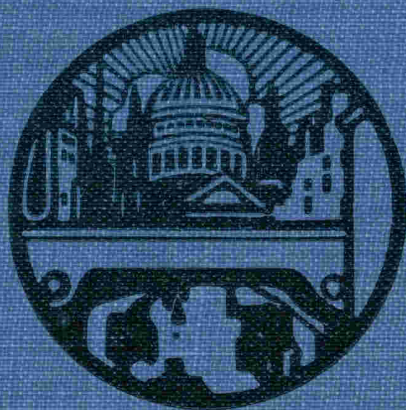


ANDREW
BOCONNOC'S
WILL

JOSEPH
HOCKING



CASELL

*** A Distributed Proofreaders Canada eBook ***

This eBook is made available at no cost and with very few restrictions. These restrictions apply only if (1) you make a change in the eBook (other than alteration for different display devices), or (2) you are making commercial use of the eBook. If either of these conditions applies, please contact a <https://www.fadedpage.com> administrator before proceeding. Thousands more FREE eBooks are available at <https://www.fadedpage.com>.

This work is in the Canadian public domain, but may be under copyright in some countries. If you live outside Canada, check your country's copyright laws. IF THE BOOK IS UNDER COPYRIGHT IN YOUR COUNTRY, DO NOT DOWNLOAD OR REDISTRIBUTE THIS FILE.

Title: Andrew Boconnoc's Will--The Story of a Crisis

Date of first publication: 1926

Author: Joseph Hocking (1860-1937)

Date first posted: March 27, 2024

Date last updated: March 27, 2024

Faded Page eBook #20240322

This eBook was produced by: Al Haines, John Routh & the online Distributed Proofreaders Canada team at <https://www.pgdpCanada.net>

Andrew Boconnoc's Will

The Story of a Crisis

By

Joseph Hocking

CASELL AND COMPANY, LTD
London, Toronto, Melbourne and Sydney

First published 1926
Popular Edition July 1927
Second Impression March 1929

Printed in Great Britain.

CONTENTS

1. [A STRANGE WILL](#)
2. [THE SEALED DOCUMENT](#)
3. [THE READING OF THE WILL](#)
4. [FATHER FAKENHAM](#)
5. [AFTERWARDS](#)
6. [THE DEAD AND THE LIVING](#)
7. [THREE PRIESTS](#)
8. [JESUITRY](#)
9. [CUPID](#)
10. [A FEELING OF REVOLT](#)
11. [TO BE, OR NOT TO BE](#)
12. [JOAN KILLIGREW](#)
13. [JULIAN'S CONFESSION](#)
14. ["BY THEIR FRUITS"](#)
15. [REVELATIONS](#)
16. [CHAOS](#)
17. [FATHER FAKENHAM'S FAILURE](#)
18. [THE ALCAZAR GROUNDS](#)
19. [A MAN AND A MAID](#)
20. [THE JOURNEY THROUGH SPAIN](#)
21. [THE NEWSPAPER PARAGRAPHS](#)
22. [TWO PRIESTS AND A LAYMAN](#)
23. [BAGSHOTT'S NEWS](#)
24. [LINDLEY'S DILEMMA](#)
25. [PROTESTANTISM](#)
26. [MARCH 10TH](#)
27. [LINDLEY'S NEWS](#)
28. [PENTECOST](#)
29. [THE SEALED DOCUMENT](#)

Andrew Boconnoc's Will—The Story of a Crisis

CHAPTER I

A STRANGE WILL

The Rector of Birtwhistle, the Rev. Thomas Gascoigne, sat at his breakfast table with a puzzled look on his face. An open letter lay on the table before him, and it was this letter which evidently perturbed him.

“Anything the matter, father?”

It was his daughter Dinah who asked the question. She was a bright, happy-looking girl of perhaps twenty years of age.

“No, nothing the matter, only I can't make it out.”

“Can't make what out?”

“Why old Andrew Boconnoc should send for me. He never comes to church and hasn't spoken a dozen words to me for years. Why, then, does he want me to come to Hawkspoint this morning at eleven o'clock? There, read the letter if you like.”

Dinah Gascoigne laughed as she took the sheet of paper from her father's hand. Dinah laughed almost about everything. She was that kind of girl. Not that she was senseless or giggling, but having a healthy, happy disposition, laughter came to her naturally. She was anything but an orthodox clergyman's daughter, and roundly refused to do ordinary parish work. Mothers' meetings, Dorcas societies, Catechumen classes, and all that kind of thing she frankly abhorred. People said she was not cast in an ecclesiastical mould, and that it was a great pity the rector had not a daughter who would help him in his work. Not that she was an irreligious girl: far from it. But church functions as church functions made no appeal to her. She was simply a healthy, happy, kindly disposed, pleasure-loving and at the same time intelligent, true-hearted girl to whom life was a glad joyous thing.

“It *is* a bit funny,” she commented after she had read the letter. “Perhaps,” she added with a laugh, “he wants to head a subscription list for restoring the church.”

“No such luck,” rejoined the rector. “By the way, where’s Ben? He’ll be late for the office if he doesn’t make haste.”

“Ben left a quarter of an hour ago,” replied Dinah. “He seemed to be frightfully anxious to be in time this morning. I suppose now that he’s a full-fledged lawyer and is looking forward to becoming a partner, he is taking his work very seriously.”

A little more than an hour later Mr. Gascoigne left the rectory and made his way through the dirty streets of Birtwhistle, a huge manufacturing town, towards the outskirts. More than one greeted him cheerily and respectfully as he passed on his way.

“He can’t preach for nuts,” was constantly remarked concerning him, “but he’s the right sort. A real gentleman, too, and no fal-de-rals. He is noan like Father Lindley up at St. Michael’s.”

Presently the rector found himself passing through the lodge gates of Hawkpoint, the largest house for miles around.

“I can’t make it out,” he said to himself, more than once, “I have not been inside Hawkpoint for years. I wonder what the old chap wants to see me for? However, I shall soon know.”

Arrived at the house he was at once shown into a large book-lined room, and then left to himself.

“Mr. Boconnoc is expecting you, sir. He will be here almost directly,” the servant told him.

Mr. Gascoigne noted the comfortable appointments of the room and then wandered around examining the books which on every hand surrounded him. Minute after minute passed, and no one appeared. Ten minutes went and still he was left alone.

“I suppose I’m early,” reflected the rector looking at his watch. “Yes, I am, it’s barely eleven now. Still——”

He went to the window and looked out over the carefully kept gardens, and across the park which lay beyond it. On the other side of the park, more than a mile away rose a high hill, rock summited, and rugged. This was called Hawkpoint, after which the house was named.

At that moment the rector turned at the sound of wheels, and saw a car moving rapidly up the drive. A few seconds later he was joined by two men well known in Birtwhistle. They were the leading medical practitioners in the town.

“Are the lion and the lamb going to lie down together?” laughed the rector as he shook hands with them.

“Which is the lion and which is the lamb?” one of the doctors retorted.

“I shouldn’t say you were very lamb-like anyhow,” and again the rector laughed at his little joke. “But what are you doing here? Is he ill?”

Both the doctors shook their heads.

The point about the lion and the lamb lay in the fact that the two medical men were generally at loggerheads. Doctor Brown was an advanced Liberal; Doctor Edwards was a Tory of the old-fashioned type. Doctor Brown was a strong Nonconformist; Doctor Edwards was a strict Churchman; Doctor Brown was the leader of the progressive party on the town council, while Doctor Edwards constantly opposed him. As a consequence to see them come in the same car, and to meet together in the same house surprised the rector greatly.

Before anything further was said, however, Mr. Gascoigne was further astonished. The door opened and Mr. Coad, the leading lawyer of Birtwhistle, was ushered in, followed by his own son, Ben.

“Good morning, dad,” Ben Gascoigne greeted his father. “What in the world are you doing here?”

“Rather what are *you* doing here?” retorted Mr. Gascoigne.

“I’m here because I was told to come,” replied the young man.

He was a typical Englishman this young Ben Gascoigne, tall, well set-up, carefully dressed, and without giving any sign of great intellectuality was evidently sharp-witted and keen.

Several more minutes passed and nothing further happened. Each man looked questioningly at the others as if expecting an explanation of why they were there, but no answer came.

“Dash it all!” exclaimed one of the doctors presently, “What’s the meaning of it? I can’t stay here all day. I’ve my patients to look after.”

He had scarcely finished speaking when there was a sound of footsteps outside, the door opened, and the owner of the house came in. He looked

from one to the other as if curious to know whether all he had expected were there, and then greeted them one by one.

“Glad to see you, Brown, glad to see you, Edwards,” he said, holding out his hand. “No, I’m not ill, so there will be no counting of pulses, taking blood pressure, and that kind of thing; still I wanted to have you here. And you too, Coad, and young Gascoigne. And here’s the rector, too; good morning, Mr. Gascoigne, it’s good of you to come and see a heretic like me. Sit down all of you, won’t you. Why,” and, as if the thought had struck him for the first time, he added, “we have got three of the learned professions represented here, the Church, the Law, and Medicine.”

Old Andrew Boconnoc was a striking-looking figure; tall—even although over seventy years of age and bent he must have been six feet high—rugged and forceful, he was a typical Yorkshireman of the old type. His height was accentuated by the long dressing-gown he wore, and a huge shock of iron grey hair gave him an almost leonine look.

Andrew Boconnoc had, for many years, been the most influential man in the district of Birtwhistle. Not only was he the largest employer of labour for many miles around, but his business transactions struck deep and wide. He was a large landowner, too, and during the last twenty years more than one historic estate had been bought by him. In spite of the fact that he had appeared to live his life in the full light of the world he was somewhat of a mystery. Some called him a miser, others declared that many of the largest gifts to the various charities of the town could be traced to him. What his politics were no one knew. He took no open part in public life. It was whispered that more than once titles had been offered to him, but if they had they had been refused. He had begun life as plain Andrew Boconnoc and he was plain Andrew Boconnoc still. Father Lindley, the High Church vicar at St. Michael’s, had hinted that he was an atheist, but there was no proof as to that. Nevertheless what religious creed he favoured was entirely unknown. He belonged to no church although in turn he visited them all. One Sunday he might be seen at the Salvation Army barracks, and the next curiously watching what took place at the Roman Catholic chapel which was situated in a poor part of the town. He had held but little converse with Mr. Gascoigne, although he was known to attend some of the services at the Parish church. He was also occasionally seen at the various Methodist chapels, as well as at those of the Congregational and Baptist, but he passed no opinions on any of them. What he thought he kept to himself. Altogether Andrew Boconnoc was somewhat of a mystery.

“Draw up your chairs to the fire, gentlemen,” he invited after the usual greetings. Whereupon he seated himself in a huge armchair which stood close to the fire, and at the side of which was a writing-desk on which lay several legal-looking documents. There was a smile on the old man’s face as he scanned his visitors. He might have been enjoying the curiosity which they manifested. For some time he gave them no hint as to why he had asked them to come, and watched them closely while they waited for the reason. Ten minutes passed away and still he did not tell them. He questioned the two doctors about the amount of sickness there was in the town, and discussed with them a new serum which was at that time much talked about in medical circles. He also asked young Gascoigne how he liked the Law, and whether he looked forward with pleasure to spending his life as a lawyer in the town. After that he turned to the rector and spoke of ecclesiastical matters. He asked him how he liked the new bishop who had been lately appointed to the diocese, and whether he thought the churches were not becoming defunct institutions.

Presently the two doctors became more and more restless. More than once they looked at their watches and whispered one to another. Old Andrew was not slow in noting this and again a sardonic smile was to be seen on his rugged face.

At length Doctor Edwards could bear it no longer. “It’s very good of you to ask us to come up here, Mr. Boconnoc,” he blurted out, “but I’m a busy man and my time is valuable. I can say the same for Brown. It’s very pleasant to chat and all that kind of thing, but my patients are waiting for me, and the morning is the busiest time of the day.”

“All right, Edwards,” chuckled Andrew, “this is a professional call and you must put it in your bill.”

“I don’t understand—professional call?” queried Doctor Brown.

“Oh yes, it’s professional right enough,” replied Andrew, and again his face puckered up with a smile.

“But you’re not ill, are you?”

“No—o,” he replied slowly, “but I want your medical opinion for all that.”

“What about?”

“Just this. Both of you have known me for over thirty years. You have no doubt about my sanity, have you?”

“Doubt about your sanity? Certainly not. Why should we doubt it?”

“And you’re of the same opinion?” turning to Doctor Brown.

“Of course. Whoever doubted such a thing?”

“That’s all right. I think that’s all, and so I need not keep you any longer, especially as you say you’re busy.”

“But—but I don’t understand!” exclaimed both the doctors in the same breath.

“I don’t suppose you do, but to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I have asked Coad and young Gascoigne here because I’m going to make a new will, and as according to law it’s necessary that the testator shall be in a sound mind I thought it just as well to ask both of you to visit me on the day I made it. That’s all. It is so good of you to come.”

A few minutes later the doctors were outside together.

“What’s the meaning of it, Brown?” asked Doctor Edwards.

“Don’t know. I expect the old man is going to leave his money in a funny way. It can’t mean that he is going to disinherit young Julian, can it?”

“There’s no knowing, but of course he’s sane enough, oh yes, there’s no doubt about that. All the same I should like to have waited. I should like to have heard how he’s going to leave his money; there’s such heaps of it you know.”

“He may live for years yet.”

“Yes, but one can never tell. He’s an old man, and might break up at any time.”

While the two doctors were talking, Mr. Coad drew a chair to the desk which stood by Andrew’s side.

“Of course you know,” remarked the lawyer, “that you made a will about ten years ago?”

“Yes, but I’m going to make a new one.”

“Why? Have you altered your mind? Surely nothing has happened to make you do that.”

“In a way yes, in a way no.”

“I assume I can speak freely before Mr. Gascoigne?”

“Certainly. I asked Gascoigne to come this morning because although we have had little to say to each other, he is rector of the parish and I regard him as a sane, sensible fellow. Yes, you can speak quite freely before Gascoigne.”

“Well then, in your previous will you left the main bulk of your property to your son, Julian. You don’t mean to say that you wish to alter that?”

“No—o, but I want to add conditions. In the previous one I left things to him unreservedly; now I don’t.”

“But excuse me for saying so, wouldn’t a codicil be sufficient?”

“No, it wouldn’t. I want to begin at the beginning. The truth is I want to save my boy.”

The lawyer sat back in his chair astonished. “Save your boy! I don’t understand. I have a son at Oxford now and he speaks of Julian as a most exemplary fellow, deeply religious and all that sort of thing.”

A curious smile played over the old man’s face. It was a somewhat bitter smile and there was a hard look in his eyes.

“You see, Coad, I’m a rich man—a very rich man.”

“I know that,” replied the lawyer. “Very few people know how rich. But what has that to do with it?”

“A great deal. Money means responsibility. I have not been one who has paraded his gifts, but as you know I have given away large sums.”

“You have,” assented the lawyer, “more than anyone dreams of. But you have been a very clever man. You seem to have understood the markets of the world and money has come to you in a thousand ways.”

“Yes it has, but never mind that. Young Gascoigne is a good stenographer, isn’t he? I ask this because the will will be fairly long, and mind, Coad, I want it to be as free from legal technicalities and all that sort of thing as possible. I want it to be written down in good plain English without a lot of those foolish repetitions which only confuse the mind. Now then, get your notebook, young Gascoigne, and take down what I dictate.”

Ben Gascoigne drew his chair closer to Andrew’s side and prepared to write, while the rector listened almost excitedly.

The first part of the will was ordinary enough. Annuities were given to various old servants, bequests were made to a number of charities, while people in whom he had long been interested were remembered.

At the end of this part of the will Andrew stopped.

“Read that aloud,” he commanded.

Young Gascoigne read his notes carefully while Andrew Boconnoc listened attentively.

“That’s practically a repetition of your previous will,” remarked Mr. Coad.

“Is it? That’s all right then. It shows I have not altered my mind in that direction,” and he lifted himself in his chair like one who had determined to do an uncommon thing.

“Not a word about the fund for restoring the Church,” reflected the rector. “What in the world did he ask me to come for?”

“The rest of my property of whatsoever nature I bequeath to my only son Julian,” he announced in slow deliberate tones, “on condition that he be true and faithful to the Protestant religion. I further will that not one penny of my money shall in any way be used for the extension of, or for the support of, that heresy known as Roman-Catholicism. In this connexion I include that bastard movement called Anglo-Catholicism, which I regard as even more detestable and far less honourable than the thing known as Roman-Catholicism.”

The old man stopped here and looked keenly at the lawyer who was listening with evident astonishment.

“I want you to be very careful about the wording of this, Coad,” said old Andrew decisively, “there must not be a possibility of a mistake, not the suggestion of a loophole anywhere, you understand?”

The lawyer nodded.

“If my son Julian,” went on the old man, “joins the Roman Catholic Church, or if he continues to identify himself in any way whatsoever with what are called Anglo-Catholics not one pound of the money I leave behind me shall go to him, neither shall he participate in any way in it. Got that down?” he asked of Ben Gascoigne who with unmoved face recorded Andrew’s words.

“Yes, sir. Let me read what I’ve written.”

Lawyer Coad smiled as the young man read. “What’s the use of such a will?” he reflected. “A coach-and-four can be driven through a thing of that

sort. Once the old man is dead and Julian has taken possession, there's nothing to hinder him from doing what he likes with the money?"

This thought quickly passed from his mind, however, for scarcely had Ben Gascoigne ceased reading than old Andrew gave the lawyer a quick searching glance and went on dictating.

"If my son Julian sees fit to join the Roman Catholic Church or if he continues to identify himself with the Anglo-Catholics he is no longer my heir, and all the property I leave, except such amounts as have been hitherto specified, shall be dealt with in such a way as I shall presently indicate. Furthermore if after my death my son Julian, although not openly professing to be Roman Catholic or to belong to that traitorous crew calling themselves Anglo-Catholics, shall make use of any of the property thus left to him for the extension of, or the support of, the Roman Catholic Church, or this Anglo-Catholic movement, he shall cease to be my heir, and all my property shall be disposed of in such a fashion as shall be indicated elsewhere."

"But—but——" stammered the lawyer, who had been listening with open-eyed wonder.

"Yes, what is it?"

"You surely do not mean this?"

"I do, indeed," replied the old man, and his eyes flashed fiercely. "What have you against it?"

"Oh, nothing at all, but it will be difficult to word it."

"In what way?"

"What's to stop him from doing the very things you say he must not do?" asked the lawyer. "Once you're dead and he's in possession, he could, if he's determined on these things, outwit any will that was ever drawn up. There are all sorts of devious ways by which the wording of such a will can be set aside."

A humorous smile passed over the old man's face. "I fancy I have thought of that," he replied, "but I have no fear."

The lawyer looked puzzled.

"Your work, Coad, will be to see to it as far as you are concerned, that my will in the matter shall be made entirely and overwhelmingly clear. You can do that, I suppose?"

“I can do it as far as my knowledge of the English language will permit me,” replied the lawyer.

“Then do it. When you have done your work come to me again, and I shall read what you have written with the utmost care before I sign anything. I am neither in my dotage nor am I in any doubt as to what I mean to have done.”

“Oh certainly, certainly,” said the lawyer apologetically.

“Are you ready?” continued Andrew, turning towards the young lawyer.

The young man signified assent and the old man went on.

“It is my will,” he declared, in even level tones, “that my son shall be allowed one year, dated from the day of my death, to make up his mind, and that this will shall not come into full operation until that time. During that year he shall have the allowance which I am at present giving him to dispose of as he thinks fit. But mind,” and there was a threat in his voice, “if at the end of twelve months after I am gone, he does not promise to obey the conditions I have stated, not one solitary pound, or the fraction of a pound shall he have.”

The lawyer coughed.

“Yes, what do you want to say, Coad?”

“Isn’t it a bit cruel, Mr. Boconnoc?”

“Cruel! No, it’s kind. I am doing it because I love the lad, because he’s dearer to me than anything else on earth. As I said sometime ago, I want to save him.”

The lawyer looked doubtful.

“He’s got into the grip of those Ritualist fellows at Oxford,” went on Andrew. “Years ago he told me he wanted to be a clergyman. I had no objection to that. Rightly understood it’s an honourable calling, and I was delighted that my only son should wish to give his life and to devote whatever property he possessed to the extension of true Evangelical Christianity; but this bug of Ritualism has entered his life; these Anglo-Catholic fellows have got hold of him; this gang of men who have taken ordination vows in the Church of England, vows by which according to the elementary principles of honour they should stand for the Protestant Faith in England, are now declaring raucously and vulgarly, that the Reformation is a dark and damnable spot in the history of the Church, and they have so far poisoned my boy’s mind that he agrees with them. Would you believe it, he

actually told me that he was willing for his soul to be damned if he could bring England back into union with the Romanists, and that he intended to devote his life to the healing of the breach caused by the Reformation.”

“Evidently he is sincere?” remarked Mr. Coad.

“I suppose Torquemada was sincere when he burned people for not believing in the Mass,” replied the old man. “But I want to save my boy, and it is the only thing I can do to accomplish my purpose.” He started to his feet as he spoke and in a voice which trembled with emotion he went on. “The last years of my married life were blackened by this influence. Unknown to me the priests got hold of my poor wife, and bent her to their will. Poor, simple, sensitive creature, they blinded her, almost drove her out of her mind. They tried to persuade her to deceive me: to be what they termed a secret disciple of the Church. And they nearly did; but not altogether. Her inherent honesty saved her, and she told me. Then unknown to you, unknown to everyone I helped her to fight them, and, thank heaven, the last two years of her life were happy. She got rid of their thralldom, and became free. Now they have got hold of my boy, and the microbe of Romanism is poisoning his life. But I’m going to save him if I can. Do you think,” and he stopped in his slow march round the room, “that I will allow my boy to remain in their grip and his soul be stultified by their machinations without struggling against it? Do you think I will allow my property to be used by such fellows to ruin the nation, to teach us idolatry, and finally drag us into atheism? For that’s what it means. No, no, not one penny of my money shall be used for such a purpose.”

In spite of his being almost carried away by the old man’s words, the lawyer again smiled.

“Yes, yes, I see what’s in your mind,” went on Andrew, answering his look. “As you said just now it’s a difficult will to make; a will through which you can’t drive a coach and horses. But I’m not afraid. Julian is not yet twenty-three and whatever else they have done they have not killed his sense of honour. They might do it in time; but they haven’t done it yet. They couldn’t do it in ten years; that’s why I’m safe.”

“But in what way will such a disposition of your money save him?” asked the lawyer.

“It will give him a shock,” replied the old man sternly. “All his life he has fancied himself a rich man. All his life he has believed that he will be the heir to a big sum of money. And haven’t these Anglo-Catholic fellows known it? Already they have their plans for making use of his fortune.

Already they have it in their minds to see him handing over the money for which old Andrew Boconnoc has laboured for forty years, to the Holy Father of the Church,” and there was infinite scorn in his voice. “But as I said this will will give him a shock. It will make him think; it may make him re-examine his ground. Anyhow it’s the only means I have at my disposal whereby I can save him, and I’m using it. Do you still think I am cruel?”

