he left the cemetery it was still daylight; and again he found himself looking at Barstone.

"She does not live there now," he said to himself. "I wonder where she is? I have never dared to make inquiries as to which of the Trevelyans she

married. But I shall not see her if I go that way.”

Unconsciously, almost, he found himself walking in that direction, until presently he found himself near the lodge gates.

Yes, it was a March day when he first entered those grounds, and now it was March. But long years had passed since then.

He saw the path he had climbed when he saw Maggie on the day he first realized that he loved her. He remembered that it led to a point from which he could see the golf links.

He began to climb, his heart beating wildly – he knew not why.

He reached the top, and cast his eyes towards the spot he had seen her that day, but she was not there. How could she be, when she was married, and living with her husband?

He heard a footstep near, and turned his head; his heart ceased beating, his head became dizzy. He must be going mad. He passed his hand across his eyes, so that he might see clearly. Before him stood the woman he loved, and she was alone.

To Dominic she came as a beautiful vision. Her cheeks were flushed by exercise and the keen March wind. Her brown, glistening hair was a little disheveled. A refractory curl hung on her forehead. Her eyes shone with excitement. She was still the same. A pure woman, whose very presence meant health and sweetness.

“Mr. Wildthorne,” she said.

“Mag— Mrs. Trevelyan,” he cried.

She opened her eyes in wonder.

“What do you mean?” she asked.

“You — you are Mrs. Trevelyan, are you not?”

“I do not understand you,” she replied.

He thought he would have fallen; the hills around him seemed to be rocking ridiculously, he could not see clearly.

“You, you are — not — not married?” he said.

“Why, no. Whatever put such a thought into your mind?”

For a few seconds he was silent. He could not understand. But he could no longer doubt. She stood there before him in flesh and blood, and she who had never told him a lie, had told him that she was still free.

“My God, I thank Thee!” he cried.

It was the recognition which his soul gave to the truth which his mind had not yet been able to grasp.

Maggie's face became slightly pale as she heard him. Perhaps she realized something of the meaning of his cry.

"But—but I heard last August, I think—it was while I was in Rome—that you were married to one of the Trevelyans," he said presently.

"Who dared to say such a thing?" she cried. "It is true Mr. Trevelyan married my old Somerville friend, Jean Winstey, from our house. She is an orphan, and father insisted that her wedding should be from Barstone. She was married at our church, too; but— but surely you did not believe I married Mr. Trevelyan? I never thought of such a thing."

Somehow the world was changed to him. The sky was grey and lowering, with only here and there a patch of blue. The clouds of smoke hung heavily on Meremeadows, which lay beneath him; but to him the sky was glorious, the green countryside a paradise.

Dominic knew that his hour had come, but he knew not yet whether it was the hour of light or of darkness.

"I want to tell you something," he said at length. "May I?"

"Won't you come back to the house, Mr. Wildthorne? I am sure my father and mother will be glad to see you, and we dine in a little more than an hour."

"Not yet. It shall be for you to say whether I shall go back with you presently. I want to tell you something first; ay, and to ask you something."

It was not only Dominic who knew that his great hour of his life had come: for Maggie knew her hour had come, too.

As if unconsciously they turned and walked along the path; no one was near, and the evening shadows were falling.

He began his story, telling her everything. Of what had happened before his visit to Rome she knew a great deal; but not all, and he told her. He spoke of one battle he had fought before he had bidden her goodbye at Rome, and then of what followed. His talks with Don Pedro, Don Tagliati, his experiences at San Pietro, of his return to Rome, the Pope's encyclical — all.

"Then I read Ritzoom's letter, which told me you had married Trevelyan. It nearly killed me."

He did not spare himself concerning what followed, of his temptation to cast all morality to the wind, and the way she stood between him and moral ruin.

Maggie's eyes became wet with tears, and her heart warmed as she listened.

He told her of his return to Wildthorne Barton, and of his experiences during the long winter nights. After that came the yearning to see Mere-meadows again, and to feast his eyes on the house where she had lived.

"I have told you all," he said. "The old faith is gone, and I am in the dark. I have given up the false, and I am afraid I believe nothing, and yet I have a feeling that my face is towards the light."

"I am so glad," said Maggie.

"I have told you all this," he said, "because I want to tell you something else. I have never ceased to love you. Oh! Maggie Yorke — Maggie, Maggie, may I dare to believe, to — to hope that — 'my life will not end in darkness?'"

He stopped in the pathway. The daylight had nearly gone; but he saw her plainly. They stood face to face.