“Anyhow Mr. Boconnoc, you must admit it is a strange will. I take the liberty of an old friend to speak plainly. Here’s Julian, your only son, and it’s natural that you should leave him the main bulk of your fortune. But you must admit that you insert what many will call an unreasonable condition. Why, think, you make no stipulation except that he shall not support a certain religious body or bodies. He can do anything else with the money. He can gamble it away or he can go to the devil in a thousand other ways. You make no stipulations about that.”

“And why?” broke in the old man vehemently. “Because I know he won’t. I’ve studied my boy’s character, and he has more of his mother in him than of me. He is in no danger of going to the devil by living a vicious life, but he is in danger of stultifying his manhood, of enslaving his soul and advocating what I believe would, if it succeeded, destroy the best life in the country.”

“Of course, if you believe that——” and the lawyer spoke apologetically.

“I not only believe in it, I’m sure of it,” replied Andrew.

“But,” said the lawyer, “you have not yet said what is to become of your wealth provided your son does not fall in with your wishes.”

“No, I’m coming to that; but before I do so I want you, as a lawyer, to clear away some doubts I have in my mind.”

“Why?” asked the lawyer, “will the remainder of your will be as startling as the first?”

“Perhaps more so,” replied old Andrew, smiling grimly.

CHAPTER II

THE SEALED DOCUMENT

Andrew Boconnoc went back to the chair he had occupied while dictating his wishes, and sinking down into it placed his hands over his eyes. He seemed to be thinking deeply.

“Do you think I’m mad, Gascoigne?” he said, turning to the rector to whom he had been paying no attention.

“No,” replied Mr. Gascoigne, slowly; “thinking as you do, your action is, of course, natural.”

“Cruel?” he queried.

“No—o. Perhaps some might say so, but believing what you believe I don’t see how you could do other. I had no knowledge about Mrs. Boconnoc,” he added.

“No, I kept it to myself. How could I tell it to the world? Even now——” he passed his hand over his eyes hastily, “it almost drives me mad. My wife was younger than I, a loving, trustful, sensitive little thing. Of course, those priest fellows knew how I loved her, knew that in the natural course of events I should leave everything to her, and that she would probably out-live me by many years. That was why they regarded her as fair prey. She was artistic, emotional, a good deal of a mystic. That was why she was led away by their blandishments. I need not go into the history of the business. Presently it became a struggle between her love for, and her loyalty to me, and the things which those fellows made her believe were her duty to God. After the fetters by which they had tried to bind her were broken she told me the whole story. I saw that it was my money they were after. But let that pass now; it’s too ghastly to think about, and thank God she saw the truth at last and the last two years of our married life were like heaven. But the struggle broke down her health. The constant battle between what she at that time believed her duty to me, and her duty to God broke her down, crushed her. I saw something was wrong, and I asked her what it was; but for years she would not tell me. They had persuaded her that to disobey them was to disobey God, and so—but there——! Let it pass.”

“I am an old-fashioned Churchman myself,” replied Mr. Gascoigne, “and I hate this Romanist tendency in the Church. I often think that in spite

of the failings of the Church before the Oxford Movement, and in spite of the new activities which that movement is said to have brought into life, we are worse off now than they were then. At least the clergy in those days were men of honour, they were faithful to their vows, and they were gentlemen. Take them man for man, too, I believe the old parish parson did more good than these fellows with their candles and their incense, and their vestments—aping Rome in every way they can.”

“Anyhow we must get on with our work,” went on Andrew, changing the line of conversation. “What I want to ask, Coad, is this. It is my wish that this will shall not come into operation until a year after I am buried. I want the boy to have a chance to make up his mind.”

The lawyer nodded.

“What I want to ask is, need Julian know—in case he does not fall in with my wishes—what is to become of what I shall have to leave?”

The lawyer looked doubtful. “Of course,” he said, “the will will have to be read. Then there’s the probate. After that it becomes public property, and any man by paying a few pence can go to Somerset House and claim the right to examine it.”

Andrew looked doubtful. “Even although it doesn’t come into operation?” he asked.

“I’m afraid so. But tell me what you want to do, and then I shall perhaps be able to explain.”

“I want to do this,” replied Andrew. “I want my boy to know what my decision is. I want him to realize immediately after my death that he has a year wherein to choose whether he will be my heir or whether he will be a pauper. But I don’t want him to know how the bulk of my property is to be disposed of. Now look here, couldn’t there be what we might call a second will, a sealed document if you will, the contents of which must not be made known until a year after my decease?”

The lawyer looked doubtful. “It might be managed,” he said at length, “but of course such a thing is not usual.”

“I don’t care a hang whether it’s usual or not,” replied Andrew. “The question with me is, can it be done?”

“I think it’s possible,” replied Mr. Coad after a long silence, “but to make assurance doubly sure I should like to have counsel’s opinion. What do you say, Gascoigne?” and he turned to Ben who was listening eagerly.

“You are fresh from your examinations and will be better up in that kind of thing than I am.”

“I should say it could be done,” replied Ben. “A man can dispose of his property how he likes; no one can object to it. The death duties would have to be paid in the ordinary way; as for the rest, it seems plain enough.”

“Then in that case,” remarked Mr. Coad, “assuming Julian will not comply with your conditions, the other heir will know nothing about it until a year after your decease?”

“That is so. And that is as I desire it,” replied Andrew.

For a long time they discussed the pros and cons of the situation, and finally young Ben Gascoigne read his notes from beginning to end, while old Andrew Boconnoc listened with a grim sardonic smile on his lips, and yet with a sad look in his eyes.

“That will do,” he said when Ben had finished reading. “How long will it take, Coad, for you to assure yourself of the legality of this business, and to get the thing prepared?”

“Say a week,” replied the lawyer.

A far-away look came into Andrew’s eyes. “A week,” he repeated. “Very well, get to work at once; and mind, Coad, there must be nothing ambiguous, nothing capable of several interpretations. Make it as plain as language can make it.”

“Of course I’ll do that. Let us hope,” he added, “that Julian will be sensible.”

Andrew made no reply for nearly a minute. Then he said slowly: “Coad, I want you to put in at the end of the stipulation that I am making it because next to his mother I love him better than anything else on earth.”

The lawyer nodded to Ben Gascoigne who made a rapid note.

“But surely,” went on Mr. Coad, “it would be better for you to tell him all these things yourself. In a few weeks he will be home and then you can make everything plain to him.”

“No, no,” sighed Andrew. “I have thought of that. I have not studied him for years for nothing, and I am doing what I am doing after long consideration. It may be all in vain, I’m afraid it is, but I feel I can do no other. Besides,”—he sighed like one weary.

The first lunch-bell rang which seemed to wake him out of a deep reverie into which he had fallen. "Why it's a quarter to one," he said, "you must all stay to lunch. And by the way, Gascoigne, I have something I want to say to you. I hear you want to renovate your Church, and I hear too that you want money for your mission down at Dawe Green."

"Yes, I do," replied the rector. "I have for a long time been trying to interest my congregation in renovating St. Mary's. It's one of the finest churches in Yorkshire, but it will fall around our heads if it's not attended to soon. As for Dawe Green, it's the worst part of the town, and I have for a long time been trying to do a little mission work down there, but trade is bad and money is so tight that I haven't dared to ask many people to help me."

"I'm going to write you a cheque for two thousand pounds," said Andrew, "and I'm doing it because I believe you're doing honest work. I want a thousand of it to go to St. Mary's Church, and the other thousand to the mission. I need not tell you that I would not give it had I not known you to be a true believer in the old Protestant Evangelical Christianity."

The rector was profuse in his thanks.

"Mind you," went on Andrew, "I have hesitated a long time before deciding to give you a penny towards your church restoration."

"Why?" asked Mr. Gascoigne.

"Why, because the Church of England is being riddled with Romanism; because although I know the church will not be mis-used while you are rector, I don't know who will be appointed when you are gone. One after another of your bishops are travelling farther and farther towards Rome, and they are taking care that practically all their preferments go to those Ritualistic and Anglo-Catholic rascals who are every day breaking their ordination vows. I can't understand it," went on the old man. "They are supposed to be Englishmen, supposed to be gentlemen, and yet they are daily violating elementary honesty. Much as I hate Romanism I hate this Anglo-Catholic movement more. The Romanists are at least honest, they stand by what they profess; but these Anglo-Catholics are beyond me. They profess to be ministers in the Church of England and they take the vows which the Church of England insists on, and yet they violate them day by day. It isn't common honesty, it isn't common decency—to say nothing of anything else."

"I am afraid I must agree with you," assented Mr. Gascoigne.

“But what can you expect!” cried the old man. “This Ritualistic movement was begun in deceit and lies; for nearly a century the lies have gone on spreading and putrefying until, what they once did covertly and secretly, they are now doing openly. I wonder how they dare stand before a congregation. And the worst of it is our politicians connive at it. Why think of —, an old Evangelical county where practically three-fourths of the people are Methodists, and yet the Authorities give them as their Bishop a fellow who was at the head of a monkery, a forcing house for Rome. I was down there a few weeks ago and I found that the old-fashioned people hate it, rebel against it; but they can do nothing.”

“At any rate, St. Mary’s will not be used for it—at least while I’m alive,” asseverated the rector.

“No, I don’t think it will, Gascoigne. But think of that Lindley fellow at St. Michael’s. A ritualist, a sacerdotalist, a Romanist at heart; and he’s only one of thousands. And it isn’t a layman’s movement. The people don’t want it. It’s a parson’s movement, a movement to undo the work of the Reformation. I’m a plain man, Gascoigne, and personally I care little or nothing about the distinctions between the Evangelical Church of England and the Nonconformists, the line of demarcation is so small; but I do believe in honesty, I do believe in truth. I have lately been reading anew the history of that Oxford Movement, reading the lives and letters of Newman and Pusey, and Froude and Scott and Ward, and the rest of them, and it fairly makes me sick. All of them practically admit that they were liars, admit that they *had* to deceive in order to do their dirty work; and this in the so-called Church of Christ. Well they sowed the seed of lies, and the lies are bearing fruit. Anyhow, God helping me, nothing of mine shall go to bolster up those lies.”

Again the lunch-bell rang and Andrew led the way into the dining-room, the other three following him.

“Well, Gascoigne,” said Mr. Coad an hour later as he and young Ben drove towards Birtwhistle, “what do you think of it?”

“I see the possibilities of a big row,” replied Ben. “I agree with the old man, though.”

“An old bigot,” replied Mr. Coad.

“Perhaps so, but I agree with him all the same.”

“What, in his disinheriting his only son for the sake of a fad?”

“He isn’t disinheriting him,” replied Ben. “Besides, it isn’t a fad to him.”

“Perhaps not, but surely he’s carrying it a bit too far. As you know, my boy Dick is at Oxford and he knows Julian very well. Of course Dick is not in Julian’s crowd, but he speaks of him as a kind of pattern young man.”

“Yes, but isn’t he hand in glove with those so-called Anglo-Catholics?”

“What if he is? Surely a chap should follow his own convictions.”

“Yes, but shouldn’t the old man follow his?” asked Ben. “As you know, Julian and I used to be great pals, but during the last two years a change has come over him. He isn’t frank and straight and honest like he used to be. There’s something covert and sly about him. I haven’t understood it. When we were boys together a straighter chap never lived, but lately we have not been able to hit it off.”

“Why?”

“I can hardly explain. It hasn’t been because of any one particular thing; it has been because of a general point of view. Anyhow, thinking as the old man does, I quite agree with him.”

“In that case,” replied Mr. Coad dryly, “I’ll leave you to draft the will. You’ll have to draw it very carefully; the old chap is as sharp as a needle.”

“Right-o,” replied Ben cheerfully, “I’ll do the best I can. But there, the old man may live for years yet, and possibly he may want to make another one. But, by George, if this comes into effect soon it will make young Julian sit up!”

Meanwhile Mr. Gascoigne was walking slowly towards the rectory. What he had heard during the last few hours had made him very thoughtful. He had not seen much of Julian Boconnoc during the last few years, but more than once he had heard of the young man’s Oxford associations.

“I did not know old Andrew felt so keenly about such things,” he reflected. “I had always regarded him as utterly indifferent to religious matters; but he looks deeper than I had imagined. As for Mrs. Boconnoc—I never dreamt of it.”

“Well, father,” Dinah greeted him, when he reached the rectory, “you have been a long time at Hawkspoint. Fancy your staying to lunch, too. It gave me quite a shock when the old butler telephoned telling me what you were going to do.”

“I expect it was a bit of a surprise,” replied the rector.

“What did he want to see you about?” asked Dinah.

“That, among other things,” replied Mr. Gascoigne, taking Andrew’s cheque from his pocket.

“Two thousand pounds!” gasped the girl. “Why—why, dad——!”

“Yes, two thousand,” repeated the rector. “A thousand for restoring the church and a thousand for the Dawe Green Mission.”

“And you such a Protestant, too!” cried the girl.

“Yes, but what of that?” asked the rector.

“What will Julian say?” asked the girl.

“Most likely he’ll never know.”

“He’ll be awfully angry if he does.”

“Why?”

“He’s as thick as thieves with Father Lindley. During the Christmas vacation he was constantly with him.”

“That might mean nothing,” replied the rector who was careful not to give any hint as to what had taken place that morning. “Father Lindley met Julian at Oxford and they got to know each other very well.”

“Oh, that is not all,” went on the girl. “I’ve never told you about it, I thought it might make you angry, but when I met him one day and we were talking about Father Lindley’s services up at St. Michael’s, he said that it was such as Father Lindley who were saving the Church from the dry rot of Protestantism.”

“Did he say that?” asked the rector.

“He said heaps of that sort of thing,” responded the girl. “I was not much interested in it. It seemed to me of no importance; still I was amused, and just a little bit angry.”

“Angry at what?”

“Oh, he riled me when he said that the ‘Prots,’ as he called them, were a drag on the wheels of the Church, and that England would be accursed—I think that was the term he used—until it was reconciled with the Mother Church. It struck me as curious at the time although I said nothing about it. If he hears that his father has given you all that money he’ll be terribly angry.”

“Perhaps he will,” replied the rector thoughtfully, but he said no more.

Two days later the ministers of various churches in the town opened their eyes wide with astonishment on reading their morning post. Each one of them had received a generous cheque from old Andrew Boconnoc.

A fortnight later the whole town of Birtwhistle was staggered by the news that the owner of Hawkspoint, and the employer of the majority of the people in the town was dead.

CHAPTER III

THE READING OF THE WILL

The funeral of old Andrew Boconnoc was over and the mourners had returned to the house. There had been little or no ceremony. A simple service had been conducted by one of the Nonconformist ministers of the town in the library, while the rector had read the burial service at the graveside.

This was according to old Andrew's desire.

"He went off quick at last," one man remarked as he left the cemetery with a friend.

"Ay, but according to all I 'ear th' owd man expected it," was the reply. "Mr. Parker, the butler, ses as 'ow he gave a good many hints during the last few weeks of his life, that the end was near."

When the last obsequies to the dead had been paid, several men returned to the house. This, according to the information given to each of them, was also among the old man's last expressed wishes. Among these were Lawyer Coad and Ben Gascoigne, who had made Andrew's last will and testament. Both Doctor Brown and Doctor Edwards were likewise present. The rector and the minister who had conducted the service in the house, sat side by side.

But for a certain atmosphere of gloom it might have been a board meeting. A long table had been placed in the room and a number of chairs stood around it. At one end of the table was a young man who, while ill at ease, evidently regarded himself as the host. This was no wonder, for he was Julian Boconnoc, the late owner's only son.

In many respects he had a striking appearance. Unlike his father, his face was cast in a classical mould, and he had the look of an ascetic. He was very pale, and thin almost to emaciation. His hands were almost transparent, and his every movement suggested that he was in a state of high nervous tension. What struck the observer most, however were his eyes. Large, limpid, with wondrous depths, they were the eyes of a mystic. But they suggested other qualities. One could easily imagine him in a monk's cell holding communion with the unseen world; but they told of more than that. There was in them a suggestion of pride, also of stubbornness. It might have been

pride of race, pride also because he believed himself possessed of almost unbounded wealth. That was why, in spite of the look that suggested asceticism, he looked as though he would fight for his own hand, fight to his last breath. He looked little more than a boy, although he was nearly twenty-three years of age. More than one of the little company scanned him curiously. They wondered what he would say and do when the will which they had all come to hear was made known.

For no one save Lawyer Coad and young Ben Gascoigne was cognizant of its full details. Julian Boconnoc knew nothing of its conditions. He had been given to understand that, ten years before, his father had made a will making him practically the sole heir of his vast wealth, but he knew also that another will had lately been made and of the terms of this he was entirely ignorant.

On his return home, immediately after the news of his father's death, he had sent for Lawyer Coad, and had questioned him closely, but the lawyer had been as non-committal as the Sphinx.

"My instructions are that the will is not to be opened nor its contents made known until after the funeral," replied the lawyer, and he said it in such a way that Julian had perforce to be silent.

When he was told of the people who would be present at the reading of the will, he objected.

"Why should these fellows be here?" he asked somewhat haughtily. "Of course, I can understand that you and perhaps Ben Gascoigne should be present, but why should the doctors hear everything, and above all why should the rector and that Nonconformist fellow be admitted at such a time?"

"Your father's strict injunctions," replied the lawyer.

"But now that my father is dead surely I am master here, and I can say who shall, and who shall not be present in my house."

"I think it will be wise to wait until the will is read," replied Mr. Coad.

"What do you mean by that?" and the look of pride in his eyes asserted itself.

"I am only carrying out your father's instructions, and I think it will be wise for us all to fall in with them without question."

With this Julian had to agree, although he evidently resented it strongly.

By his side, at the end of the table, sat a masterful-looking cleric. He was attired in a monkish-looking garb and wore a leather girdle round his waist. He had come to Hawkspoint on the previous day, and since his arrival the two had spent much time together. The stranger's stronger personality appeared to dominate that of Julian entirely, and as he sat by the young man's side he seemed to have an air of authority as though he were master of the situation. No one knew exactly who he was. He had been introduced as the Reverend Father Fakenham, and Mr. Gascoigne had whispered to Mr. Gray, the minister at his side, that he believed he was at the head of an institution for preparing candidates for Holy Orders.

"If it is he," added Mr. Gascoigne, "I should not be surprised if there's trouble. He's an Anglo-Catholic of the most pronounced order. Some say he has been admitted into the Church of Rome, and is acting under her instructions; but of course I can't vouch for that. Anyhow, he is one of those extreme Anglo-Catholic fellows who is working heart and soul to bring our church under the dominion of Rome."

He might have had a proprietary right in Julian. The young man seemed to consult him about everything, while the older man appeared to be constantly giving instructions as to what he ought to do.

When they had all taken their seats at the table there was an awkward silence. The uncertainty in which everything was shrouded caused Julian to be nervous, and ill at ease, while Mr. Coad, knowing what he did know, hesitated to begin what he felt sure would be a painful duty. He nervously fingered the legal-looking documents which he had placed on the table before him, and looked somewhat helplessly from one to the other.

On seeing this, Father Fakenham rose to his feet. "I'm aware," he said, speaking rather in the tones of an autocratic schoolmaster than in those of a stranger, "that my name is not mentioned among those who were asked to be present here on this occasion; but I am here at the request of my young friend at my side who now naturally takes his place as the head of this house. It is as his friend, and most intimate adviser, that I have come. I merely mention this to make matters plain. We have returned here, I believe, to hear the last will and testament of my young friend's late father, and I see that the limbs of the Law," this he said with what was evidently meant for a smile, "are ready for their work."

After this he sat down with the air of a man who had given the lawyer instructions what to do.

“This will,” said Mr. Coad, who was evidently slightly nettled at the tone adopted by Father Fakenham, “was made three weeks ago. It was drawn up by myself and my assistant after receiving the most minute instructions from the late Andrew Boconnoc. The final draft which I hold in my hand was carefully read by the deceased gentleman and duly approved. He also signed it in the presence of competent witnesses.”

“Of course, we assume that,” broke in Father Fakenham; “at least, we assume that the will was duly drawn up, and duly signed, and witnessed. Pray proceed.”

Julian Boconnoc, who had not spoken to anyone save Father Fakenham since returning from the funeral, might have been a little chagrined at the course events were taking. He looked round the table as if wondering what those present were thinking of the attitude which Father Fakenham had adopted. A faint flush arose to his cheeks, and he tapped the table a little impatiently.

The lawyer commenced to read.

During the early part of the document a dead silence prevailed, although it caused little or no excitement. The fact that this and that servant should receive annuities from a grateful employer, or that this and that institution, or person, should be remembered, was quite natural, and proper. Besides, when all the amounts were added together they were not a tithe of the old man’s wealth. It was when the lawyer came to the part of the will wherein the main bulk of Andrew Boconnoc’s estate was dealt with that the real interest commenced.

“‘The rest of my property of whatever nature . . . I bequeath to my only son Julian,’” read the lawyer. He hesitated a few seconds, and as if by common consent the eyes of all present were fixed on the young man who had been listening breathlessly to every word. More than one saw the look of satisfaction on his face, and heard the trembling sigh that escaped his lips. It was a sigh of relief, a sigh almost amounting to a sob; but it was a sob of triumph. Each saw, too, the peculiar look on Father Fakenham’s face, a look not easy to interpret. Mr. Gascoigne said afterwards that it made him think of Bishop Bonner.

“‘. . . On condition that he be true and faithful to the Protestant religion. . . .’”

“What’s that!” gasped Father Fakenham. “What’s that! Read it again.”

The lawyer took no notice of the interruption, but went on in the same even, level tones. And here he read the words which, had the will been drawn up in the ordinary way, would not have occurred. Andrew had insisted that the terms he had dictated to Ben Gascoigne should appear exactly as he had uttered them. . . .

“I further will that not one penny of my money shall in any way be used for the extension of, or for the support of, that heresy known as Roman-Catholicism. In this connexion I include that bastard movement called Anglo-Catholicism which I regard as even more detestable, and far less honourable, than the thing known as Roman-Catholicism.”

“I might say,” explained Mr. Coad, “that the deceased gentleman insisted on these very words. He said he wanted his son to understand without any possible doubt what his feelings on this matter were.”

The expression of triumph which all had seen on Father Fakenham’s face a minute before disappeared like magic as the lawyer spoke. Instead there was angry astonishment, defiance, almost malignancy expressed. As for Julian, although he spoke no word, his face became as pale as paper and his hands shook as they rested on the table.

The lawyer continued to read. Evidently both he and Ben Gascoigne had been true to their promise to leave no possibility of a mistake or misinterpretation.

“But this is monstrous!” asserted Father Fakenham in a hoarse whisper. “It is an outrage!”

The lawyer still went on as though the man had not spoken. His tone of voice did not change. . . .

“‘If my son Julian,’—and these are the exact words on which the deceased gentleman insisted strongly,” explained the lawyer, “‘joins the Roman Catholic Church, or if he continue to identify himself in any way whatever with what are called Anglo-Catholics, not one pound of the money I leave behind me shall go to him, neither shall he participate in any way in it . . .’” The lawyer read on, every line confirming, safeguarding and strengthening what had gone before. . . .

“‘Furthermore, if after my death my son Julian, although not openly professing to be Roman Catholic, or to belong to that traitorous crew calling themselves Anglo-Catholics, shall, directly or indirectly, make use of any of the property left to him for the extension of or the support of the Roman Catholic Church or the so-called Anglo-Catholic movement he shall cease to

be my heir, and all my property shall be disposed of in such fashion as shall be mentioned elsewhere.’ ”

By this time Julian Boconnoc had mastered himself. He had slowly recovered from the blow he had received. There was a fighting light in his large liquid eyes, his lips had become firmly pressed, and his hands, which had trembled on the table, had now become clenched.

“This is monstrous!” repeated Father Fakenham. “It is fiendish, it’s—it’s _____”

“Please go on, Mr. Coad,” broke in Julian. “Go on to the end, and please let no one interrupt.”

There was a latent strength in his character which seemed to have asserted itself, and the priest at his side became silent.

The lawyer obeyed, and slowly and distinctly he read the remainder of the document.

“But this is not legal!” gasped Father Fakenham. “It would not stand in a court of law. Of course,” turning to Julian, “you will contest it?”

“I took counsel’s opinion, one of the ablest lawyers in the country,” replied the lawyer, “and he declared without hesitation that there was no doubt as to its legality.”

“Then the testator was mad at the time,” persisted the priest. “No sane man would have conceived or signed such a document.”

Mr. Coad looked towards the two doctors at this juncture as if asking them to speak.

Doctor Brown, the older of the two, immediately arose.

“I think I ought to mention here,” he said, “that I have known the deceased gentleman for nearly thirty years. I was also asked to come here on the day he dictated this will. I could swear in a court of law that I have no doubt whatever, no possible shadow of doubt, as to his sanity.”

Doctor Brown sat down and nodded towards Doctor Edwards.

“I also knew the late Andrew Boconnoc for many years,” said that gentleman, “and I, together with Doctor Brown, was present in this room just before he dictated the will to which we have just listened. Neither Doctor Brown nor myself knew anything as to what was in his mind, but concerning his sanity there could be only one opinion. He was as sane and in as complete possession of his faculties as any man in England.”

For more than a minute Father Fakenham remained silent, while Julian Boconnoc sat staring into vacancy. He looked what he felt, bewildered, angry, distracted.

Presently the priest whispered to Julian and seemed to be insisting on something. Apparently the instructions given did not agree with the young man's inclinations, but after a time he nodded his assent.

"I suppose there is nothing more to be said," he remarked, rising to his feet. "We have met here according to my late father's instructions, the will has been read, and its contents made known. That being so, I see no reason for detaining you gentlemen any longer. Of course," he added, "I shall be glad if Mr. Coad, who is responsible for the will, will remain for a time. Perhaps Ben Gascoigne will also stay," he added, nodding to his old schoolfellow.

"I am at your disposal," replied Mr. Coad, "and perhaps you will remember that Mr. Gascoigne is, under the will, one of the trustees."

"Although that is true," remarked the rector, "I see no reason why I should remain. If at any time I can be of any service I, with my co-trustees, can be easily got at. I wish you good day."

The rector moved towards the door as he spoke. Doubtless he was a little annoyed that the boy whom he had known from childhood should, at the dictum of a stranger, practically ask him to leave the house. He was quickly followed by the others, and a little later only Julian, Father Fakenham, and the two lawyers remained.

"Speaking for my young friend," remarked the priest, "I should like to go more closely into this matter. A stranger, madder, more unfair will was never made, and——"

"Pardon me," interrupted Mr. Coad, "but I am afraid it does not fall within my province to discuss that matter with you. If Mr. Julian Boconnoc, as the only person concerned, wishes to ask me any question, I will do my best to answer him."

"But I am Mr. Boconnoc's intimate friend and adviser," persisted the priest.

"Pardon me," replied Mr. Coad, "but I speak as a lawyer, and I have no authority whatever to discuss matters with anyone but the late Andrew Boconnoc's son." Mr. Coad resented the man's arrogant interference; resented his masterful attitude towards Julian. He was an old-fashioned churchman himself, and although he had not altogether sympathized with

the disposition of Andrew's money or with the conditions made, he resented anything like priestly authority.

Father Fakenham could not help but understand the lawyer's words, and although he was evidently angry, he could not openly interfere any further. But there was a scowl on his face, and as he walked towards the window and looked out over the widespread park, his mind was evidently full of opposing schemes.

"Of course, you realize, Mr. Coad," said Julian, "that this is a great blow to me?"

The lawyer nodded.

"Indeed, I don't know where I am," went on the young man. "Everything is confusing, bewildering."

"Both young Mr. Gascoigne and myself exercised all our knowledge of the English language to make everything plain," was the lawyer's reply.

"Look here," and for a moment Julian appeared to become more his old natural self, more like the boy Ben Gascoigne had known years before, "this is a knock-out blow, and although as you say you have tried to make everything plain, it is all so beastly staggering, so abominably unfair, that I hardly know whether I am on my head or my heels. Draw up your chairs to the fire and let's talk it out." He suited the action to the word, and a minute later he was seated in the chair in which his father sat and dictated the will only a few weeks before.

"Let's have a look at the thing," he said. "Let me read it for myself."

"Here is a copy," said the lawyer, passing it to him. "The original I am instructed to keep."

Again an angry light flashed in Julian's eyes, but he spoke no word. Taking the will he read it carefully from beginning to end. Now and then he paused as if failing to understand something, and then, having grasped its meaning, went on again. As he did so the priest returned to his side.

When he came to the part that told him that it was because his father loved him so dearly that he insisted on the conditions he had felt it his duty to insert, his lips trembled, and he passed the back of his right hand quickly over his eyes. Then, as he reached those parts which declared him to be disinherited if he failed to comply with the conditions laid down, his eyes became hard, and his lips compressed.

“It seems to me,” he said at length, “that even this house is not mine, that I have no right to be here?”

“It is for you to decide,” said the lawyer.

“How can I decide?”

“It’s plainly written in the will.”

“But I’ll not be untrue to my convictions for all the money in the world,” he declared angrily. “Did my father think that he could buy me? That I would lose my soul for the sake of—of——.” He ceased speaking, and again a far-away look came into his eyes.

The lawyer was silent, while Ben Gascoigne watched his old schoolfellow’s face as though he were fascinated.

“May I ask,” and here Father Fakenham broke in, “through you, of course, my young friend, seeing that your legal adviser is so meticulous, whether this will was a sudden impulse on the part of the late Mr. Boconnoc?”

“No,” replied the lawyer, “it was no sudden impulse. He had been thinking it over for a long time. His son knew of his feelings concerning the line of action he proposed to take.”

“Yes, yes, my father was a bigot,” broke in Julian. “He hated the Catholic Faith. He hated any endeavour to let the light shine on this benighted land. He preferred the dry rot of Protestantism, which is no religion at all, to the true Faith of the Catholic Church. But this—I never dreamt of this.”

“I should say,” went on the lawyer, “that he left me a document to give to you. He wrote it with his own hand; wrote it, I think, at the cost of great pain to himself. It was after he had signed the will, and he was anxious for you to read it under conditions which he specially stipulated.”

“What conditions?” Father Fakenham asked.

“Conditions which I will explain to Mr. Boconnoc in private,” replied the lawyer. “It has nothing whatever to do with the will, or with the disposition of his property,” he added.

The priest looked at the young man questioningly, searchingly. He seemed to be trying to catch his eye, and he might have been calculating as to how much power he had over him.

Julian Boconnoc gave a quick glance at the lawyer and then went on. "But tell me, Mr. Coad, in plain words, just where I am."

"I can't tell you more plainly than it's written," replied the lawyer. "You have a year wherein to make up your mind. During that time the allowance which has hitherto been given you will be continued. This house will be your home, and, as I read, a certain and sufficient sum is set apart for its upkeep. If at the end of that time you solemnly promise that you adhere faithfully to the Protestant religion then you will be complete master here, and you will have your father's fortune."

"I can never do that! Never—never!" asserted Julian. "It would be signing away my birthright. It would be denying my God."

"You have a year to consider anyhow," replied the lawyer. "A year to consider and decide."

"And who is the person, or persons, to whom everything will go provided I do not agree to the conditions?"

The lawyer shook his head. "Naturally, that is all set forth in the sealed document to which reference has been made."

"May one ask," broke in the priest again, "and, of course, I ask through Julian, if Mr. Coad can tell us, approximately of course, the value of the estate which the late Mr. Boconnoc left?"

"Do you wish me to answer that?" and the lawyer turned to Julian.

The young man nodded a little impatiently. It might seem that the priest's attitude was becoming irksome.

"Of course, I can't tell you exactly," replied Mr. Coad. "Money has changed in value during these last few years, and of course Mr. Boconnoc's interests were so wide and so varied that it is next to impossible to name anything like an exact sum which would indicate their worth, but judging as far as I am able I should say that the estate is worth at least two million pounds."

Father Fakenham gave a gasp of astonishment. "Great heavens! so much!" he ejaculated.

"That, at least," replied the lawyer coolly; "possibly, probably far more. Mr. Boconnoc largely dominated the woollen market. He owned not only several of the largest mills in Birtwhistle but others in various parts of Yorkshire. He also had large interests in the shipping world, and the railway

world. He owned more than one colliery, while during the last twenty years of his life he bought several valuable estates.”

“And yet I am a pauper!” gasped Julian.

“It is for you to say,” replied the lawyer.

Ben Gascoigne looked at Father Fakenham’s face, and noted the look in his eyes. He saw greed and cupidity there. He saw visions not of personal gain but the enrichment of institutions which he, the priest, had at heart. It was then that Ben was sure that old Andrew Boconnoc had been right when he said that Julian’s soul was not the primary motive in the endeavour to persuade him to leave the faith of his fathers.

“I don’t care how much it is,” remarked Julian. “My father may have owned half England for all I care. Money as money I care nothing about.”

“Your father may have known that,” said the lawyer pointedly.

Again silence fell between them. Julian seemed to be thinking of the tremendous alternative which lay before him, while Father Fakenham watched him as a cat might watch a mouse.

Presently the lawyer rose from his chair. “There is nothing further you wish to say to me, is there?” he asked.

“I seem to have a host of things that I want to discuss with you, but I can’t,” replied the young man. “I’m too bewildered. The whole day has been one long shock, and I can see nothing in its true perspective. Must you go?—I’m sure there are heaps of things I want to say to you—to ask you about. Perhaps I shall think of them later on. If so you will be within call, won’t you?” He accompanied them into the hall as he spoke, and presently found himself alone with Ben Gascoigne.

“Isn’t it ghastly, Ben?” he said, as the two stood bareheaded outside the house.

“What’s ghastly?”

“Oh, everything. Fancy, I have to choose whether I’ll be a millionaire or a pauper!”

“I thought you had made up your mind,” replied Ben with a nervous laugh. “I thought you regarded your religious convictions as beyond all question and beyond all discussion.”

“My head is buzzing old man,” replied Julian. “I can’t think, I can’t weigh values. The thing seems to have brought me to my haunches. Here

was I, just on the point of taking Holy Orders, and——”

“There’s no stipulation that you shan’t take Holy Orders,” replied Ben. “Your father had no objection to your being a clergyman of the Church of England.”

“Yes, but can’t you see?—my eyes have been opened about that. Besides, I’ve taken a vow that I’ll give all I am and have to restoring our church to communion with her Holy Mother.”

“Well, and what then?” asked Ben.

“I did not want to go with empty hands,” replied the youth. “I wanted to take a dowry with me. I wanted to——but there, what sympathy can you have with me? To you one faith is as good as another.” There was a fanatic’s light in his eyes as he spoke, and his voice trembled with suppressed passion.

“I’m afraid I never trouble much about creeds and that sort of thing,” replied Ben. “I hope I’m a straight decent sort of chap. I go to church, too, and take the Communion from my father, but I don’t see much difference between our church and that of the other Protestant churches in the town.”

“There *is* no difference; they are *all* heretic bodies,” cried Julian passionately, “all of them,” and now he took hold of Ben’s arm and the two walked down the drive side by side. “How is Dinah?” he asked suddenly, as though the thought had just entered his mind.

“Just as usual,” replied Ben, astonished at the sudden change of topic. “Dinah is as gay as a lark and as mischievous as she always was.”

“I say, Ben,” and he seemed to take no notice of the other’s words, “I’m in an awful funk, just awful. Won’t you come to see me to-night? Come up to dinner.”

“I’d love to,” replied Ben—“if you want me.”

“I do want you, I’m—but you can’t understand. This is an awful knock-out blow.”

“I’ll come like a shot,” replied Ben, “but will Father Fakenham be here?”

“I’ll get him off to bed. Anyhow you come—7.30 to-night prompt.”

Julian hurried back to the house to find Mr. Coad on the doorstep.

“Here’s the letter your father told me to give you,” said the lawyer, handing him a package.

“You said something about—conditions,” stammered Julian.

“Yes, your father instructed me to tell you that he did not wish you to discuss it with anyone until twenty-four hours after you had read it.”

“But why?” asked the young man wonderingly.

“I don’t know, but your father always had a reason for everything he did. He particularly insisted on it. You know my telephone number if you want me. I shall be at my office all this afternoon, and all day to-morrow.”

The lawyer looked as though he would like to have said more, but refrained; he felt the restraint which the day’s proceedings had caused.

Julian Boconnoc again entered the house and walked across the entrance-hall like a man in a dream. He stood at the library door as if with the intention of going in, but checked himself. Then, looking at the packet he held in his hand, he made his way slowly upstairs and entered his bedroom.

CHAPTER IV

FATHER FAKENHAM

“I thought you wanted to be alone,” said Father Fakenham. “That is why I have not disturbed you. You have had much to think about.”

Julian did not reply. He still seemed like one in a dream.

“I saw the lawyer give you a document,” went on the priest. “I suppose it was the letter he spoke to you about?”

Julian nodded.

The priest looked at him intently as though trying to read his thoughts. He wondered whether it would be wise for him to ask what were the contents of the letter.

The great house was strangely silent. It was now past five o'clock in the afternoon, and for the past three hours Julian had been alone.

“You will want to discuss the whole situation with me,” said Father Fakenham presently. “You are placed in a difficult position.”

“I hardly feel up to discussing anything,” replied the young man. “My mind is confused, I don't see anything clearly.”

“One thing is plain, anyhow.”

“Yes, what is that?”

“Your duty to God,” replied the priest.

“Yes, that's plain.”

“Let us sit down,” said the older man. “As you know, I look upon you as a son. Under God, as you have confessed again and again, I have been able to lead you into the light. I have shown you the rule of duty.”

“Yes, but I did not think it would be so hard, so terribly hard. Father Fakenham. These things have a stronger hold on me than I had imagined. I thought I did not care; but I *do* care.”

Again the priest looked at the young man intently. He seemed to be wondering what was the next best step to take.

“You have read the letter?” he said presently.

“Yes.”

“It was from your father?”

“They were the last lines he ever wrote,” and his lips trembled. “He must have written them in great pain and weariness.”

“You will want to tell me about it.”

Julian hesitated. “Not yet,” he said presently.

“But, my son——”

“Not yet,” repeated Julian. “It was my father’s wish, his express command, that I should not discuss what he had written with anyone until twenty-four hours after I had read it.”

“But why?”

Julian was silent.

For more than a minute neither spoke. Julian, seated in his father’s chair, was looking steadily into the fire, the older man thinking deeply.

“The time has come for plain-speaking,” said Father Fakenham at length. “As I said just now, I regard you as a son, a spiritual son. For more than two years I have been your guide, and as you have more than once said, I have led you to the light. I am sure you will remember that when listening to what I am going to say. You have come to a crisis in your life, a tremendous crisis. I know that in spite of everything, natural affections are strong, and although you have opposed your father’s will for years, the laws of nature have a strong hold on you. For that reason you may feel like resenting what I am going to say; but I must speak to you as your father in God.”

Julian still sat looking into the fire. He heard the solemn voice of the priest, but the expression on his face did not alter.

“Your father was only your father in the flesh,” went on the priest, “therefore, although his claims may be strong, the claims I represent are stronger. Besides, your father was outside the Covenant of Grace when he died.”

Julian gave a start. In spite of himself the words wounded him. Almost angrily he said, “He was a good father to me.”

“While you did not oppose his carnal wishes,” was the reply. “But directly you did, what then? Yes, I must speak plainly, much as I may hurt

you. Put it as mildly as I may, your father acted in ignorance of the truth and therefore as an enemy to God. As I said, he was outside the Covenant of Grace, and now, while God's mercy is infinite, he is suffering the punishment which is his due. Of course, you will have masses said for his soul?"

Julian did not reply; his mind seemed far away.

"I can't help shuddering as I think of his end," went on Father Fakenham. "It was true he acted in ignorance, but surely it was culpable ignorance, an ignorance fostered and encouraged by the Evil One."

"I would much rather you did not discuss my father just now," Julian replied.

"But I must. After what we have seen and heard to-day, how can I help it? Did he have a priest of God near him when he died? No, he sternly forbade their presence. Did he receive the last consolations of the Church? Did he receive the Sacraments? No. Father Lindley or Father O'Brien, the only two real priests in this atheistic town, were not allowed to come near him. Think of the mockeries of to-day. I had difficulty in remaining silent. A heretic Nonconformist man conducted what he called a service in this room, while the rector of the parish participated in it. Then think of the performance at the graveside. Were the rites of the Church, as we understand them, in any way recognized? The whole thing was a mockery."

"But I could not help that, Father," replied Julian. "My father left express instructions for everything. I could not interfere with them."

"Oh, I'm not blaming you for these things, my son, but I can't help referring to them, especially in view of what followed."

"You mean the will?"

"It was an outrageous will, a sinful will; it was an abomination in the sight of God. It was conceived in a pit of lies. It was embittered by spleen. It must have been inspired by the Evil One. But there it is. It was declared to be in accordance with the laws of England. However, we will speak of that presently. But you can surely see for yourself that it is not only vilely unfair, but it strikes at the root of everything we hold most sacred. According to the lawyer's reading of it you are foully robbed, unrighteously disinherited. None but a man outside the Covenant of Grace, and hating the will of God, could have conceived such a thing."

Julian started to his feet. "Father Fakenham!" he exclaimed.

“Sit down!” commanded the priest. “I speak these words not to hurt you, but that we may face facts, that we may see our way out of what appears to be a horrible pit. . . .

“Your father is now in the Spirit world. Could he again dictate his will he would dictate it differently; he has learnt the truth by this time; but we have to deal with hard material facts just as they are. Listen, my son. More than a year ago you joined our Most Holy Society, the society of which I am Master. I need not remind you that the object of that society is to bring about the corporate reunion of the poor, bleeding, lacerated Church of England with the Church of Rome. You know as well as I that it is one of those societies which is the outcome of the Oxford Movement founded by Father Newman. For many years all these societies worked in secret. In those days Protestantism was aggressive, blatant, almost all-powerful, but those days are gone. We can now lift our heads and speak more and more plainly. What, back in Victorian days, we had to utter in secret, and with bated breath, we now proclaim boldly. It is we who have the upper hand now,” and there was almost a savage snarl in his voice. “To-day, the Evangelical party in the Church of England, the Protestant party, is but a mere tithe of the whole Church. As far as the clergy are concerned it is the Evangelicals who have to apologize, while we go from strength to strength. Still our work is far from being done. The great bulk of the laity is against us. It is true our bishops are becoming more and more Catholic, and prime ministers are more and more playing into our hands. It is the best policy for them to adopt. By that means parishes are becoming more and more under Catholic influence. When a Protestant incumbent dies, most of our bishops see to it that—a Catholic takes his place. Still the laity, as a whole, are against us. They still adhere to the dry bones of Protestantism. Nevertheless, our work is progressing, and in a few years there is every promise that we shall have such power that we can go to Rome petitioning that we may be received into our Holy Mother the Church.

“To this great work you have set your hand. Even although you are not yet in Holy Orders, you have been received as a lay member of our society. You have promised to obey its statutes; you have promised to give all that you have, and all that you are, to bring back the Church of England to the Church of Rome.”

“Yes, that is so,” replied Julian. “You led me so far into the light that I gladly promised to do that.”

“And now think of this will,” went on Father Fakenham. “By every word, by every line, your father has tried to make it impossible for you to

use the wealth, which is rightfully yours, in the service of God.”

“Tried!” repeated Julian, “tried! He has done it. There is nothing ambiguous, nothing capable of misinterpretation.”

The priest held up his hand. “We will come to that presently,” he said. “Who inspired that will? Did God inspire it? Then if God did not inspire it, who did? There is malignancy, fiendishness in every line. Who was at the back of that malignancy and fiendishness? Was God? To admit so much would be blasphemy.”

A silence fell between them, a silence that grew painful as the minutes passed. Outside, although the day was dying, the birds chirped to greet the coming spring. Inside, the old eight-day clock ticked solemnly; the room, book-lined as it was, looked dark and sombre.

“Julian, my son,” the priest broke the silence, “you and I with many others of the Faithful have set ourselves apart to frustrate the works of the Devil. You and I have vowed that England, which is lying in the darkness of Protestantism, shall be led into the light of the true Faith; you and I have bound ourselves to fight schism. To do this we have to use whatever weapons may fall to our hands. Is not that so?”

Julian, although he did not look at the priest’s face, nodded his assent.

“One of our most powerful weapons,” went on Father Fakenham, “is money. If it is used for ourselves, and for our own pleasure, it is, as the Holy Apostle Paul says, ‘the root of all evil’; but used for God it can be a powerful instrument in pulling down strongholds of Satan. You, by that infamous will, have been robbed of a powerful weapon which God intended to be placed in your hands.”

“Yes, yes, I know; but the will is made; it’s signed and sealed; nothing can upset it. Sir James Macintyre, the counsel whose opinion Mr. Coad took, is one of the ablest lawyers in the land. The will is legal, it can’t be set aside.”

The priest smiled. “Is there not an old adage which says: ‘Any stick is good enough to beat the devil’?” he asked.

“I can’t see what that has to do with it,” replied Julian.

“In the past,” went on Father Fakenham calmly, “the Church has been obliged to commit even what some would call murder for the good of the Faith. Wasn’t the Holy Inquisition conceived and carried out for the good of the Church?”

“I can’t see what you’re driving at,” replied Julian. “Whatever opinion we may have about the will, it exists; it is worded with the utmost care; it leaves no loophole of escape. It declares that if I am not a Protestant, that if I do not disown Roman-Catholicism in every form, or Anglo-Catholicism in any form, I am disinherited, that not one penny of my father’s wealth will come to me.”

“What *is* Protestantism, my son?”

“Do *you* ask that, Father?”

“I do ask it. What *is* Protestantism? Is it not a word which has many interpretations?”

“But that would not be honest!” gasped Julian. “If I understand your meaning aright it would be a lie, and I should be a living lie.”