"Maggie," he cried again, "can you, do you think you can ever care for me?"

"I — I thought you knew," she sobbed.

"Then — then — you —"

"Yes, Dominic."

"Then you will be my wife? You will come and live with me in my old home?"

"Yes — if you will let me."

She half laughed, half sobbed out the words, and they opened the gates of heaven to him, and made that grim March evening like a June morning.

He held out his arms, and she came to him. Closer and closer he strained her to his heart; it seemed as though the agony of the past months went out of his life as he held her there. The love of long years expressed itself in the hot burning kisses he rained upon her.

"Oh, Maggie, my love, my love!" he cried; "if there is a God, I thank Him!"

Presently they walked towards Barstone together.

"I felt sure you would come back to me," said Maggie, as they drew near the house.

He looked at her questioningly.

"You had promised me to be true to yourself, true to the mind God had given to you, and I knew that the man I—I loved would never consent to be

bound, and live in darkness.”

“But the old faith has gone with the chains,” he said.

“The faith, the true faith will come again,” she said calmly and joyfully. “It always does to those who keep their faces towards the light. And your face it towards the light, Dominic.”

It is not for me to tell of the welcome Fletcher Yorke gave him, or of what he said to Dominic when he asked for Maggie’s hand. All I need say is that Dominic needed no persuasion to send that very night to Wildthorne Barton for the things he required in order to spend a few days in Yorkshire.

He met Father Townley during his visit. The old man spoke very sadly to the man of whom he had hoped so much, and asked whether he was not afraid to break the vows he had made. Dominic was tempted to answer angrily, but he refrained. He knew that Father Townley could not understand him.

“I believe you meant to be kind to me, and I believe you were sincere,” he said, as he gave him a check to cover the expenses of his education; “but, Father Townley, I pray you to reflect before you continue further in your endeavor to bring the English Church back to Rome. Even if it were honest for a clergyman of the Church of England to do Rome’s work, it is a terrible responsibility for you to try, either to lead men into the darkness of superstition, or to drive them to atheism. I was an atheist — perhaps I am still; and it was the Roman Church which killed my faith.”

“But we are not Romanists,” urged the old man.

“Are you not doing Rome’s work?” said Dominic.

“Have you forgotten that scene in the House of Commons?” And to this Father Townley gave no answer.

Dominic and Maggie were married in May. Nature had clothed herself in her beautiful garments, and even in Meremeadows, hill and dale stood resplendent like a bride adorned for her husband.

“Where shall we go for our honeymoon, Maggie?” Dominic had asked weeks before.

“To our home, Dominic,” she said. And his heart throbbed for joy at the thought of it.

Thus it was that soon after the wedding ceremony was performed in the church where Maggie had attended from childhood, they, amidst shouts of gladness, and crowds of well-wishers, started for Wildthorne Barton.

The sun was just sinking in a cloudless sky as the carriage drove up to the door. Old Jonathan Wagstaff stood by the porch awaiting them.

“God bless you, and welcome home, sir!” he said, and the tears trickled down his face. “And you — a thousand times you too, my beautiful mistress. Ay, and He will bless you, ay He will bless you!” he added as he looked into Maggie’s face.

The old man’s voice fell upon them both like a benediction, and Maggie’s eyes gleamed with joy as she heard him.

They stood on the terrace together before going into the house, she with her hand resting upon Dominic’s arm. The whole countryside was flooded with the glory of the setting sun. Hill and dale, mountain and crag were wondrous to behold.

“Oh, Dominic!” said the girl, “it is more beautiful than I had ever dreamed it could be. It is paradise on earth.”

“You will love it, as I have learnt to love it,” he said.

“I love it already,” she cried. “Oh! my love, is it sinful to be so happy? No, forgive me for saying that. It is beautiful because God is beautiful. And we are happy because God loves us.”

“God,” said Dominic quietly and thoughtfully.

“Yes, do you not see Him in — in everything?”

“I am afraid to say yes — yet,” he replied. “Still, my face is towards the light, my Maggie; I know so much, and I hope I shall believe. But if I do, my faith must be as broad as Eternal Love.”

“That is why I have no sadness,” she replied, “I could not be sad, knowing that.”

“And I will keep towards the light, always,” he said, as he looked into his wife’s eyes.

Then, side by side they entered the old home of the Wildthornes, the new home of Maggie and her husband, the man who had come up out of great darkness, and whose face was towards the Light.

The End

1. The author heard a Roman Catholic doctor make this remark in Rome.↩

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Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25)

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