“Be calm, my son, and let us think calmly. During the time you have been up in your room I have been thinking, thinking carefully. I have been weighing the pros and cons of the whole situation. *What is honesty?* Is there any sufficient definition of the word? Think. I am a clergyman of the Church of England. I took my ordination vows; I vowed to be faithful to what is known as the Thirty-Nine Articles. I promised to maintain the principles of what is known as the Protestant Reformed Church of England. And yet for more than twenty years I have been working secretly, assiduously to undermine the principles of that Church. I have accepted with all my heart what its Articles denounce as the abominations of Rome. I am trying day by day to bring the Church of England back to the Church of Rome. Is that honest? According to my calling as a clergyman of the Church of England, I assert that there are only two sacraments and that the other five which Rome insists on are a mockery, and yet, with all my heart, I accept all the sacraments of the Church of Rome. Is that honest? I have again and again been accused of dishonesty by the so-called faithful adherents to the Church of England. I have been denounced as a traitor to the vows I took. But what then? *Is there not a higher honesty than that which can be expressed in mere words?* Is there not something diviner than quibbling about the mere *letter* of the truth? Think, my son: you hope to take Holy Orders in the Protestant Reformed Church of England, and you will be expected to remain faithful to your vows. But do you not all the time intend to do all that’s in your power to destroy everything which even savours of Protestantism?”

“But—but——” stammered Julian.

“Think, my son: do you think it would be to the glory of God if we could bring England back to the true Church?”

“It is God’s will that it shall be,” was the young man’s reply.

“Do you not long for the Church of England to be re-united with Rome?”

“I would give all I have and am to help it forward.”

“Then go a step farther. Do you not believe it would be the Devil’s work to try to hinder such a glorious consummation?”

“You know I believe that, Father!”

“Exactly. Then go a step farther still. Is it not our duty to fight the works of the Devil, to seek to nullify his malign plans?”

“Still, I do not see what——”

“Never mind whether you can see or cannot see how this bears upon our present situation. I am asking you a plain question. Is it not our duty in every way to fight the Devil?”

“Of course it is.”

“Exactly. Now then listen. Here is a will inspired by the Evil One. It is intended to rob you of your power to do the will of God. Isn’t it your duty to fight the Devil with his own weapons?”

“But how can I do it?”

“The will declares that your father bequeathed to you, with the exception of a few trifling sums, the whole of his vast wealth.”

“On condition that I am a Protestant,” ejaculated Julian quickly.

“A Protestant; exactly. But again I say, what *is* a Protestant? Do you not protest against evil, against false doctrine? Therefore, would it not be according to the will of God to use what should be rightfully yours, and *would* be rightfully yours but for the wiles of the Devil, to extend the one and only true Church?”

“But that would be lies! it would be wrong, foully wrong.”

“Even although you are extending the Kingdom of God by doing so?” asked the priest. “Again I ask, *is there not a higher honesty?* Is there not a higher truth than that conceived by man? Let me put it in this way. Do you

believe that the work commenced by Cardinal Newman in 1833 was of God or of the Devil?"

"Of God, doubtless."

"Do you believe that Newman was right in starting at that time what was called the Tractarian Movement, and which has since been called the Oxford Movement?"

"Undoubtedly."

"And do you believe that those who worked with him were holy men?"

"It would be madness to deny it."

"Men like Father Newman, Father Pusey, Father Faber; men like the Reverend William George Ward, the author of 'The Ideal of a Christian Church'?"

"Every one of them was a man of God," cried Julian fervently.

"Exactly; *and yet every one of them was obliged to do what men called evil, that good might come. They had to deceive in order that truth might prevail. They had to prevaricate so that they might overcome the Devil.* But mind, nothing was done selfishly; nothing was done for their own gain or for their own glory. All these things were done only that God's will might be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven. Shall we call ourselves wiser than they? It is a well-known fact that Newman, even while he was convinced of the truth of the Catholic Church, both preached and wrote most strongly and bitterly against Rome. Why did he do it? Because he believed that thereby he could better serve the Faith. Within three months of his founding the Tractarian Movement he published his work on 'The Arians of the Fourth Century,' and he quotes with approval the advice given by Clement of Alexandria. What was that advice? I have been browsing among your father's books this afternoon, and I found the very book to which I have referred. Here is the advice given to the Alexandrian Fathers. Now listen—'He both thinks and speaks the truth *except when careful treatment is necessary, and then as a physician for the good of his patients, he will lie, or rather utter a lie, as the Sophists say. . . . Nothing, however, but his neighbour's good will lead him to do this. He gives himself up for the Church.*' "

"Did Newman approve of that?" asked Julian, astonished.

"Most strongly he did. In fact, the Oxford Movement is founded on what was termed the Economical mode of teaching and arguing. Call it Jesuitical

if you like, or call it the Doctrine of Reserve; the underlying meaning is the same. Those holy men acted in secret; they did and said many things which were *intended to deceive the world*, not for themselves, not for their own gain or glory; they did and said them that the truth might prevail. Did not our Blessed Lord say to His disciples, ‘There are many things I would say unto you, but ye cannot bear them yet’? It was on that principle that Newman and his friends acted.”

“But that is blasphemy!” cried Julian. “That passage, on the face of it _____”

“Silence!” said the priest sternly. “Who is most likely to be right? A stripling like you or holy men such as they? The whole High Church Movement, which was the outcome of Father Newman’s work, begun in 1833, would have been impossible but for those very Doctrines of Reserve and Economy. They had to *pretend to be something which they were not*; had to pretend to believe in things which they hated, in order to carry on their work. But there was no selfishness in their actions. Everything was done for the sake of the higher truth. *They sacrificed the lower truth, that the higher truth might prevail*. They admitted that they had to do things in a corner, admitted that, like the Holy Apostle, they caught men by guile. Doctor Pusey wrote against Popery. Why? Simply that thereby he might the more easily persuade people to become Catholics. Here is an extract from a letter which he wrote to a friend and which is contained in Volume One of ‘The Life of Pusey.’ *‘I suspect we might thus have people with us instead of against us, and that they might find themselves Catholics before they were aware.’* Can anything be plainer than that?”

A look of astonishment, almost of terror, came into Julian’s eyes. It was easy to see that he was influenced by the priest’s words; that his sophistry almost carried him away. So bewildered was he that he could not see an answer to Father Fakenham’s reasoning. If these holy men started and carried on a movement, so beneficent to the Church, how could he, an ignorant youth, dare to criticize them? And yet, where did it all lead? If this were true, what could not be done in the name of truth? Father Fakenham’s stronger personality wrapped him round like a mantle. He had learnt to revere this man who was the Master of the Society which he had joined. He, like hundreds of others, had been carried away by the subtle sophistry of their teaching. For years it had been instilled into his mind—not boldly and definitely as it was now being done, but gently and subtly—that it might be right, and was undoubtedly right, to do what the uninitiated called wrong, in order that the greater right might prevail. He had not been able to put it into

so many words, but the thing was a kind of deposit in his intellectual and moral life. More than once, when during the last two years he had been troubled by the accusations which had been laid against the Anglo-Catholic party, he had comforted himself by the fact that although the great leaders of that party might *seem inconsistent*, they were nevertheless undoing the evil which was caused by the Reformation, and bringing back the English Church to its Holy Mother.

“I mentioned the Reverend William George Ward just now,” went on Father Fakenham; “a holy man, and yet he not only believed, but taught the Doctrine of Equivocation; and mind, he taught those things while he was a clergyman of the Church of England. Listen to what his son says about him in this book which I have culled from your father’s library, ‘William George Ward and the Oxford Movement.’”

“In discussing the Doctrine of Equivocation as to how far it is lawful on occasion, he maintained as against those who admit the lawfulness of words literally true but misleading, that the more straightforward principle is that occasionally, when duties conflict, *another duty may be more imperative than the duty of truthfulness*, but he expressed it thus: Make yourself clear that you are justified in deception, and *then lie like a trooper.*”

Julian was silent. He could not find words to express the tumultuous thoughts that were surging through his mind.

“And now let us come back to where we were,” said Father Fakenham. “You have pledged yourself to do all in your power to advance the great work for which the Society of which you are a lay member was formed. By the machinations of the Evil One you are apparently robbed of the means of doing this. But is it not your duty to fight the Evil One, and therefore, *is it not your duty to interpret that will in such a way as will enable you to advance the cause to which we have given our lives?* Mind, if it were a question of gratifying your own selfish desires, if it meant ministering to your own cupidity, then all would be different; but when it means the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ on earth, what have you to say?”

“But it would be lies, Father!” gasped Julian.

“*In order that lies might be killed.*”

“But it would be going against the very first elements of truth.”

“But if the higher truth would prevail thereby? Is not that what you have to consider?”

Father Fakenham had scarcely finished speaking when there was a knock at the door and Parker the butler appeared.

“Miss Gascoigne and Mr. Ben Gascoigne,” he announced.

“Please forgive me for coming,” said the girl, advancing towards Julian, “but Ben told me you wanted him to come up to-night, and I took the liberty of an old friend and accompanied him.”

Julian could not understand why, but the atmosphere seemed changed in a moment. The sight of the girl’s honest face and the ring of her clear, musical voice seemed to sweep away, as if by magic, the miasma in which he had been living and breathing. His mind became clearer, too, and he suddenly became light-hearted.

“It’s good of you to come, Dinah!” he cried joyfully, “and you, too, Ben! But, by jove, I’d no idea it was so late. It wants only a quarter of an hour to dinner time.”

Suddenly he remembered Father Fakenham and introduced him to Dinah.

At first the priest seemed to be angry at being disturbed, but his face changed quickly. Instead of being the hard, stern ecclesiastic, he was the polished man of the world, and he greeted Dinah with a courteous *bonhomie* which was altogether unlike the stern tones in which he had been talking to Julian.

“And you’re coming to dine with us?” he said, almost gleefully. “That is an unexpected pleasure. Then I must get away and make myself more presentable. Oh yes, you may laugh, but even staid old clergymen like myself are not free from the little vanities which do so easily beset us; neither are we invulnerable against the witcheries of youth and beauty,” he added with a laugh.

When, a few minutes later, he was alone in his room, however, his face changed again, and the old scheming look came into his eyes. “A pretty girl,” he reflected. “She may be dangerous.”

He threw himself into a chair and cushioned his face in his hands. “A difficult problem and a delicate problem,” he went on, “and very great care will have to be exercised. The question is, is old Andrew Boconnoc’s money to be lost to us? How can we get it, and in the event of Julian being stubborn, who will have it? Whose name is mentioned in that sealed document? It might be possible—yes, I must find that out. There are surely means——” He sat for a long time, thinking, planning, scheming. Then,

presently, when the dinner gong sounded he went downstairs with a happy, smiling face, and greeted Dinah with subtle flattery.

CHAPTER V

AFTERWARDS

During dinner and throughout the remainder of the evening Father Fakenham was as broad in his theology as Dean Stanley, and as full of humorous quips as Artemus Ward. Evidently, too, he enjoyed the good things of life. He appraised the sherry with an air of a connoisseur, and remarked on the vintage of the port.

Julian was silent, and evidently distraught, but not so Father Fakenham. He made himself pleasant to everyone. He did it with utmost good taste, too. Without mentioning the fact in so many words, he inferred that although they were in a house of mourning, and that although Julian naturally grieved at the death of his father, it was their duty to be bright and cheerful, even in times of sorrow. He intimated that, to him, death, especially in the case of an aged person, was not a matter for grief; that it was but the removal to higher service, and therefore to higher joy.

Little by little the conversation drifted to mundane things, and almost in spite of themselves they found themselves talking of Julian's future. Of course, Father Fakenham knew that Ben Gascoigne had helped to draw up the will, but he assumed, seemingly without any manner of doubt, that Julian would enter into possession, and that although he would not control affairs as his father had done, he would be master of his fortune. But he said nothing definitely. He was as vague as a cloud. No one would be able in after days to say that Father Fakenham had said this or said that.

He treated Dinah with marked attention, and seemed to regard her opinions as of great value. He might have made special study as to what young girls like, and seemed bent on making a good impression upon her.

"Do you know Father Lindley?" she asked.

"I think I saw him once in Oxford," replied the priest. "He is regarded as rather advanced, isn't he?"

"I don't know about advanced," replied Dinah. "He's very funny."

"Funny, how? Is he a humorist?"

"Unconsciously he is. Anyhow, he made me laugh almost immoderately when I went to St. Michael's Church some time ago."

“In what way?”

“I expect you would be very indignant with me if I were to tell you, so I’d better be quiet.”

“Me indignant! my dear child, why should I? Tell me what you saw to laugh at.”

“When I come to think about it,” replied the girl, “there was not so much to laugh at, although he certainly aroused my risible faculties at the time. You see, my father is just a simple-minded, devout churchman of the old school, and I have always been brought up to a plain, orderly service. So when I saw the gymnastics of Father Lindley they seemed to me so absurd that I could not help laughing. But really it was pitiful.”

“I suppose Lindley has aroused a good deal of opposition, hasn’t he?” inquired Father Fakenham.

“Yes, he did at first, but it’s dying down now. The newspapers were full of letters of protest asking why we should have a veiled Papist in the town, and all that sort of thing. Indeed, a number, my father among them, appealed to the bishop, but you see the bishop is a High Churchman, and so nothing was done.”

“I’ve always heard that Lindley was a good preacher,” remarked Father Fakenham; “do you think he is?”

“Oh yes, he’s quite interesting, and he made us listen in spite of ourselves.”

“And have you been since?”

“No, my father did not wish me to, and, of course, I obeyed his wishes. Personally, while it seems funny for such a man to be in the Church of England, I did not see why people should make such a fuss. After all, what do those things matter as long as people are earnest and sincere? I can’t see that it makes any difference whether the clergy are High Church or Low Church, or Presbyterian, or Methodist or Baptist; they are all trying to do good in their own way.”

“Then you have no settled beliefs of your own?”

“Oh yes, I think so, but I don’t think I have any right to interfere with other people’s beliefs. All the same, I don’t think Father Lindley is a gentleman.”

“Why?” asked the man, with a smile.

“After all, he is a clergyman of the Church of England,” replied Dinah, “and he has taken his ordination vows. That’s why I think he’s playing a low-down trick in trying to make his people Catholics. He should either go over to the Church of Rome boldly or else be true to the church to which he belongs. I can respect Father O’Brien, the Roman Catholic priest in the Irish quarter. He is what he pretends to be, but I can’t understand a man doing the work of Rome in an English church. However, I don’t know very much about it, and after all, what is the real difference as long as we are sincere and honest?”

Father Fakenham did not reply. Perhaps he did not think the time was opportune, but dinner over and hearing that Dinah sang, he led her to the piano and asked her for some music. A little later, seeing that Dinah and Julian were eagerly talking to each other, he took the opportunity of conversing with Ben Gascoigne.

Ben, although ordinarily a young fellow of sound judgment, was far from being a match for Father Fakenham. By almost imperceptible steps that gentleman led Ben to the subject of the will. Ben had not liked Father Fakenham that morning, but he had appeared so gay and jolly during dinner that by this time his opinion of him was very much modified.

“You have known Julian all your life, haven’t you?” asked the priest.

“Up to the time he went to Oxford,” replied Ben. “We were pretty thick as boys, and are friendly still; but since he went to Oxford I have seen very little of him.”

“I had no idea his father was such a rich man,” said the older man.

“But surely Julian told you?”

“You don’t quite understand. Julian and I have talked together a great deal about religious matters, but seldom about anything else. Of course, I had an impression that old Mr. Boconnoc was a man of means, but I had no idea he was a millionaire.”

“As to that I imagine there are lots of people in the town who haven’t thought of him as a millionaire,” replied Ben. “You see, he has always been very unostentatious, and never paraded his wealth in any way.”

“But it will be strange to Julian to be possessor of all this,” remarked the priest.

Ben looked at him questioningly. He did not quite understand.

“Fancy him having the control of two millions of money, and perhaps more,” went on the older man like one musing.

“If he does,” Ben could not help saying.

“Why shouldn’t he?” with well-feigned astonishment. “Has he said anything to you? I saw you talking together just now while I was listening to your sister’s singing.”

“Oh no, he didn’t say much about it; but you heard the will and you know the conditions. Perhaps he has told you what he is going to do?”

“Not a word,” replied Father Fakenham, “not a word. But I see nothing in the will to prohibit him from taking possession.”

Again Ben was silent.

“Of course, I don’t know what he will do,” went on the priest, “and that is why the whole situation is peculiar. I wonder what will happen if he won’t obey the letter of his father’s condition?”

In spite of himself the peculiar personality of the priest was affecting Ben, and although he had made up his mind to be reticent, the feeling of reticence was dropping from him like a mantle. “The terms of the will are pretty plain,” he remarked.

“Julian is a peculiar fellow. Of course, I have only known him intimately for the last year or two, but as I read his character he is difficult to comprehend, don’t you think so?”

“Up to the time he went to Oxford one could read him like a book, but since then I have not quite understood him. However——”

“Yes?” queried the priest, “yes—you were saying that——?”

“Nothing,” replied Ben.

“A strange will,” said Father Fakenham musingly. “I suppose you knew old Andrew Boconnoc very well?”

“In a way, yes.”

“He must have been a peculiar man. Just fancy, if his only son refuses to fall in with his wishes all his property goes to a stranger; for that’s what it means, isn’t it?”

Ben, without realizing what he was doing, nodded assent.

The priest was quick to note the movement. At any rate, he thought, he had got so far on the line of discovery. Failing Julian's entire obedience, all this vast wealth would go to *a stranger*! He wondered who the stranger could be. If he could only find out!

In another part of the room Dinah was turning over some music while Julian stood at her side, but evidently only half her attention was being given to the music; she was eagerly listening to what the young man was saying.

"It would be an awful shame, wouldn't it, for his only son to be disinherited while all the wealth for which he had laboured so many years went to a stranger? That stranger would have no inherent right to it. Besides, what would he do with it? He may be a drunkard, a gambler, a vicious man. Of course, you were old Andrew Boconnoc's legal adviser, and I would not for anything ask you to betray what he evidently intended to be a secret, at least for a year; but would it be a breach of confidence for you to say if he is known to Julian?"

Ben Gascoigne was a young man, and had had but little experience of men. Perhaps that was partly why the priest's personality affected him so, and why he felt a little excited.

"Of course, you will understand my position, Father Fakenham," he replied. "It would be dishonourable to divulge what I hear in the way of my profession, and even if I knew her, I should not feel at liberty to disclose anything."

"Naturally, I respect your discretion," replied the priest in almost careless tones. Nevertheless a smile played round his lips. He had at least learnt something, and he wondered if he dared go further.

He took a fresh cigar from a box at his side and lit it with a steady hand, all the time keeping his eyes on the young lawyer's face. There was that in Ben's face which decided him to make no further attempt. He noticed that his eyes had become hard; he might have been a little angry with himself.

"Ah well," he went on, "to quote Mr. Asquith, 'we must wait and see'; but personally, I see no reason why the unknown part of the will ever need come to light, do you?"

"It all depends on Julian," replied Ben.

"Yes, it all depends on Julian; and—my word, but your sister is having a good effect on him! He has become quite gay. They are good friends?" he added, in a questioning tone.

“They were children together,” was Ben’s rejoinder. “But excuse me, Mr. Fakenham, I’m afraid I must be going, and I want to have a word with Julian.”

He left the priest as he spoke and made his way towards Dinah, while Father Fakenham followed him.

“Look here, old man,” cried Ben, “it’s getting late, and I have to catch an early train to Sheffield to-morrow morning. Of course, you will be staying on here?”

Julian gave a questioning look at the priest as if seeking to know his will.

“I’m afraid you must,” went on Ben. “There will be a lot of things to do, and Mr. Coad will want to be in constant touch with you.”

“Personally,” said the priest, “I must go back to Oxford first thing in the morning, but no doubt Julian will stay on here for a time.”

“I hate that fellow,” remarked Ben to his sister, as they walked back to the rectory.

“Why, Ben, I thought him a most delightful old dear. I judged from what you said about him that he was just a stiff, narrow-minded cleric; but he isn’t a bit.”

“He’s a Jesuit,” was the youth’s reply. “It’s written all over him.”

“However can you say so? I think I was a little prejudiced before I saw him. I did not like what you told me about him.”

“I expect he is the sort of fellow who appeals to women. I hear he has a confessional in his church and all that sort of thing. No doubt he has heaps of devotees who go to him for confession, and tell him all their silly secrets. And did you notice what a hold he has on Julian? Did you see that the poor chap hardly dare call his soul his own? That priest fellow just winds him round his finger. Dinah, I can see trouble ahead.”

“What sort of trouble?”

“I can’t say yet, but mark my words, there will be.” And Ben was in a bad temper during the remainder of their walk home.

As for Father Fakenham, he did not think it wise to discuss anything further with his young disciple that night, but to allow what he had already said to sink into his mind first; and presently, after having bidden Julian good night, he went away to his room evidently in deep thought.

“Yes, the whole business will need careful handling,” he reflected; “*very* careful handling.”

He paced the room for some time, and then, going to one of the windows, he looked out. It was a clear, moonlit night, and he could see a vast stretch of hill and dale. He stood for a long time in silence, but of what he thought it would be difficult to tell. Presently he turned to another window from which the valley in which the town of Birtwhistle stood could be seen. The fires in the factories had been in the main damped down, and but little smoke was being emitted from the vast area of chimneys, but he knew it was a huge, prosperous town.

“And a great part of it is his,” he reflected. “Two millions of money—two millions at least, probably more, much more. Commanding it all I could——! Why, it means almost incalculable power. The man who controls it all would be——! And we *need* it! We are now organized, and we have machinery second only to that of the Black Pope—but we need money, more money!”

Again he paced the room, while the look in his eyes showed that deep-laid plans were revolving in his mind.

“There’s bound to be a row,” he went on reflecting. “It may be staved off for a few years, but it’s bound to come. These thick-headed British people won’t stand it much longer. In spite of all we have done, England is a Protestant country, and when we show our hand a little more, as we shall have to do, then will come the deluge. The battle of the Reformation will have to be fought over again, and all the innate Protestantism of the nation will rise up. Of course, it will mean that thousands of our fellows will go straight to Rome, while thousands of others—but there comes the rub. What will become of the churches, the emoluments? Besides, how are we to live if we give up our livings?—Yes, we want money, and if I could have the handling of Andrew Boconnoc’s millions——!”

But suppose Julian were awkward, suppose circumstances proved too strong for him? Father Fakenham thought he had him pretty well under his control, but Yorkshire people were a stiff-necked people, and the young fellow had, at times, manifested an obstinacy which might prove troublesome.

He reflected on his conversation with Ben Gascoigne. He had hoped he might have been able to discover who the unknown heir would be if Julian were disinherited; but in this he had failed. Yet not altogether. In spite of the young lawyer’s reticence he had found out two things. First, that it was a

stranger, and second, that the stranger was a woman. That one word "her" had revealed so much. Surely, even with such small data of information, he could find out much. Who would old Andrew Boconnoc be *likely* to make his heir? He must find out; and in any case, he must see to it that the vast wealth of which he had been thinking must be devoted to the cause to which he had given his life.

Then Father Fakenham took from the luggage he had brought with him the day before a crucifix, and set it on a table. Before this he knelt long, and prayed with great earnestness.

There was no doubt about it; this man was sincere.

CHAPTER VI

THE DEAD AND THE LIVING

Julian Boconnoc had doubtless received a great shock, and that shock had led him to think furiously.

Old Andrew had been right when, a few weeks before, he had told his lawyer that such would be the case. Months before, father and son had quarrelled fiercely about the question of Romanizing in the Church of England, but Julian was only angry at his father's point of view. He refused to see anything in it but vulgar materialism and crass bigotry.

Now, however, all had changed. The voice of the living had failed to move him, but the voice of the dead shook his life to its very foundations.

Besides, the terms of the will were ghastly. Unconsciously he had been influenced by the fact that he was going to be a rich man. It had shaped his thoughts, coloured his imaginings, entered into the warp and woof of his life. And now, suddenly, he realized that if he did not give up the Faith, which he thought was the only thing worth living for, he would be a pauper. He had to make up his mind whether he would be the possessor of millions or be penniless.

This fact, as he had declared to Ben Gascoigne, had brought him to his haunches. It had come so suddenly, so unexpectedly, and was, moreover, so outrageous, that it bewildered, staggered him. Never before in his whole life had he been so staggered. That morning he had regarded himself as being the owner, not only of Hawkspoint, and its surrounding lands, but of half the woollen factories in the great town which lay in the valley. He knew, too, that his father had many interests, knew that wealth had flowed to him from many directions, wealth which he had regarded as being one day his own.

He had not in the past been fond of his father. The two had lived apart. He had realized from his infancy that they lived in different worlds. He had always been a dreamy boy, and much given to curious fancies and strange imaginings, while his father had but little sympathy with such things. Moreover, old Andrew had manifested but little outward affection. He had never entered into his hopes and desires. Thus they had drifted apart. As a consequence, he had not been overwhelmed with grief at the news of his father's death. He was sorry, of course, but there was nothing of that keen anguish which some feel at such an event.

But as we have said, the reading of the will had come to him like a blow. It had brought him up suddenly. He who had pictured himself giving his great wealth to the Cause which was to bring England back to the true Faith, found himself, unless he would give up the great purpose of his life, a pauper. He did not care for money for its own sake. He would have been willing to give up every penny he had if he knew that it would flow into the coffers of that organization which meant the re-birth of true Christianity in England. But now, everything appeared to him in a different light. He found that he loved his old home, that the thought of being deprived of all his father had toiled for was cruel.

His mind swept back over the events of the day. Again he stood by the graveside and heard the words which the rector had read. Again he saw the crowds of the townspeople who had come to the funeral. Again he had watched while the mortal remains of his father had been laid in the grave. He had felt but little grief at the time. His father's death was not a great blow to him, rather it meant getting rid of one who would hinder the things he longed for.

Then had come the reading of the will, and with it—chaos. All his plans and hopes had come crashing round his head. Nothing but the ruins of his fond imaginings remained.

He would be a pauper unless——

He was in the library where the will had been read, and he heard the footsteps of Father Fakenham, who, overhead, tramped to and fro, to and fro.

His conversation with Father Fakenham was creating an epoch in his life, too. He did not fully realize it, but it was. At first he had only but half-seen what his words had meant. There was something crooked, unsatisfactory about them. Newman's Doctrine of Reserve, his talk about "Economy." . . . His father had always taught him that lies and deceit in any fashion were born in Hell, that prevarication and equivocation were the Devil's tools to do the Devil's work. Whatever his father had been he had always been regarded as an honest man. Stern integrity was his motto. And now to be told that prevarication might be necessary, that truth itself might be temporised with that a higher truth might prevail, was somehow out of accord with the traditions of the Boconnoc family.

And yet, was not his spiritual guide and philosopher right? Surely that will of his father was inspired by the devil. Unless he were false to his

conscience he was to be robbed of everything. This vast wealth was *his*—his by inherent right, his by law, if——

It was not that he wanted it for himself. He only cared about it in so far as it would help forward the true faith, and destroy the Protestantism which was sapping the nation's spirituality. Therefore, would it not be right to interpret the will in such a way as to enable him to use the wealth which was rightfully his for such a high and holy purpose? And yet, and yet——

A knock came to the door, and Parker, the old butler entered.

“Anything more you require, sir?”

“No, thank you, Parker.”

The old man wandered round the room doing little unimportant things, and all the time casting furtive glances at his young master.

“Anything you wish to say to me, Parker?”

“Nothing particular, sir, except—it's been a terrible blow to us, sir.”

Julian was silent.

“He was a good master, sir—a better never lived. And always so just, so very very just. I don't think he was capable of doing a mean thing, sir.”

Julian thought of the will he had heard that day, and his heart grew bitter.

“I was his servant before you were born, sir, and while he always insisted on everything being done right and well—some people called him hard—he always had a wise meaning in everything he did. If ever he was what the world called cruel, it was always because he meant to be kind. I've thought of that a good deal since he died. You're sure there's nothing more I can do for you, sir?”

“Quite sure, thank you, Parker.”

“Excuse me, sir, but is the gentleman who has just gone to bed, staying long?”

“No, he's going in the morning.”

“Thank you, sir. And you'll be here all alone just like your father was?”

“Yes, for a time, at all events.”

“Thank God for that. I mean, sir,” and Parker stammered a little,—“I—I wish you every joy in entering into possession, sir. I hope you mean to keep

on this place, sir? I'm afraid I'm very rude, but I take the liberty of an old servant."

"It will be kept on for a time—for a year, anyhow."

"Thank you, sir. I'm sure that every one of us at our end of the house, are anxious to do everything we can for you, sir, and there's not one of us but what grieves at your loss. Thank you, sir. Good-night, sir. I hope you're not offended at my bluntness of speech, sir."

"Not a bit of it," and Julian rose to his feet. "I appreciate your sympathy, Parker, and—and I value your services most highly."

"Thank you, sir." The old butler swept the back of his hand across his eyes as he made his way to the door.

The incident, little as it was, moved the young man greatly. The thought of giving up the only home he had ever known became harder than ever, while the old servant's tribute to his late master influenced him in spite of himself.

"If he seemed to be cruel it was only because he wanted to be kind. He always had a wise purpose in everything he did," he paraphrased.

In spite of himself his lips quivered, and tears started to his eyes.

He caught himself reflecting on the terms of the will. He remembered the words which his father had insisted on inserting. "I am making these conditions because of the great love I bear for my boy, and because I want to save him from ruin."

There was nothing harsh nor stern in that. It was something different.

Again he heard the tramp, tramp of feet overhead. Father Fakenham was doubtless deep in thought. What was he thinking about? He had insisted on coming to see him the previous day. Why?—

In spite of the approaching spring, the night had become very cold, and he threw more fuel on the fire. Then, again seating himself in his father's chair, he took from his pocket the letter which Mr. Coad had given him on his departure, and again he carefully read it. It came to him as a kind of appeal. It was true he detected angry impatience in much that was written, but there was a note of tenderness, too. Besides, it was written in his father's own hand, evidently written in febleness and pain.

"Anyhow," the letter concluded, "I request you to give yourself time to think, to weigh all the issues carefully. Test everything, prove everything. As

I am telling Mr. Coad, it is my will that you shall not discuss this letter with anyone until twenty-four hours after you have read it. I do this because I expect you will surround yourself with people whom I despise and mistrust. Anyhow, my son, do nothing in a hurry, and remember that what I have done I have done because I love you. Soon I hope to see your mother. I have told you in an earlier part of this letter of what happened to her, told you, too, how at length she found liberty and light. I believe she will be near to you when you read this, and if God permits me, I shall too.”

The paper dropped from his hands as he read, and he gave a startled look round the room. Were his father and mother near him? Were they watching him? In imagination he saw them standing side by side. His father tall, rugged, stern, yet with infinite tenderness in his eyes, and his mother just like the picture he always had in his mind concerning her.

For a moment he believed they were there, believed that he saw them; but only for a moment. His mind reasserted itself, and he found himself smiling at his own fancies.

Yet why should they be fancies? Why should not his mother be there? He picked up the paper again and read on.

“Always remember this, my son. Your mother was the most beautiful woman God ever gave to the world; beautiful in her purity, and in the loveliness of her life. She was the soul of truth, and although for years the priests tried to warp her mind, truth was triumphant at the end, and I am sure that if she were alive she would agree with me in what I have done. And so I urge you before entangling yourself further, before taking any final step, to prove everything. I have told you that while there are undoubtedly millions of good, sincere people who are Roman Catholics, the Roman system is an accursed one. I have told you that this so-called Anglo-Catholic movement is dishonourable from its very foundations, that it is built upon those things which are unworthy of an English gentleman, and I ask you to prove whether my words are not true. Go to the root of the whole matter, sift everything to the foundations, and may God bless you. And remember always that what I have done I have done in love.”

Slowly, and with a far-away look in his eyes, Julian folded the long letter he had read, and then, having placed it in a safe that stood near him, carefully locked it. After that he sat for a long time looking into the fire.

“Slept well, Julian?” asked the priest, the following morning, as they sat at breakfast.

“Not until the early morning,” was the reply.

The priest watched him closely, and seemed to be doubtful what to say.

“Ah yes, ah yes, I quite understand. Everything is strange to you.”

“It *is* a bit.”

Again the priest watched him closely. “A great testing time has come to you, my son,” he went on. “Such a testing time as comes to but few; but I have no fear for you. You will be worthy, you will be true to the great opportunity which presents itself to you. You are no Judas.”

Julian flashed back a questioning glance.

“You are no Judas,” repeated the priest. “You are no false disciple. You will not sell your Lord, either for thirty pieces of silver, or for an estate worth millions. You will be faithful to your high calling. You will be true to the Society of which you are a member. You will give all that you have and are to the Great Cause.”

The strong personality of the priest was again enveloping the young man like a mantle. Almost unconsciously he found himself breathing in a new atmosphere.

“I’m sorry I can’t stay until this afternoon,” went on Father Fakenham. “Then, undoubtedly, you would have wished to discuss that letter with me,” and again he fastened his compelling eyes upon his disciple. “But I shall be coming to see you again shortly, and doubtless you will wish to have your confessor here. Father Bridgeman is a wise man and will guide you truly.”

Whatever had wrought the change, Julian was not overjoyed at Father Fakenham’s promise to visit him again shortly, neither was he glad that he had promised to send Father Bridgeman to him. This was strange, because for a long time past he had taken the utmost delight in the society of these two men.

“A difficult piece of work, a most delicate piece of work,” reflected Father Fakenham later as, seated in a car, he sped swiftly towards Birtwhistle railway station. “Those millions must not—they simply *must not* be lost to us. We need them. If we don’t get them it will be a blow, a terrible blow to us. . . . That young fellow has had a shaking up, a tremendous shaking up. No wonder. That will be a devilish thing, but——”

The car entered the town, and now it was obliged to move slowly, so full were the streets with the traffic of a great manufacturing centre.

“There was a subtle change in him this morning,” he reflected. “He would tell me nothing. I wonder what his father’s letter contained? I wonder whether——?”

The car drew up at the station and a minute later Father Fakenham found himself on the platform awaiting the train.

“First class, sir?” asked the porter who had taken his bag.

Father Fakenham nodded.

“This way, sir, the train will be here in a minute. You have come from Hawkpoint?” he added.

“Yes,” replied Father Fakenham. He always made it a point to be friendly with what he called the lower orders. “I suppose Mr. Boconnoc’s death will make a great difference to the town?”

“It must,” replied the porter. “He wur a big man wur old Andrew, and he employed the greater part of t’ waivers i’ Birtwhistle. I’ve ’eard as ’ow everything is in apple pie order and that things will almost go by theirselves. He had a grand lot of managers and things like that, but it must mak’ a difference. Even when he wur too ill to come to t’ mills he ’ad t’ managers up at Hawkpoint every day. Of course, a lot ’ll depend on what sort of chap young Julian is.”

“Are many of these mills his?” asked Father Fakenham, looking across the town.

“Many! Look ’ere, sir,” and he pointed out several large buildings, “all of ’em belongs to ’im,” he said. “Everybody ’opes as ’ow young Julian will step into ’is father’s shoes in t’ right way. But ’ere’s the train. Smoker, sir?”

Father Fakenham found himself alone in a first class smoking carriage. He looked out of the window as the train slowly passed through the station, and noted the buildings which the porter had pointed out.

During the journey from Birtwhistle to Oxford, Father Fakenham scarcely looked at the literature with which he had provided himself. Neither did he take any notice of the country through which he passed. On reaching Oxford he got into a taxi, and ere long found himself at the institution of which he was the Head. But he made no inquiries as to how that institution had got on during his absence. Instead, he found his way into his own

private study and sat there alone. Presently he went to the telephone and rang up a certain number.

“That you, McCormick?—Good—Will you be in to-night, say at nine o’clock?—You will?—Splendid.—Yes, I want to have a long talk with you.—Important? Yes, I should think it is!—Anyhow, you’ll be alone?—All right, you may expect me—No, don’t say anything about it. It’s a sort of Nicodemus business. Good-bye for the time.”

Shortly before nine that night, Father Fakenham found his way into Oxford. He did not take a conveyance, but preferred to walk. He passed by Magdalen College, then found his way into the “Broad,” and from thence moved rapidly in the direction of the “Union” buildings. A little later he found himself in a quiet, dimly lit square. Giving a quick glance around him he made his way to a house numbered 13, into which he was quickly admitted.

He was met in the hall by a man of middle age, strongly built, and who at first sight proclaimed himself to be a Hibernian. The Irishman was written all over his face; a good-humoured jolly looking face it was—that of a man who enjoyed life to its full, and who entered into its pleasures with zest. It might seem, at first glance, that he had not a care in the world, and as for worry—it might be unknown to him. Some said he had a cherubic appearance. That at first glance. A second look, however, might modify the effect of the first. It is said that a man’s eyes proclaim his character more than anything else, and Father McCormick’s eyes belied his rubicund, cherubic, innocent appearance. They were deep-set, keen, piercing, and gave an impression of subtlety.

“Ah, Fakenham,” cried McCormick heartily, “glad to see you. You’ve been out of town, haven’t you?”

“Since the day before yesterday.”

“I heard you had gone.”

“How did you hear? I didn’t sound a trumpet before I went.”

“Oh, one hears,” and the Irishman laughed heartily. “When the Prime Minister leaves Downing Street for Chequers it’s always made known. But I say, I’ve something to tell you, something of importance. I didn’t know of it when you rang up, and he wouldn’t let me tell you when he came.”

“Who wouldn’t let you?”

“My visitor, my dear fellow.”

“You have got a visitor here, then?”

“Ay, great heavens, I have!” and McCormick’s voice dropped into a whisper.

“Who is he? The General of the Jesuits?”

“You’ve nearly hit the nail on the head the first time. If he isn’t General now, he will be. It’s Father Anthony Ritzoom.”

“Ritzoom!” there was a kind of awe in Father Fakenham’s voice.

“Yes, my dear fellow. But we need not talk with him if you don’t like.”

Father Fakenham reflected. He had come to see McCormick, who was a priest and a Jesuit. He was one of the most powerful emissaries of that Order in England. He was one of the twenty thousand employed by the Black Pope, Supreme Head of the Order of the Society of Jesus (who swayed the destinies of the Roman Catholic Church even more than the Pope of Rome), and who had his Headquarters in Switzerland. This Society of Jesus, as all the world knows, has, ever since it was founded by Ignatius Loyola in the sixteenth century, been the great working, vital force of the Church of Rome. Throughout the centuries it has passed through many vicissitudes. It has been driven out of country after country. Again and again, Popes and Cardinals have tried to destroy it. But it has lived on, working mostly in secret, but with tremendous power, in the life of Romanism.

Father Ritzoom, during the close of the nineteenth century, and in the first years of the twentieth century, had been the chief representative of that Order in England. Of late, little had been heard about him in this country, but presently it became known that he occupied a position among the Jesuits second only to that of the Black Pope himself.

It was this man who was in Father McCormick’s house that night.

CHAPTER VII

THREE PRIESTS

When Father Fakenham entered Father McCormick's study he saw seated by the fire, and smoking a huge black cigar, a man who would be noticed anywhere.

A good many years have passed since the Reverend Anthony Ritzoom, S.J., was introduced by the author of these lines to the public.^[1] When we saw him first he was a man in all the vigour of middle life. His hair was jet black, and his closely shaven chin had that blue appearance which is the characteristic of many hailing from the South of Europe. But even then, no one knew his age or nationality, and he persistently refused to tell.

"I am a citizen of the world," he repeatedly said, "and own no country."

He might have been about fifty then, although, generally, he did not look his age. When Father Fakenham saw him in Oxford he must have been considerably past seventy.

But he gave few signs of the passing years. It is true his once jet black hair had become white, and there were creases round his eyes; otherwise there was nothing to suggest that he had lost the vigour of his youth. His eyebrows were jet black, and the dark, piercing, unfathomable eyes beneath them had lost nothing of their old power. Perhaps he had decreased an inch or so in height, and sometimes he moved a little stiffly, but these were the only indications of increasing age. His movements were as quick and decided as ever. His voice had lost none of its resonance. As for his mind, some said that it had become more keen and subtle with the passing years.

Rumour had it that he had more than once been offered the highest position in the Order to which he belonged, but that he had always refused to be elected because his influence could be more potent as a free-lance.

The moment Father Fakenham entered the room he felt that he had come into contact with a remarkable man. He had heard of him for years. Many stories were extant as to the great work he had done for the Roman Church, and of the way in which he had influenced men and governments. Perhaps that was why Father Fakenham stood somewhat in awe of him even before he had spoken a word. But there was more than that. Father Ritzoom possessed that wonderful quality for which we have no better word than

“personality.” The man impressed himself wherever he went. It was not so much that his intellectual powers were remarkable, or because his will was so dominant. It was rather a combination of many qualities. Had he been a business man he would have done much to dominate the markets of the world. Had he chosen to be a politician, the highest positions in the land would have been open to him. But he cared for none of these things. His ambition was to work in secret, to pull hidden strings, to move unknown machinery. Had he joined the Roman Catholic Church in the ordinary way he would doubtless have become a great Cardinal. But he had not. Rather he had elected to join the Society of Jesus, which, outwardly, at all events, eschews all high official positions and places of honour.

Power was his god, but he loved to make use of that power in secret.

The Jesuit Order fostered and encouraged this characteristic. From the time of Ignatius Loyola until now it has never advertised itself. Few published records are known. It is a society that works in silent, secret places, but it is none the less potent. Who, for example, knows the history, even the name, of the present General of the Jesuits? What proportion of the British population has even given him a thought? In clerical circles he is spoken of as “The Black Pope,” but all in inner circles know that his word carries far more weight than that of the Pope of Rome.

It is realized, too, by every impartial student of history that throughout the centuries the influence of the Jesuit Order has been baneful. Wherever and whenever it has reached the position of power which has always been its aim it has meant intrigue, domestic and political troubles—often revolutions and wars.

And Father Ritzoom was one of the most potent influences in this great Order, an Order which, unknown to the world, is stretching every nerve to dominate the land in which we live.

“Let me present to you the Reverend John Fakenham, Father Ritzoom,” said the Irishman.

Father Ritzoom rose from his chair and held out his hand. As he did so the Englishman felt a shiver go down his spine. And yet Ritzoom did not speak. He simply gave the other a quick look, a look that was accompanied by a smile.

Yes, there was no doubt about it, Father Fakenham, the Head of a college for training young clergymen, and Master of a Society which exists for the purpose of bringing the English church back to Rome, stood in awe of the

Roman priest. For the moment it was more than awe. It was fear. The deep, unfathomable eyes of the Roman seemed to read into the inmost recesses of his soul and master him. And yet, in spite of his fear, a pride filled his heart that he should be brought face to face with this man.

“Your name is familiar to me,” said Father Ritzoom. “McCormick and others have spoken of you as one who is doing great things.”

There was mastery in his voice, but more than mastery. There was something intriguing, flattering in it. Something that pleased the Englishman even while it made him afraid.

“I am greatly honoured, I’m sure,” was his reply. “I have long heard of you, but scarcely ever hoped for the pleasure of meeting you face to face.”

“I hope you don’t mind tobacco,” said Ritzoom, looking at his cigar. “I’m afraid it’s a weakness of mine, and McCormick always takes care to minister to it.”

“You need not fear, Ritzoom,” laughed Father McCormick; “Fakenham is a well-seasoned vessel, and he loves the fragrant weed. Sit down my friend, and help yourself. Ah, and that reminds me, although spring is coming, it’s a cold night, and you’ll not be averse to a drop of whisky. I’ll ring for it.”

A minute later a servant entered bearing a whisky decanter, a syphon of soda-water, and glasses.

“Now then, help yourselves and let’s be comfortable,” invited McCormick.

“But Mr. Fakenham has come to you on business,” remarked Ritzoom, looking at Fakenham. “You will want to be alone, and I have heaps of work to do myself. Let me go into another room, McCormick, and then you can discuss your deep-laid schemes until further orders.”

“No, no,” interposed the Englishman, hurriedly. “I said, when first I heard from Father McCormick that you were visiting him, that it was providential. Nothing could have suited my plans better. In fact, you are the man I want to talk with more than any other in the world.”

The shadow of a smile played over Ritzoom’s face, but the other did not see it. Neither was he aware that Ritzoom had come to Oxford for the very purpose of meeting him. He knew as much about the Anglo-Catholic movement in England as Father Fakenham did, and a good deal more. He had made himself acquainted with the workings of all the societies which

have existed for the purpose of bringing England back to Rome ever since the days of Father Newman. He had watched the growth of the Anglo-Catholic movement with lynx eyes, and had been instrumental in a thousand secret ways in helping it forward. He knew, no one better, of the forces which had been at work through the years, and unknown to many Anglo-Catholics, he had been sending missionaries up and down the land in order to assist in the "good work."

And more than that. He knew of the influence which Father Fakenham had over young Julian Boconnoc. Knew of the will which had been made in his favour years before, and was well aware of the tremendous wealth which he was expected to inherit. He had heard, too, of old Andrew Boconnoc's death, and of Father Fakenham's visit to Hawkspoint.

That was why he had come to Oxford. And with that strange divination which he possessed, he felt, knowing the relationship between Fakenham and McCormick, that the former would seek his friend's advice.

But nothing of this was manifest in his appearance. He might have been an innocent guileless old man who had simply paid a passing call on a brother in the faith.

"Now then, tell me," said Ritzoom, "how the good work is progressing."

"Slowly but surely," replied the Englishman. "It is not yet a hundred years since Father Newman started the Tractarian movement, but, as you know, England has become a changed country."

"Tell me in what way."

"Surely that is unnecessary. You know a great deal more than I do."

"Think of me as knowing nothing," remarked the Jesuit. "Talk to me as though I were utterly ignorant of what has taken place."

"It is not so much in things that can be tabulated that our progress may be seen," remarked Fakenham, "though they are considerable. It is in something deeper, something more abiding. When Father Newman commenced his work in 1833, the country was blatantly Protestant. The very name of Rome was a byword, while the cry of 'No Popery' counted for something. Now it counts for nothing. There is a new atmosphere. Had anyone mentioned in Newman's early days, even the possibility of the English church being united to that of Rome on Rome's terms, a howl of horror would have gone through the land. Now people talk of it as a probability, almost as a certainty. Out of the eighteen thousand or so clergymen of the Church of England, at least a third of them may be counted

on our side. As for the Evangelicals—the Protestants—they who were all-powerful back in the middle of the last century, are now a mere rump. They have no unity, no scholarship, no driving-power, no money, no influence. They are even laughed at in the Church Congress. We refuse to call ourselves Protestants. We glory in the name of Catholic, and the people raise no protest. The Bishops are afraid of putting restrictions upon what are called the extremists.”

“What do you mean by that?” asked Ritzoom.

“Take this instance. You remember how the other day the Malines Conference was arranged for on the broad question of reunion? Who were the men sent to represent the Church of England? They were the most extreme men we have got on the Anglo-Catholic side. More than that, our clergy have, one by one, adopted Roman usages and doctrines. They accept the Real Presence, the Sacrifice of the Mass, Prayers for the Dead, the Sacrament of Auricular Confession, Extreme Unction, and in many cases devotion to Our Lady. In fact, the atmosphere is entirely changed, and now I should say, a third, if not more, of our clergy acknowledge Rome as their spiritual home.”

“Of course,” remarked Ritzoom, “I knew of these things before, although it is good to have them confirmed by a man occupying your position. But at present,” and this he said with a laugh, “I don’t know that we want many of your clergy to come over in a body. We might not be able to do with them. And, after all, what we aim at is the conversion of the country, and the conversion of the clergy is not necessarily the conversion of the country. Of course, I am aware that the greatest work is very largely done by the clergy, but does that apply to the nation?”

“In a way, it does,” replied Fakenham. “Every true Catholic clergyman is instilling the doctrines of the true Church in his parish day by day. This must eventually mean the conversion of the nation.”

“But are there manifest results in this direction?” asked the Jesuit.

“Many. Why think. Time was when it was next to impossible for a Romanist to find his way into official positions, especially in Government departments. Now it’s otherwise. Indeed, I have heard complaints that those of the true faith are more and more occupying positions which mean the government of the country.”

“That also I know,” replied Ritzoom. “Naturally, it has been my business to know it, and perhaps I have not been altogether uninstrumental in

bringing it about.”

“Then go further,” went on Fakenham. “When the Archdeacon of St. Paul’s declared, fifty years ago, that it was next door to impossible to get anything inserted in our leading newspapers derogatory to the Roman Church, he was howled at, laughed at, thrown stones at; but to-day”——he finished the sentence with a significant shrug of the shoulders.

Father McCormick laughed heartily at this juncture. “Yes, yes, Ritzoom,” he said “no man can deny that the Press is a powerful organ.”

“I admit that these things are important,” said the Jesuit, after a silence. “I admit, too, that in time they will bring forth a great harvest; but I’m getting to be an old man and I want things done quickly. After all, you have not got to the root of the matter. As you say, it’s nearly a hundred years now since Newman, and Pusey, and the rest of them commenced their work. Has the Anglo-Catholic movement any real hold on the majority of the nation? Are the people being converted? You say there is tolerance, but may not that tolerance be the result of indifference? To put it in a word. Have the people in England, Scotland and Wales become anything like Catholic?”

“No,” ejaculated McCormick. Although he was a Jesuit he was also an Irishman, and often spoke impulsively.

“What do *you* say?” asked Ritzoom, looking at Father Fakenham.

“I’m afraid McCormick is right,” he replied sadly. “In turning up the records of my Society I find that back in 1860 one of our men, in speaking of our work, prophesied that in twenty years the country would be ready to go over to Rome. He was greatly elated by the progress we had made, and under the influence of that progress he uttered his prophecy. The twenty years have gone, and forty more on the top of that; but——” He shook his head doubtfully.

“Put it in another way,” said Ritzoom, “Is the country, as far as you can judge, nearer coming over to Rome to-day, than it was in 1880?”

For a time no one spoke, and then Father Fakenham, more like a man musing than answering a question, replied.

“I can’t understand it,” he said. “We seem to be making progress every day. More and more our clergy are adopting Roman ceremonial and Roman doctrine, but *the people* seem as Protestant as ever. Every prophecy in that direction has been falsified. Parishes into which Romanizing clergy were sent, twenty, thirty years ago, are, in the main, as Protestant as ever. The people stubbornly hold to their old Protestant prejudices. It’s saddening, but

I'm afraid it's true. Of course, a number of women go to confession, but the men—— In fact, Father Ritzoom, *I'm bound to admit that the Anglo-Catholic movement is not a movement of the laity*. Of course, a large number of laymen have joined us, but in the main it's clerical. Indeed, as a nation, there are no signs that we are nearer *joining* the Church of Rome than we were fifty years ago. You have multiplied your churches and your institutions, while we have done our best to help you; but England is still Protestant, stubbornly Protestant. You see half the religious life of the nation is Nonconformist, and we have made no headway with them."

"You speak pessimistically. Do you mean to say that you have given up hope?"

"No! no! no!" replied the Englishman, eagerly. "We shall never give up hope! We are bound to succeed, we are bound to triumph! There are hundreds of our clergy waiting to come over, and when they do they will bring tens of thousands of followers. But you say you don't want us yet. Besides, there is the question of money."

The Jesuit looked at Fakenham questioningly, searchingly. "Yes?" he queried.

"You see," went on Fakenham, "thousands of our clergy are troubled about their livings. What can you do with them if they come over in a body? Can you receive them, give them work? If we had a few millions I can see how even in England much could be done. I can see an uprising which would shake our nation to its foundations, and cause a new Reformation."

"Tell me how?"

Father Fakenham spoke eagerly, excitedly, and with burning words. He sketched his plans, unfolded his ideas, while the Jesuit watched him closely.

"England is a rich country," he said; "even in spite of the war it is the richest country in the world, with the exception of America. But do you see those millions? Do you see any chance of them?"

"That is what I want to speak to you about. Why I want your advice."

The Jesuit sat with a perfectly placid face, quietly smoking. This was the point to which he had been slowly leading the other throughout their conversation, the point he had come to Oxford to discuss.

"Yes," replied Fakenham. "I do see them, but there may be difficulties."

"There always are, my dear man, but difficulties are made to be overcome."

“The Anglo-Catholic movement is said to be backed up by unbounded wealth,” went on Fakenham, “and there is some truth in it—but not much. We are cribbed, cabined and confined on every hand by want of money. Compared with the Protestant societies we are rich, but compared with our needs we are poor, pitiably poor. That is why I am a little worried.”

“Do you care to tell me about it?” asked Ritzoom. “Please don’t if you have any doubt about it.”

“I want to tell you. I want to tell you badly. I want your opinion, your advice.”

The Jesuit did not speak, but waited for the other to continue.

Rapidly Father Fakenham told his story. He described Julian Boconnoc coming to Oxford. Told of the young man’s financial prospects. Of his easy conversion to the Anglo-Catholic Faith, and of his desire to give all his wealth to bring England back to Rome.

“He would have joined the Church of Rome a year ago if I had allowed him,” went on Fakenham, “but I persuaded him that he could better do our work by outwardly remaining an Anglican. That our purposes would be accomplished not by individual conversions, but by a great movement of the whole Church which would end in reunion and reconciliation with Rome.”

“And he agreed to this?”

Father Fakenham gave a smile of satisfaction. “He has been but clay in the hands of the potter,” he replied.

“Then surely all is well?”

“Less than a week ago his father, old Andrew Boconnoc, financier, mill owner, colliery proprietor, landowner, shipowner, and I don’t know what else, died.”

“And you say young Julian was his only son?”

“His only son.”

“And isn’t everything plain?”

“No.”

“How? Why?”

“Because not long before his death he made a new will.”

Up to now, Father Ritzoom had listened to Fakenham's recital with a kind of detached air, and as though he had very little interest in what he was saying. The truth was, all that the Englishman had been telling him was known to him. It was his policy to appear ignorant and to a large extent disinterested. But the new will was unknown to him. Something like fear entered his heart. He had thought that Father Fakenham had visited McCormick in order to discuss details about the application of Andrew Boconnoc's wealth. That was why he was present. But a new will!—That explained Fakenham's excitement, his anxiety.

“And do you know the terms of the new will?” he asked, and this time there was interest in his voice, and his eyes shone with that peculiar glitter which always manifested itself when he was deeply moved.

“I do. It is a devilish will. It creates a situation which will require careful handling, very careful handling.”

“What is it? Tell me.”

“It is the will of a Protestant, a bigoted Protestant. He has left the bulk of his huge fortune to his son on the condition, and *only* on the condition, that he is a Protestant, and that not one farthing of his money goes, either to the Roman Catholic Church, or to the Anglo-Catholic movement. If Julian will not be a Protestant, or if he in any way, directly or indirectly, devotes a penny of his money to the cause which you and I have so near to our hearts, he will be a pauper.”

“But—but——” ejaculated both McCormick and Ritzoom, the former excitedly and angrily, the latter quietly, although with evident emotion.

“I heard it read,” went on Fakenham. “I was present at the reading immediately after the funeral. I read a copy of it myself afterwards. It is drawn up with fiendish cleverness; it apparently leaves no loophole anywhere. I am afraid there is no doubt about its legality; and—and——” Father Fakenham lapsed into silence.

[1] See the “Scarlet Woman,” the “Purple Robe,” “The Woman of Babylon,” and “The Soul of Dominic Wildthorne.”

CHAPTER VIII

JESUITRY

For a time there was silence in the room. Father Ritzoom sat back in his chair and closed his eyes, but he did not allow his cigar to go out. He smoked steadily and apparently with enjoyment. The Englishman sat watching him. He was too excited to speak. He was eagerly wondering what the other had to say to him. The Irishman, on the other hand, walked round the room with quick, excited footsteps.

“What do you think about it?” asked Fakenham, presently. But the Jesuit did not answer; he remained with fixed, immovable features, and closed eyes. McCormick ceased to tramp the room, but he asked no questions. After an anxious look at Ritzoom’s face, he went to the window and stared out into the night. He had known Ritzoom for many years.

The silence which followed was painful. Minute after minute passed and still no one spoke. Father Fakenham was eager to talk, eager to discuss the question which had occupied his mind since the previous day, but looking at Ritzoom’s face, he was afraid.

“Can you see any way out of it?” he ventured to ask presently.

“Be quiet! I’m thinking,” replied the Jesuit. “I shall have a lot to say to you presently, but in the meanwhile, let me think.”

There was a sharp, impatient tone in his voice. Father Ritzoom might be very angry.

“How much do you say old Boconnoc left?” he asked, presently, and he spoke in almost careless tones.

“The lawyer said at least two millions, probably a great deal more.”

“You are reported to have a good verbal memory; can you call to mind the exact terms?”

Fakenham spoke rapidly. He described the will with almost marvellous accuracy. When he had finished, a curious smile again passed over the Jesuit’s face.

“Tell me more about young Julian?” he requested. “Describe him to me, his personal appearance, his mode of life, his characteristics.”

Father Fakenham complied.

“Another Hurrel Froude,” said Ritzoom, like a man musing.—“But Hurrel Froude with a difference. You say you were present when the will was read; of course, he was there, too?”

“I sat by his side.”

“How did he take it?”

“He was shocked, staggered, bewildered.”

“Angry?”

“I don’t know as to that. He said but little. Evidently, however, he was staggered. I’m afraid I was unwise.”

“Very likely. But why do you think that?”

“I could not help protesting before the lawyer and the others, that it was unfair, monstrous.”

“I don’t think you need bother about that. All the others would think that you had Julian in your mind, and that it was unfair that he should be robbed of what he rightfully expected. They don’t know your plans about his money?”

“Of course they don’t.”

“And young Boconnoc seemed to acquiesce in his father’s decision? He hinted at no determination to take any steps about the matter?”

“No—I hardly know.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“Well, I said nothing to him for several hours. You see the funeral took place early, and we got back to the house before eleven. Then the reading of the will took place, after which all except the lawyers left. We discussed matters until nearly half-past twelve, then the lawyers also went.”

“They didn’t stay to lunch?”

“No. I could see Julian wanted to be alone.”

“And then?”

“I ought to tell you that in addition to the will, old Andrew left a letter for his son. It was given to him by the lawyer when he left the house.”

“Whereupon——?”

“Julian went way to his room alone until lunch time. He scarcely spoke through lunch and immediately afterwards went away alone again.”

“And you said nothing?”

“I thought it wise.”

“Just so—and then?”

“Then I thought the time had come to speak.”

A smile, half-contemptuous, half-pitiful, crossed the Jesuit’s face. Perhaps he thought how he would have acted under similar circumstances.

“What did you say to him?”

“Of course, I assumed that he would not take the findings of the old man lying down. I hinted that the word Protestant might have many meanings. I quoted the early leaders of the Oxford movement who declared that it might be right, and was, indeed, sometimes right to deceive, even to the point of telling downright lies, if the cause of truth, the higher truth, could be helped forward. I quoted Newman and Pusey, and Ward, and others.”

“Tell me more about that.”

Father Fakenham gave a resumé of their conversation omitting nothing that was important.

“And how did he take it?”

“I don’t know. He was still bewildered. I don’t think he was able to think clearly. His mind seemed shaken up.”

“Did he appear shocked?—I mean at your remarks.”

“I am not sure—a little, perhaps.”

“You did not know old Andrew Boconnoc, did you?”

“No. Julian was always afraid to ask me to the house while he was alive; but I know a good deal about him.”

“Tell me.”

“A Yorkshire man, strong, stern, stubborn, a man with an iron will. Tremendously honest according to his own standards. One not easy to move. One who generally carried everything before him. His people had lived in Yorkshire for three generations.”

“Boconnoc—Boconnoc,” repeated the Jesuit, reflectively. “That sounds like a West country name.”

“It is a Cornish name,” replied Father Fakenham. “His family originally came from Cornwall.”

“And his mother?”

“She was a Yorkshire girl. At one time there was a talk of her joining you.”

“A strong combination, my friend. You have the Celtic imagination and fervour, linked to the Yorkshire grit and obstinacy; that makes one of the strongest combinations in the world. For that matter, I think the Cornish obstinacy is equal to that of the Yorkshire, and Julian is the child of these two. By the way, did you notice any change in him after the reading of the will?”

Father Fakenham reflected a few seconds. “Yes, I did,” he said. “I could not quite understand it. I attributed it to the shock that the will had given him.”

“Yes, it would,” mused Ritzoom, “a tremendous shock. It would go down to the foundations of his life. This means a curious study in psychology. For a young man of such parentage and upbringing, who always had the idea that he would be heir to vast wealth, and then suddenly to find himself a pauper unless he would abjure the things which seemed to him a matter of life and death, must be a curious experience. It would affect different men in different ways. You don’t know what his father’s letter contained?”

“No. Julian would not tell me. I thought it best not to press him.”

“Has he made a confidant of you in the past?”

“Yes, hitherto he has hidden nothing from me, although I am not his confessor.”

“Then he was anxious to get rid of you?” asserted Ritzoom.

“Now I come to think of it, I believe he was.”

“Exactly. About this potential heir. Have you any idea who it is?”

Father Fakenham gave an account of his conversation with Ben Gascoigne.

“You see, I found out a little,” he concluded. “I discovered that it was a *woman*, and that she was a *stranger*.”

“Are you sure young Gascoigne knew?” asked Ritzoom. “I doubt it. Then there is another question. Did young Julian Boconnoc show any interest in the fair sex? Was he susceptible to the wiles of women?”

Father Fakenham answered decidedly. “No,” he said. “The first year he was in Oxford he went about a good deal. He is a good dancer and was popular with the girls. But after he came under our influence he showed not the slightest inclination to be with them. As you know, he intended to take Holy orders, and had avowed his decision to be a celibate.”

Father Ritzoom took a fresh cigar, lit it, and again sat back in his chair with closed eyes.

“Don’t speak to him now,” whispered McCormick in Father Fakenham’s ear. “Wait.”

When the Jesuit had burnt about a quarter of his new cigar, he turned to the Englishman as though there had been no hiatus in their conversation. “As you say, Fakenham,” he said, in tones of familiarity, “the matter will need delicate handling, very delicate handling. The Church doesn’t want to lose two, or perhaps more millions.”

“Our cause needs it,” assented Fakenham. “It would be a crime in the sight of heaven if all this money is not devoted to right ends. Don’t you think so?”

“A great deal could be done with it, a *very* great deal, properly used. But I have very great doubts about it.”

“Doubts!—*you?*”

“Yes, very grave doubts. I am not so cocksure as I was forty years ago. Experience has made me wise,” and he spoke in a ruminating tone of voice. “I used to say that the man who failed was a fool. I don’t say that now. Our best-laid schemes are likely to go astray. Human nature is constantly laughing at us, and I don’t promise as glibly as I did. Forty years ago I was one who prophesied that England would be reconciled to Rome before now, but I had not truly estimated the British character. Of course, I despise it. The Britisher is generally a thick-headed fool—but he is difficult to manage. He is of bulldog breed. He may be slow in getting at a thing, but once he sets his teeth in it . . .! The Continental mind is far more nimble, far more keen, than the British,—and yet the Britisher has beaten the world. Manning was right when he said that if the Church could conquer England it would conquer the world. But it has not done it. Whether it ever will or not, I have my doubts.”

“*You!*” exclaimed Fakenham, in astonishment. “You doubt?”

“Yes, I do.”

“You mean that you give up?”

“No, never. The Catholic Church doesn’t legislate for a day. It legislates for eternity. That’s why we go on, success or no success. But we have to face facts.”

Again Ritzoom leant back in his chair, closed his eyes, and apparently devoted himself to his cigar. The other two took this as a hint to be silent.

“I should like to see this young fellow,” he remarked presently. “One can judge so much better after having had a chat with him. But I doubt if it would be wise.”

“No?” queried Fakenham. “I had thought of arranging a meeting between you.”

The Jesuit shook his head, “A week ago it would have been all right,” he said. “Then he would have had no doubts and I should have been able to see into his mind without trouble. But I don’t like the turn things have taken.”

“Please don’t think,” urged Fakenham, “that he in any way distrusts me or doubts his vocation. He is still as transparent as a child, and he looks up to me in everything.”

The Jesuit shook his head. “What you have told me is not assuring,” he said, “and I see difficulties in the way. But they must be overcome. As you say——”

He again lapsed into silence and for more than a minute made no sound or movement.

“What do you think are the main difficulties?” asked Fakenham.

“Character,” replied Ritzoom. “Everything is summed up in that. If I had had him these last two years as you have had, if he had been in one of our institutions, there would have been no trouble.”

“I went as far as I thought was wise,” remarked the Englishman. “He admitted that those early Tractarians were holy men. He seemed almost to regard it a sin to doubt anything they said, and yet I could see that at the back of his mind he did doubt. A kind of reserve sprang up between us, an invisible something, I don’t know what it was, kept me from bringing anything to its ultimate conclusion. There was no doubt about it, a subtle

change came over him. I had to come back here, but I almost fear where his thoughts will lead him now he is left alone.”

“You say he is firmly convinced about the infallibility of the Catholic Faith?”

“Absolutely.”

“Then there *should* be no difficulty.”

“Then you think we can deal with him?”

“My friend,” said the Jesuit, “it is the will of God that all that vast wealth should be devoted to the extension of the Church.”

“You look at it in that light?”

“Undoubtedly. Therefore, it is God’s will that we should use every means in our power to accomplish it. Newman was right there. In fact, Newman and Pusey and Ward—the whole boiling of the Tractarians, were Jesuits before their time, Jesuits by nature, Jesuits in every fibre of their being. . . .

“They said that what such men as Andrew Boconnoc called truth, might be, in reality, lies. The question is will young Julian Boconnoc, in order to keep his wealth and use it for the Church, pretend to be a Protestant and be a Catholic secretly? There lies the crux of the whole question. All the rest is a matter of detail.”

Father Fakenham looked grave. He remembered certain things Julian had said, remembered, too, the expression on his face when he had hinted at certain Jesuitical doctrines. “I’m not sure that he would not say it was dishonest. I’m not sure whether he would act a lie.”

Ritzoom shrugged his shoulders scornfully. “Why, the whole of your Anglo-Catholic position means acting a lie?” he laughed. “You are acting a lie every minute of your life—according to the standards of your so-called British honesty. That’s where, on the face of it, John Bull has you. Oh yes, it’s no use mincing matters. You took vows in the English Church, vows which were a solemn protest against Popery in any and every fashion, and yet you’re doing your best, you and thousands of others, day by day, to bring your Church back to Popery. That is not honest according to the ordinary standards of honesty, and you know it, and I know it. But that is not the question. I, with Newman, admit frankly, that I would tell a lie, or a hundred lies, if thereby I thought I could extend Catholic truth. Why, think of one of the most elementary books that we publish, that called ‘Catholic Belief,’ by

the Very Reverend Joseph Faà di Bruno, D.D., page 230,” and Ritzoom laughed scornfully as he spoke. “I know the book and the page well,” he added. “I have had to use it so often. Now what does he say? ‘After being received into the Church *privately*, if weighty reasons in the judgment of your spiritual adviser justify it, such as loss of home, or *property*, or employment, and so long as that weighty reason lasts, you need not make your Catholicism public, but may attend to your Catholic duties privately.’ There you have the case in a nutshell. ‘If weighty reasons in the judgment of your adviser justify it, such as the loss of home, or *property* . . .’ That’s exactly Boconnoc’s position. You need not talk about it, you need not confess it, you can claim to be a Protestant while all the time you’re a Catholic.”

“Of course, I hinted as much as that to him,” admitted Fakenham.

“And he protested, questioned it?”

“No—o.”

“Exactly. Who is his confessor?”

“Father Bridgeman.”

“Bridgeman! I know him. That’s all right. I’ll see him first thing tomorrow morning, and then having talked over the whole situation with him he must go to Hawkspoint, and if necessary stay for a few days. That could be managed, couldn’t it?”

“Easily.”

“That’s settled, then,” and Ritzoom rose from his chair like one who saw his way plainly. “I’ll have a good stiff glass of whisky and soda, McCormick,” he said, with a laugh. “All this talk has made me thirsty and I’m feeling tired. I’m not the man I was thirty years ago.”

After that, while they sat for a long time talking, and while their conversation often reverted to the subject of Julian Boconnoc, the feeling was not so intense, neither was there any note of anxiety to be observed.

The following morning an English clergyman made his way into the square where Father McCormick’s house was situated. He was quickly admitted, and ere long he and Father Ritzoom were deep in conversation together.

“You understand, Bridgeman?” said Ritzoom, at length.

“I think so.”

“Practically everything depends on you.”

“Of course, I shall do my best. I fully agree with you in the attitude you have taken. It is not for our own gain or pride or honour or glory, it is for the extension of the whole Church of God.”

“Exactly. But mind, be careful. Study his character well. Watch his every movement, even to the flutter of an eyelid. Go slowly. Feel your ground carefully. As far as I can see a great deal of necessary foundation work has been done. He is a member of your Order. He has been taught to obey.”

“Yes, that is so.”

“But bear in mind that he is an Englishman, an Englishman of the most pronounced order. His father was a Yorkshireman whose forbears were Celts. His mother was a Yorkshirewoman. Remember, too, that she was at one time near joining the Catholic Church. And added to this, have the dangers clear before your mind.”

“Name them,” said the Reverend Mr. Bridgeman.

“First, he is an Englishman, and therefore has an intense hatred of being governed by a foreigner.”

“But surely that has been overcome?”

“To a degree, yes, but this will have given him a shock, and it will make him think out things anew. Second, remember that he is a man, and a young man. Be careful about his associations with girls; everything might come a cropper there. Fakenham tells me that he seemed very intimate with the daughter of Gascoigne, the Rector of Birtwhistle. Always be doubtful of a woman. And remember this, too. His wealth will appear to him in a new light. The love of his old home will appeal to him.”

“I think I understand, Father Ritzoom,” replied the other. “I have been his confessor for more than a year, and I have seen into the depths of his mind. I have no fears.”

“Good. Anyhow, get to your work. There is no time to waste. God bless you.”

A little after noon, the Reverend Mr. Bridgeman, Anglo-Catholic, and member of the Society for Corporate Reunion, started for Birtwhistle in Yorkshire, with many plans revolving in his mind.

CHAPTER IX

CUPID

Directly Father Fakenham had left him on the morning after Andrew Boconnoc's funeral, Julian went for a walk. March though it was, the sun was shining brightly, and the air was warm and fragrant. Julian did not realize it, but the fact that his spiritual adviser had left him gave him a sense of freedom. While he had been in the house there had been a sort of weight upon his mind, and a sense of restriction.

As we have already said, the reading of the will had come to him as a great shock. In a sense everything had become changed. Up to now, try as he might, he had not been able to adapt himself to the new conditions. He was in his father's house—supposed to be its owner; and yet it was not his house. Thus he felt confused and utterly strange. The only home he had ever known, and the home which he had been instinctively proud of, was somehow unreal. He who had fancied that his life was marked out on clear distinct lines found everything chaotic. He was like a vessel which had been apparently safely anchored but had suddenly broken loose from its anchor and was tossing on a trackless sea. He felt restless, felt as though the barque of his life had no moorings. Even his chosen profession had for the moment lost its hold on him. The ground seemed to be slipping from under his feet.

That was why, directly after Father Fakenham had gone, he went out for a walk.

He did not go towards Birtwhistle, but made his way steadily across the park in the direction of Hawkspoint. This craggy peak had always had an attraction for him even as a boy. It looked so stern, so rugged, so defiant. He was glad, although he knew not why, that his home had been called after this old landmark.

When he set out it was with the determination of thinking out what Father Fakenham had said in relation to the new conditions under which he found himself. But once in the open air all such thoughts fled from him. There was something in the sunshine, in the chirping of the birds, in the very air he breathed which kept him from concentrating his mind on such questions, and presently he gave himself over to the pure enjoyment of the day. After all, there was no such hurry as all that. He was young and he was free.

Presently he reached the end of the park lands and found himself faced by a stone wall which formed the park boundary. He was on the point of turning back when he suddenly resolved that he would climb to the top of the peak. There was something he liked about it, something which told him that up there, more than a thousand feet above, there would be freedom, exhilaration.

Yielding to the impulse of the moment he climbed the wall and leapt on to the road which ran close to it. Directly he did so his thoughts were turned in a new direction. He saw a two-seater motor-car standing in the road with its bonnet open, and by its side, evidently in difficulties, was a young girl.

“I say, excuse me for asking you,” the girl said with a laugh, “but do you know anything about motor-cars?”

“A little,” he replied. “What’s your difficulty?”

“I don’t know. The thing stopped just as I came to the foot of the hill. I’ve been here half an hour, and I can’t start it. Look, see what a mess my hands are in—and if I don’t get started in five minutes I shall be late. Please do see if you can do something with it.”

She looked only about twenty years of age and was flushed with her endeavours to get the engine going.

“Aren’t I a fright?” she went on. “I’m supposed to meet my mother and some friends at Bridgetown at eleven o’clock, and I’m not fit to be seen.”

“Yes, you are,” he replied quickly.

“What with all this grease and oil on my hands?” she laughed. “I’m afraid I’ve dirtied my dress too. But do see if you can find out what’s wrong with the blessed thing.”

Julian’s experience of girls was very small. Ever since his early days at Oxford, when he had been brought into contact with Father Fakenham, all his thoughts had been devoted to what he regarded as the serious things of life, and more and more he had been led to believe that women were a snare and a temptation. But the experience of the last two days had unsettled the whole course of his life. Besides this girl was but little more than a grown-up child. She was free and easy in her manner, and utterly unconventional. If she had been a boy she could not have talked to him more naturally. There was a comical expression on her face as she displayed her soiled hands and declared her helplessness. All the same, meeting her was pleasant. Although he did not realize it the very sight of her gave him a kind of surcease from the thoughts which had been bothering him.

At first there was nothing particularly striking about her. All the same, she gave him pleasant thoughts. She had a clear complexion and bright laughing eyes. Her parted lips moreover revealed rows of perfect teeth, and some locks of her hair had escaped from under a very becoming motoring cap. Besides, she had a trim little figure, and was well-dressed.

“You haven’t got a magneto, I see,” he remarked, looking into the engine.

“Haven’t I?” she laughed. “I’m not sure I know what a magneto is. Do you know when I was learning to drive I went to some lectures about the mechanism of a car; but it was all Sanscrit to me. I *do* know what a carburettor is though, and I can take out a sparking-plug and clean it.”

“Have you done anything to your carburettor?” he asked.

“No. I simply dare not move anything. You see I might make things worse.”

“Give me your bag of tools,” commanded Julian, “and I’ll see what I can do.”

“I’m so glad you happened to come along,” she remarked contentedly. “The thing was going like a bird until I reached this spot, and then it stopped suddenly. There can’t be so very much the matter with it.”

“I’ve got it,” he said at length. “Something has got into your petrol and choked the carburettor. There, don’t you see? That bit of grit’s done it.”

A minute later he had put the carburettor back and was flooding it. A minute later still the engine was purring sweetly.

“Oh, thank you so much,” cried the girl. “You *are* clever.”

“Not a bit of it; but I do know something about a motor engine; and of course—this was nothing. It might happen to any car.”

“Anyhow, I must be going now. I do hope the blessed thing won’t go wrong again, for I simply *must* be at Bridgetown in a quarter of an hour from now.”

“May I drive you there?” he asked. “I have nothing to do, and I could get you there in ten minutes.”

“Would you?” asked the girl without a moment’s hesitation. “It would be jolly good of you if you did. I’m awfully fond of motoring, but I’m the greatest duffer in the world if anything goes wrong. The man who taught me to drive told me I had not got the mechanical streak in my brain, whatever

that may be. In fact I'm pretty useless altogether. There, get in if you want to drive me."

He obeyed her and placed himself before the wheel while she took her seat by his side.

A few seconds later they were going up the hill at the rate of thirty miles an hour.

"You see that was all," he remarked. "She only wanted a little juice. Do you live near here?" he added.

She shook her head. "No, my home is near London."

He would like to have asked her what she was doing there, whether her friends lived in the district, and a number of other questions, but he refrained. After all it would be an unwarrantable liberty. Besides if she wanted him to know she would tell him.

The car sped on, and a few minutes later they found themselves nearing Bridgetown. Then the girl, who had been silent for some time, burst out impulsively.

"Oh, I was mean to let you come with me. I never gave a thought to you, and I must be taking you miles out of your way. Please don't go any farther; I can manage all right now."

"But really I have nothing to do," protested Julian, "and I'd love to take you—where your mother is."

"But you mustn't, you mustn't!" and there was an anxious tone in her voice. "Mother won't understand, and—and, no you must not. Please stop now."

Evidently she meant what she said, and almost unconsciously he moved his foot from the accelerator to the brake, and the car slowed down.

"It's no end good of you to get me out of my fix," she laughed, as she got out of the car, "and I'm jolly well ashamed of myself for getting into such a funk as to ask you to help me. But I'm just like that. Good morning, and thank you so much." She held out her hand as she spoke, and with laughing eyes looked into his face.

"Please don't thank me," replied Julian. "It's—it's— You're sure you can manage now?"

For an answer she placed herself before the wheel, released the clutch, placed her foot on the accelerator and sped away, while Julian stood

watching her.

“Dash it all, what a fool I was!” he exclaimed to himself. “I didn’t even ask her her name, and—— But of course I couldn’t. I wonder who she is?”

As if in reply to the question which had formed itself in his mind, the girl, who was by this time two hundred yards away, turned slightly and waved her left hand to him. But he did not see her face again. That was hidden from him. Then a turning in the road hid the car from his sight.

The incident was small and seemed of no importance. It was a common thing for a girl to be driving a car alone in these days; it was quite natural, too, for her to ask him to help her out of her difficulty. He was glad he had fastened upon it so easily, and yet he was not sure. He almost wished something had been the matter with the distributor instead of the carburettor; that would have taken him longer, and he might perhaps have learnt more about her.

He turned and walked back along the road towards Hawkspoint. A feeling of depression had come over him suddenly. While this girl had been at his side he had felt almost gay and light-hearted; now a sense of utter loneliness possessed him.

What a jolly girl she was! And what glorious eyes she had. Not beautiful in the ordinary sense of the word, but pleasant beyond words. Fascinating in fact. And so unconventional too. She talked to him as though she had known him for years. But surely it was strange that she should have been willing for him to drive her! He had not thought of it at the time, but although the memory of it was pleasant, it surely was not an ordinary thing for a girl to do. And yet there was not the slightest suggestion of anything fast about her. She spoke to him just as a boy might speak, and with no more hesitation or restraint.

Presently he reached the spot in the road where he had first seen her, and then called to mind his determination to climb Hawkspoint. But he had no longer any desire to go there. Then he realized again that Father Fakenham had gone, and that the house was empty. He thought of his father’s letter which Mr. Coad had given him the previous day, and then suddenly all his old problems came back to him.

Leaping the park wall he found his way back to the house, half dreading to return to its empty silence, yet drawn to it as by a kind of magnet.

“Fancy giving it all up,” he reflected. “Fancy giving up all this. Fancy _____”

“Mr. Coad is inside, sir,” Parker greeted him. “He came about ten minutes ago. I told him you had gone out, but he said he would wait.”

“I didn’t feel free to talk to you plainly yesterday,” said the lawyer as Julian joined him in the library. “Perhaps you can understand.”

“Is anything wrong?” asked Julian.

“No—yes, everything is wrong.”

“What do you mean?”

“It’s this will,” replied Mr. Coad. “I hated drawing it up, but I had to; if I hadn’t done it someone else would, and I’ve been your father’s lawyer and friend for years. I had a long talk with him two days before he died.”

“Yes?” queried Julian, and he looked steadily into the lawyer’s face.

“I believe your father hated doing it too. But perhaps you can understand his feelings. Believing as he did perhaps he could not have done otherwise. But I hope you will be reasonable.”

“Reasonable? What do you mean by that?”

“You will—you’ll not disinherit yourself? You’ll not allow everything to go to a stranger? I’m sure that in his heart of hearts your father hoped you’d—keep everything.”

“Did he think,” and there was passionate anger in Julian’s voice, “that I would be untrue to my conscience? That I’d sell my soul?—that I’d be another Judas? My father knew of my vocation, knew what were the cherished hopes of my life, knew what I had determined to do. Did he think that like Esau I would sell my birthright for a mess of potage?”

“Then you can never be a Protestant?”

“Protestant!” he cried angrily. “What is Protestantism? It’s a negation. It’s a political system touched with emotion. The so-called Protestant church is no church at all; it’s a mockery. Shall I, knowing what I know of the true Faith, give it up? Never!”

“Think what you’re saying, Julian. Think what you would have to give up. I’m a lawyer and my business is to deal with properties, but I trust I’m a Christian. Anyhow, your father has given you time to think, time to decide.”

“I *have* decided.”

“No you haven’t,” persisted the lawyer. “After all, you’re only a boy, and no boy of your age should make such a tremendous decision in a day.”

Take the full year allowed you. Look at the matter from every standpoint. Test everything, prove everything.”

“I have decided. I have tested everything, proved everything.”

“Then are you going to give up everything at once?”

A far-away look came into his eyes. He looked out of the window and saw the broad parklands stretching before him. From the town which lay perhaps a mile away he heard the sound of buzzers. He remembered that thousands of the operatives in the town were his father’s employees—*his* employees if he liked to have it so. He remembered his father’s letter, a letter written with a hand that was dying, and in spite of himself his lips quivered. Then seemingly without any reason whatever his mind flew to the laughing-faced girl he had seen that morning. He remembered the whimsical look on her face, the mischievous light in her eyes, the healthful laughter of her voice.

“I’m all at sea, Mr. Coad,” he said. “Perhaps I shall see things clearer presently.”

“That’s it,” assented the lawyer. “Give yourself time. Give yourself time, my boy.”

That was the note on which Mr. Coad left him after lunch, and Julian felt that perhaps after all he was right.

That same afternoon he walked to Birtwhistle and wandered through the streets of the town he had known from his childhood. He noted the great mills which were supposed to belong to him, and marked the faces of the weavers as they left their work. Many of them, he saw, looked at him curiously. Of course, they knew who he was. Perhaps they wondered what he was going to do with all his vast possessions.

When night came he sat alone trying to face the problems which loomed before him. Surely never was a fellow in such a position before. Again he read his father’s letter, again he pondered over the whole situation. Before going to bed he prayed long and earnestly.

The following morning, directly after breakfast, he got out the car which years before he had used freely, and having told Parker that he would be back for lunch, he left the park with the intention of going for a long drive. Where, he did not know, but ere long he found himself nearing Bridgetown. Why he went there he could not have told. There was apparently no reason why he should have been attracted by it. It was simply a huge overgrown manufacturing village. It had no architectural beauty. The houses were long

rows of ugliness, and from a hundred chimneys half-consumed smoke was belching forth. It was about seven miles from Birtwhistle and was little known to him.

Presently he stopped his car before the Bull Hotel, the leading hostelry in the town. Why he did this he could not have told. He had no intention of staying there.

Then something happened which caused his heart to beat violently. Coming out of the hotel he saw four women, one of whom was the girl he had helped on the previous day. They did not see him, but stood together in the doorway talking eagerly.

“What in the world made you select Spain?” asked one woman.

“Oh, it’s a very interesting country,” was the reply. “Besides this is the best time of the year to go there. I have long wanted to see the Spanish towns and especially the cathedrals. I suppose those of Toledo and Burgos are simply dreams. We are going there first.”

“Yes,” and this time it was the girl whom he had met on the previous day who spoke, “and Spain is a Roman Catholic country. I suppose there are no Protestants there, and mother wants to see what Roman-Catholicism does for a country. Of course there are other things too,” she laughed. “There are bull fights and all sorts of festivities.”

They passed up the street talking and laughing as they went. None of them had noticed him.

Julian waited until they were out of sight. Then, scarcely knowing what he was doing, he turned his car and drove back to Hawkspoint.

He had made up his mind what he was going to do.

CHAPTER X

A FEELING OF REVOLT

The Reverend James Bridgeman looked round the room complacently. Although in many respects an ascetic, he was not averse to the good things of life. He was a lover of art, and regarded himself as a connoisseur of statuary and pictures. He was particularly impressed by the stately proportions of Hawkspoint. It was true he personally preferred Queen Anne houses, but he could not help being impressed by the dignity, and even beauty of this Yorkshire house. Stone built, substantial and massive, it was indigenous to the countryside. The furniture, too, although anything but "arty," corresponded with the building. There was an air of affluence and of solid comfort everywhere.

When he had first arrived he thought Julian had not given him a particularly hearty welcome, but remembering what Father Ritzoom had told him he had been very careful in his conversation, and had little by little regained his authority over him. At least he thought he had.

Up to the present, however, he had said nothing of his real purpose in coming. It was true he had adopted something of the attitude of a Father Confessor to a young penitent, but nothing of importance had been discussed between them.

After dinner, however, when the two men had adjourned to the library he felt that the time had come to speak. Julian sat in his father's armchair while Mr. Bridgeman had drawn up another opposite to him, and was stretching his legs before the fire with an air of enjoyment.

"I had no idea you had such a fine place here," he remarked to the young man as he looked round the room. "Why it must be nearly a mile from the lodge gates to the house."

Julian did not reply, but sat looking steadily into the fire.

"The house is not very old, is it?" he went on seemingly quite at ease.

"A little more than a hundred years, I think," replied Julian. "It was built on the site of one very much older. My father bought it with the estate just before he married my mother."

"Your father was much older than your mother, wasn't he?"

“Considerably. He did not marry until he was well on in life.”

Mr. Bridgeman looked as though he were on the point of pursuing this topic further, but after looking at Julian’s face, refrained.

“He was a rich man then, I suppose?” he said at length.

“I should imagine so.”

“Father Fakenham told me about his will. It was a most unjust one; most unholy.”

Julian was silent. Even from his confessor anything derogatory to his father irritated him. After all it was not his business.

“Father Fakenham told me how perturbed and anxious you were,” remarked Bridgeman. “That’s why I came. I felt that you needed guidance and advice. You see you’re young and inexperienced, and you have come face to face with a great problem. Because it *is* a problem. No one recognizes that more than I. That was why, the very moment Father Fakenham suggested it to me, I determined to come to you. As you have told me a hundred times, although you have lived here all your life you have no real friend, with the exception of Father Lindley, and he of course is not quite your sort.”

“You mean by that——?” Julian queried quickly.

“That while he’s an excellent fellow he is scarcely a gentleman,” replied Mr. Bridgeman. “Of course, too, you could not talk with him freely; how could you? That was why I felt, realizing our relationship, that it was my duty to come to you. As I said, your father made a most unholy will, a most unjust will. You see it places you in a very difficult position. It is not as though you were in the full sense of the word a layman, for you are on the point of taking Holy Orders, and Father Fakenham suggested to me, long before this great trouble fell upon you, the advisability of joining some Order.”

“Some Order? I am a member of an Order, the Order of which Father Fakenham is Master.”

“Yes, yes, I know; but an Order something like the Carthusian or the Franciscan. However, I don’t advise that, especially under the circumstances. As your father’s heir you have duties, great and solemn duties. Every young man needs help in the administration of such an estate.”

“My father had every confidence in Mr. Coad,” replied Julian. “And he entrusted the management of all his Birtwhistle property to him. I don’t

know much about it, but I suppose he employed several solicitors in various parts of the country.”

“Yes, yes, I understand that. Doubtless everything is in order from the legal standpoint, and I have no doubt that Mr. Coad and others whom your father employed will see that everything is right according to the laws of the country; but there are higher laws than the laws of the country, and that is where your difficulty comes in. Your legal advisers are doubtless to be trusted in their own domain, and you do right to place your affairs entirely in their hands. It is yourself I am thinking about.”

“Please explain.”

“I am thinking of this outrageous will. Father Fakenham tells me he has talked with you about that.”

“Yes,” replied Julian, and by the puzzled look on his brow he seemed to be trying to recall something difficult to understand.

“You have been troubled a good deal, haven’t you?”

“I’m afraid I have. I suppose it was natural.”

“Yes, natural, but believe me, my son, unnecessary.”

“How, unnecessary? I don’t understand. You may say the will is unjust if you like, but it’s very plain. If I accept its conditions I inherit practically everything. If I don’t I have nothing. That’s what it amounts to in a nutshell.”

“As to those conditions, are they for you to decide, my son?”

“Who else is there to decide them?”

“You are a child of the Church. You are almost ready to take Holy Orders. Practically you have given your life into the keeping of the Church. Will you not as a natural consequence turn to the Church to guide you under every circumstance in life? Believe me, my son, it is not for you to trouble, it is not for you to puzzle what you ought, or ought not to do; it is for you to place your hand in the hands of the Church, which means in the hands of your spiritual adviser, and let him guide you in the one true path. When you entered the college of which Father Fakenham is Head, you, to all intents and purposes, agreed to do this. In everything you promised obedience to the Church’s commands. And believe me, my son, although that obedience will bring you infinite joy, and rest to your soul, it is at the peril of your soul that you disobey.”

This was the point to which Father Bridgeman had been leading the conversation, and it was here that he felt on firm ground. Like Father Ritzoom, he had felt that Fakenham had acted unwisely in debating the ethics of the doctrine of Reserve with Julian. No doubt Cardinal Newman was a great and holy man, and was fully justified in what he had done during the early days of the Oxford Movement. Doubtless, too, he and several others belonging to that movement had said and done many things which to the plain blunt John Bullism of the country might appear exceedingly debatable, if not absolutely wrong. That was why Julian might be shocked when suddenly brought face to face with such an intellectual position. Of course, Father Fakenham was right in his conclusions, but he had acted precipitately. Father Ritzoom had made him feel this. What Fakenham had said was lawful, but it was not expedient, and so Father Bridgeman, remembering the conversation he had had with Ritzoom, determined to make Julian look at everything from a different standpoint.

Not that he was altogether at his ease. There was something new in Julian's attitude which he did not quite understand.

"I'm sure you feel this," he went on. "Of course, every true Catholic discards the Protestant idea of the Church which, since the Reformation, has obtained in England. To the Protestant the Church practically means nothing: to the Catholic it is everything. It is our home, our ark of safety, our refuge in the storm—our all. The Catholic Church speaks with a Divine Voice. It speaks with authority. That is our glory in bringing back the Church of England to the Catholic fold again. That is why we Anglo-Catholics could no longer be content with the dry husks of Protestantism."

Julian had heard this a hundred times in one form or another, and as one who had accepted the full Anglo-Catholic position, it formed a part of his creed.

"That is why the Catholic Church has always insisted on obedience on the part of her children," went on Father Bridgeman. "Protestants all over the world are a mere rope of sand. Protestantism cannot speak with authority, therefore it cannot command obedience; but to every true Catholic, when the Church speaks, it is for us to obey."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Julian.

"I mean this," replied the priest: "You are face to face with a difficult position, a very difficult position. That is why you need guidance. Well, that guidance awaits you."

“Where?”

“In the Church. It is not for you to trouble. Of course, if you were a layman things might be different. But you are not. You have in intention taken Holy Orders; you have promised obedience to the Master of the Order you have joined. The Church is your great Mother. It is for her to speak for you.”

“I’m afraid I do not see that,” replied Julian. “Of course, I see what is in your mind, but it does not seem to apply. In the world of doctrine the Church’s voice is, of course, supreme, but as I understand it the Church has never assumed the right to dictate in temporal matters.”

“The Church’s voice is supreme everywhere,” replied the priest solemnly; “but let that pass. As I understand your position from Father Fakenham, your father made a most unholy will. He has laid devilish conditions upon you. He has declared that unless you deny your Lord, you are to be robbed of what is rightfully yours.”

“And I must accept his conditions,” replied Julian. “As an honourable man I can do no other. The terms are absolutely plain. If I remain a Catholic I am a pauper. Well, I accept that. The issue is perfectly clear.”

“Yes,” urged the other, “but is it not a matter of *ethics* as to whether you will allow the devil to be triumphant in this matter? Is it not a matter of ethics as to how the word ‘Protestant’ shall be interpreted? Is it not a matter of ethics as to whether you are a secret disciple of the true Church, while the world regards you as a Protestant?”

“Of course it is a matter of ethics; but what then?”

“This. Who shall judge as to what is right and what is wrong, you or the Church?”

“You mean that I should allow the Church to decide?”

“I mean that those whom God has placed in authority over you are alone capable of guiding you in matters appertaining to conduct. Of course, it is not for me to say what the Voice of the Church will be. Such a question will be decided by those wiser and holier than you, and they will decide aright. In the meantime it is not for you to trouble. It is for you to place yourself entirely in the hands of those who will not think of themselves, but of the good of the world, of the extension of the Kingdom of God in the world. That is your great privilege in being a Catholic. You have only to place all your difficulties in the hands of the Church, and she will decide.”

His confessor's voice had all the power of a siren's call to the young man. Ever since the reading of the will his mind had been in a state of tumult. He who had thought that material wealth had no power over him discovered his mistake. Love for his old home, and all that the old home meant, was strong within him. His father's letter, too, had made its appeal. Why should he give up everything for what many would call a chimera? Was not Father Fakenham right? If great holy men like Newman and Ward declared that people might, and even ought to, deceive if some great good thing would result, might he not . . .? And then his sense of honour, all the traditions of his family, that elementary conception of truth which had been instilled into his mind from his infancy, told him that in spite of specious reasoning he had no right to use a penny of his father's wealth while he remained a believer in the Roman Catholic Church.

Still, Father Bridgeman's words made a strong appeal to him. It was not for him to trouble, or to argue pros and cons. He had accepted the Catholic faith, he had promised obedience to his spiritual advisers—this indeed was his bounden duty, therefore it was for him to place all his problems in the hands of the Church and cease to trouble. All he had to do was to throw his burden where it properly belonged, and rest his poor tired head on the great broad bosom of his infallible Mother.

And yet . . .

"But definite steps will have to be taken," he said at length. "What you say appeals to me strongly, but lawyers are men of business, and . . ."

"Is that for you to trouble about? When once you have placed your affairs in the hands of those who will act for you, you will have no further care, you will have nothing to trouble about, nothing to decide. In the meanwhile . . ."

"Yes, in the meanwhile," interrupted Julian.

"I should say travel. You need rest, and change. You look pale, ill. Why not go away, see new scenes, hear new languages? I have had this in my mind ever since Father Fakenham told me about your difficulties, and I have made my plans accordingly."

Julian looked at the other questioningly.

"Yes, I knew that as a devoted son of the Faith you would be obedient, even although I have issued no commands. Of course, if you had openly avowed yourself as a member of the Roman Catholic Church and had joined one of her Orders, it would be for her priests to command. But we who are

called advanced Anglo-Catholics are in a somewhat peculiar position. If I may so put it we are secret disciples of Rome, and we remain in the Church of England only to bring her into submission to Rome as a body. But our duty is the same. If we do not obey her behests we are traitors. And you are no traitor, Julian. Your one thought in life is to help to carry on the great work we have set ourselves to do. That is why I knew that only the suggestion of your duty would suffice.”

“But you said you had made your plans?”

“Yes, I find I can be free for the next few months, and so you and I will go away for a holiday together.”

“Where?” Julian could not help asking.

“Oh, many places; but among others, Rome.”

“Rome?”

“Yes. The conditions of your father’s will are bound to leak out, and many will wonder what you will do. Well, what will be more natural than that you should go to Rome to study the system at headquarters? Moreover, you will go professedly as an inquirer; no one will need to know what your real thoughts are. We shall go as a couple of laymen and shall adopt a somewhat critical attitude. I think that will be best. Incidentally we shall have a pleasant and interesting holiday.”

Although Father Bridgeman spoke in a pleasant voice and with a smiling face, he watched Julian anxiously. For that matter he was not altogether at ease in what he was saying. It is true he belonged to the extreme order of Anglo-Catholics, and regarded it as his duty to do everything in his power to bring England into submission to Rome. But he was still an Englishman, and the old English traditions of truth and honour were not dead within him. Had anyone told him, thirty years before, that he would entertain the ideas which were now surging in his brain he would have been scornful, indignant; but ever since he joined the Anglo-Catholic movement a change had slowly come over him. He had adopted a new mental attitude. When he had first taken orders he fully believed in the vows of the Protestant Reformed Church of England. Then, constantly meeting with Anglo-Catholic men, he had become enamoured of the Catholic idea. He listened eagerly to discussions among the more advanced Ritualists. He wanted to belong to the Catholic Church, wanted to claim—without doubt—to be in an unbroken line of apostleship, wanted priestly power. That was why he became an easy convert to the doctrines of “Economy” and “Reserve,” which were at the

basis of the Tractarians' scheme of things. Presently he found himself trying to prove that his ordination vows presented no hindrance to his being a secret disciple of Rome. The microbe of deceit, apparently innocent at first, had slowly eaten its way into his former conceptions, until, like many others, he persuaded himself that it was his duty while remaining in the Church of England to lead that Church into submission to what he called his "true spiritual home." His old passion for truth became numb, and the specious casuistry of Jesuitism took its place. That was why he who had promised to be true to the Protestant Reformed Church of England could now laugh at what he called "Prots," and claim fellowship with a system which by his ordination vows he was bound to eschew.

As the years went on he became more and more deeply involved in the Anglo-Catholic scheme, and joined eagerly with others in seeking to destroy the Protestantism of the land.

When Father Fakenham had at first told him of the happenings at Hawkspoint, and of the new will which old Andrew Boconnoc had made, it seemed to him that all the wealth which he had hoped would flow into Anglo-Catholic coffers would be lost. But after discussing the matter with Father Ritzoom he saw things in a new light. Not a keen thinker himself, and anxious to be persuaded, the subtle Jesuit was quickly able to show him ways and means which he had never dreamt of. The Church was everything, the individual was nothing. Therefore in all things the Church must stand first. He knew that many, even among the advanced Anglo-Catholics, would condemn what he had in his mind to do; but having placed himself in Ritzoom's hands he was quickly persuaded that the Jesuit was right. Just as Torquemada believed that the use of the thumb-screw, the rack, and the faggot was all for the glory of God, so Father Bridgeman believed that to outwit old Andrew Boconnoc's Protestant bigotry in making such an unholy will would be counted to him for righteousness.

"A strange, unbelievable attitude of mind," many readers will say. But, sir, or madam, let us be sure of this; once tamper with truth, once persuade yourself that it can be right to deceive that good may come out of it, and the floodgates of lies are thrown wide open, and every deceit and every lie becomes possible.

"It will give you time to think," Bridgeman added. "Your father was anxious that you should have a year to consider your whereabouts. This plan of mine will give it you."

But Julian did not altogether relish it. The thought of being in Father Bridgeman's company day after day, week after week, and perhaps month after month did not appeal to him. It was not in accord with his English ideas. It was true he had become a convert to Father Bridgeman's faith, but he did not want to be like a dog led round by a string. And this was what it meant; thus it was that in spite of the influences of the last few years, he revolted.

Yes, the reading of his father's will had given him a shock, while the old man's letter, which he had read so many times, came to him as a kind of moral tonic. There was something else too. Only a few hours before he had made up his mind what he intended to do, and if Father Bridgeman had his way his plans would vanish to the winds. As it was, almost before he realized he was speaking, those qualities in his nature to which his father had appealed asserted themselves.

"Thank you, Father Bridgeman," he said, "but surely this will not be necessary."

"You mean . . .?" questioned the priest in astonishment.

"That I have other plans."

"You have other plans?"

"Yes, I have other plans," he persisted, and even as he spoke a sense of freedom came to him to which for a long time he had been a stranger.

The priest was astonished, confounded.

"Surely you do not mean that, my son?"

"Yes, that is what I mean."

"And what are those plans?"

"Pardon me," replied Julian quietly, "but for the moment I do not care to discuss them."

"You use that language to *me*? Surely, Julian, you forget yourself."

"No, I do not forget anything," replied the young man, and there was a tone in his voice which the other had never heard before.

"Do you mean that you disobey me? Remember, my son, you have told me the secrets of your soul; you have accepted me as your guide, your spiritual counsellor. Does this mean that you have become apostate?"

“Of course not. No such thought has ever entered my mind; but at least I owe my father this. He has given me a year to decide. I—I’m going to take advantage of it.”

“What has come over you, my son? Do you accept your father’s guidance rather than mine?”

“I have realized since his death that I never understood him,” replied the young man slowly. “I have realized, too, although I did not know it when he was alive, that I loved him. What he has asked me to do he has asked in love, and—and . . .”

“‘He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me,’ ” quoted the priest anxiously. “I speak as your confessor, I speak as your priest.”

“When I have gone to you for confession, it has been to confess my sins,” cried Julian. “But in such a matter as this, surely I must act—for myself. In every matter of right and wrong I look to you as my spiritual guide. . . .”

“This is a matter of right and wrong,” urged the priest.

“Father Bridgeman,” replied Julian, rising to his feet, “in matters appertaining to faith, and of my soul, I look to you as my guide, but when it comes to a question of how I shall spend my holiday, surely . . .”

“But you are under Father Fakenham’s orders,” broke in Bridgeman hurriedly. “You . . .”

“I have received a letter to-day from Father Fakenham, telling me that he will not expect me back at college for six months. He has advised me to take a holiday abroad.”

“Did he not tell you I was coming?”

“He suggested that you would probably pay me a visit; that was all.”

The priest was silent for a few seconds, and a change slowly came over his face. “Julian, my son,” he said, “I can see that you’re ill, overwrought. These disturbing events have come upon you suddenly; naturally you do not care for further conversation now. I too am tired, and would like to go to bed. Will you show me to my room? I’m afraid I can scarcely find my way by myself.”

“Yes, I am tired, overwrought,” replied Julian, and he went to the bell-push as he spoke. “Will you show Mr. Bridgeman to his room, Parker,” he

continued, as the servant appeared. "Good-night, sir, I hope you will sleep well."

"I have made a mistake," reflected Bridgeman as he followed Parker upstairs. "I have gone too fast, I have taken too much for granted. I had no idea he would take it that way. Heavens, we must be very careful!"

He entered the bedroom, and when Parker had left him, threw himself into a chair and buried his face in his hands. "Yes, I went too far," he went on thinking. "No, there is no real harm done, and he's safe enough; but I was a fool, I forgot what Ritzoom told me. Of course his father's death and this ghastly will have given him a shaking up, and he wants to stand on his feet again; but—but—yes, I must go to Oxford first thing to-morrow morning. I must report to Ritzoom right away. He will know what to do."

CHAPTER XI

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE

“Can you let me have a car, Julian?” was Bridgeman’s greeting as he met Julian the following morning.

“Certainly. Do you want to go anywhere in particular?”

“I must get back to Oxford at once. There are a few things I want to settle up before taking my holiday,” was the priest’s reply. “I see there is a good train just before ten, and it will get me back home in good time. It will not be inconvenient to you, will it?”

“Not in the slightest. I’m afraid the chauffeur has been very idle lately. I’ll see he has his orders at once.”

During breakfast the conversation of the previous night was not resumed, but Julian could not help noticing that his visitor took it for granted that they would go to Rome together. He gave a graphic description of his first impressions when he went to the Eternal City, and of the wonderful sights he had seen.

“You have never been to Rome, have you?” he asked.

“Never,” replied Julian. “It has been one of the dreams of my life to go there.”

“It will be such a pleasure to show you round. My word! we shall be like two boys together! The Hotel de Russie is not the most fashionable place in the city, but the proprietor knows me, and it is exceedingly comfortable. I am as excited at the thought of going as a boy preparing to pay his first visit to the seaside.”

Julian was silent. He had been again reading his father’s letter, and its influence was strong upon him.

“You told me, last night, that you had just had a letter from Father Fakenham; would you mind letting me see it?”

Without a word the young man took the letter from his pocket and passed it to the other.

“Yes, I see”—he had carefully read every word—“he has given you an extended holiday, but, of course, you will still remain under his control. He

is Head of the Society to which we both belong, and under him you are still preparing for Holy Orders.”

“Yes,” replied Julian.

“I know he has it in his mind that we shall go away together,” continued Bridgeman; “still, there is no hurry about that for a few days. By the way, I shall tell Father Fakenham of our conversation. I shall assure him that you will be guided by us in this most difficult matter.”

Julian was silent.

“I think the best plan will be for you to sign a document which Father Fakenham will prepare, whereby you give him authority to act for you. Everything will be plain sailing then, and you will have no further need to trouble any more about the matter. He is in constant communication with the best lawyers in the country, and I am sure you trust him implicitly?”

“Of course,” replied Julian, but he scarcely knew what he was saying.

“God be with you, my son,” said the priest, as a little later he took his leave. “Have no fears, all will be well. I believe you are called to do a great work. Through you I can see a new Reformation. I can see England throwing off her heresy and received back to the heart of the great Mother.”

There was real passion in the man’s voice, and Julian was affected. His old hopes came surging back into his heart. The dream which for years he had been dreaming became very real.

“Oh, if it could be so, Father!” he cried. “If Grace had only touched my father’s heart before he died, and this ghastly will had not been made!”

“Have no fears, my son,” cried Bridgeman eagerly; “a way will be found. The wiles of the Devil will come to naught, and in days to come you will be looked upon as one of the great saviours of the country. Only trust in our guidance, and everything will come right.”

“Yes, Father,” he replied submissively, and at that moment he meant it. The light of a visionary came into his eyes, and all the wild, wondering thoughts which had surged in his brain ever since his father’s funeral seemed to pass away. He beheld all heresy swept out of the land as if by a strong hand. In the eye of imagination he saw all England in submission to Rome. He saw Protestantism become a thing of the past, until it was regarded as only a hateful memory, while he, Julian Boconnoc, by his devotion, by his sacrifice, by his great gifts to the Church, had made this holy work possible.

“Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free!”

The words surged in his mind and memory. They were the words of our Lord Himself, spoken as He only could speak.

“That is it,” he cried aloud. “England shall know the truth and the truth shall make her free. The truth of the Church, the only Church, the mouthpiece of God.”

He started as though someone had struck him. Another passage came into his mind.

“No lie is of the truth.”

The words seemed to be a corollary of the great passage which had so moved him.

“No lie is of the truth.”

They were the words of him who had laid his head on the bosom of our Lord, and they appeared like letters of fire before his eyes. If that were so—then . . .

He was alone on the doorstep of his father’s house. Father Bridgeman had gone, and he was left there with those tremendous words ringing in his ears, and burning in letters of fire before his eyes.

For some time he stood, scarcely realizing that his visitor had left him. Then his mind reasserted itself and he came back to the hard matter-of-fact world.

But the words kept ringing in his memory, and the spell which the priest had cast upon him passed away. He went into the library, sat in his father’s chair, and again re-read the letter which the old man had written to him with a dying hand.

An hour later he was walking through the park towards Birtwhistle rectory. He remembered that Mr. Gascoigne was one of his trustees, and it would be nothing but courtesy on his part to call upon the man whom Andrew Boconnoc respected and trusted.

“Hallo, Julian,” cried Dinah, as he entered the rectory. “You have found time to come and see us?”

“Yes, Dinah,” he laughed. “Is your father in?”

“Not for the moment; but he will be back in half an hour. Come in, won’t you?”

He was almost relieved that the rector was not in. Knowing as he did that that gentleman was cognizant of every detail of his position, he felt sensitive at the thought of meeting him. Besides, it would be pleasant to talk with Dinah, pleasant to look at her healthful, happy face, to hear her clear, girlish voice.

“Haven’t you been lonely up there alone, Julian? I have tried to persuade Ben to take me up to see you, but he’s been so frightfully busy. What have you been doing with yourself?”

“Oh, thinking, brooding.”

“Poor old boy,” sympathized the girl. “You have had a hard time. I say, Julian, is it true?”

“Is what true?”

“That you’re taking Holy Orders.”

“Yes, I suppose so.”

“And you’re what they call an Anglo-Catholic, aren’t you?”

“Why do you ask that?”

“Oh, it’s the talk of the town. I say, Julian, how can you do it?”

“Do what?”

“Join the crew who are saying that such men as dad are hindering the work of the Church, because he’s true to his ordination vows. I always looked upon you as a gentleman.”

“I hope I am,” he replied, but the words stung him.

“Then how can you, as a gentleman belonging to the Church of England, play into the hands of Rome?”

“Who said I was playing into the hands of Rome?”

“But aren’t you—you and all those Anglo-Catholic men?”

“But if some of us think the Reformation was a mistake, Dinah?” he queried.

“Then there is only one course an honourable man can take,” replied Dinah.

“What is that?”

“Go to the Church of Rome. The man who stays in the Church of England while his heart is with Rome is acting a lie. I don’t know anything about theological niceties. Very likely Father O’Brien could prove to me that all Protestants are heretics; but that is not the question. People are saying that Father Lindley is a Romanist at heart. I don’t know whether he is or not, but if he is he should go to Rome. Don’t you think so? Oh, here comes dad; he’s back earlier than I thought. Hallo, dad; here is Julian come to see us, and as I suppose you don’t want me, I’ll go into the kitchen and look after the lunch. Won’t you stay to lunch, Julian?”

“I’m afraid I can’t,” replied the young man.

He was sorry and yet relieved when Dinah went. The girl’s bright presence seemed to lift a load from his heart. All the same, she made him uncomfortable. There was something in her outspoken honesty that was like a rebuke.

The rector looked at him questioningly. He had not seen him since the reading of the will, and while he had felt strongly tempted to take advantage of his position as trustee and have some conversation with him, he refrained; all the same, he was glad Julian had come to see him.

“Well, my lad,” asked the rector presently, “have you made all your plans for the future?”

Julian shook his head.

“Yes, you have had a rough time, haven’t you? I’ve been longing to have a chat with you.”

“Why haven’t you come up to Hawkspoint, then?”

“Well, I was not sure I was wanted.”

“I say, rector!” protested Julian.

“Fact, I assure you. You see, that man Fakenham was there when I left, and, of course, we have nothing in common, and I didn’t know how long he was going to stay. What are you going to do about it, my boy? You were on the point of taking Orders, weren’t you, when your father died? Is that still your intention?”

“I suppose so; but it will not be for some time, anyhow.”

Mr. Gascoigne looked at the young man’s face keenly. Naturally, he wondered how his father’s will would affect him.

“You don’t feel like obeying your father’s conditions, I suppose?”

Julian shook his head. "How can I—believing as I believe?"

"No, of course you can't. Still, I'm awfully sorry, my boy, awfully sorry. But I won't argue with you about it. I am too utterly out of sympathy with your point of view; and good seldom comes of arguing. Still, it seems an awful pity that the wealth which your father amassed should go to a stranger."

Julian was silent.

"And, of course, it will," went on the rector. "Your father left nothing in doubt. Hasn't it made you think, my boy?"

"Think! I've thought until I'm nearly mad. I'm not a money grub, rector; all the same, I love my old home, and—and—but there it is."

"Yes, there it is," sighed Mr. Gascoigne, "and I wish I could persuade you to give up what to me is a dishonourable position. But if you can't there's nothing for it but—but to take the consequences. Of course, you could not be a hypocrite and pretend to be what you're not."

"I never wanted the money for myself," replied Julian. "I had hoped to use it for—for other things."

"Yes, I imagined that. And, of course, your father had it in his mind when he made the will. Besides, that makes no difference."

"Don't you think so?"

"How can it? I know what you have in your mind. Of course, you intended to use the money for what you believe to be God's work; but God wouldn't have it, my lad. It would be sheer hypocrisy. If you do not honestly see your way to become a Protestant, then, hard as it may be, it will, of course, go to a stranger."

"Have you any idea who that stranger is?" asked Julian quickly.

"Not the slightest, and even if I had I could not, of course, divulge what your father did not intend to be known until the end of the year. Yes, it seems hard, I know it does; but your father hated Romanism. He believed the system to be evil. He had no sympathy with what he believed to be its superstitions, its idolatry, its blasphemy; therefore, seeing you cannot accept his conditions, there is no honourable course but to let everything go—elsewhere."

Julian could not help realizing the difference between the straightforward, blunt words of this old-fashioned English gentleman and

the subtlety of Father Fakenham. Of course, he did not agree with the rector's Protestantism. The man was blind to the higher truth of the Catholic Church; and yet he admired him. There was no room for subterfuge, no room for equivocation in Mr. Gascoigne's mind. As for the doctrines of "Reserve" and "Economy," which the Tractarians made so much of, they were anathema to him; they savoured of lies and of the Devil. Julian rose to go.

"What's your hurry, my boy?" asked the rector. "Look here, I never pretended to be much good at dialectics; but can't you come down some night and let us thrash out the whole matter? I think I can prove to you that your father's position was the only position for a man who believed in the New Testament."

Julian shook his head. "It would be no good, Mr. Gascoigne," he said.

"Wouldn't it? Well, I'm sorry. Still, of course, I would be the last man to persuade you to do anything against your conscience. The Reformation stands on that. Luther was right there. 'Here stand I,' he said. 'I can do no other. God help me.' Good-bye, my boy, if you *will* go; and may God bless you."

Reaching the street, Julian looked at his watch. "It is only twelve o'clock," he reflected. "I'll go and see Lindley. I wonder why he has never come near me."

He found Father Lindley in his house adjoining St. Michael's Church.

"Why haven't you been to see me?" asked Julian, when their first greetings were over.

"I wanted to, of course, but I did not think it wise."

"Why not?"

Lindley smiled in a mysterious manner. "I happen to have heard the terms of your father's will," he replied.

"But—but—who told you? There's been no probate yet, and of course, the details have not been made known."

"Don't fret yourself, my dear fellow," replied the young priest. "No one in Birtwhistle told me, anyhow; will that satisfy you?"

Julian's mind worked quickly. "You have heard from Oxford?" he ventured.

"I naturally keep up my connexion with my old 'Varsity," replied Lindley.

"You know the terms of the will?"

"I have a pretty good idea."

"I am a pauper unless . . ."

"Yes, I know."

"What do you advise me to do?"

"It's not for me to advise; you have seen both Fakenham and Bridgeman. They are at the heart of things. Bridgeman left you this morning. Do you like him? Of course, you trust in Father Fakenham?"

"Do you?" asked Julian. "You know them both."

"They go farther than I," replied Lindley. "Of course, I am a High Churchman, a Ritualist, if you like. People call me a Romanist; but I'm not. What I stand for is that people can get everything in the Church of England that they can get in Rome; but I don't go as far as they do. I am simply an advanced High Churchman. Of course, our ultimate aim is reunion with the Church of Rome."

"But you use the full Roman ceremonial now. You believe in every article of their faith."

"Not Papal infallibility," laughed Lindley.

"But all the rest. If you don't accept the doctrine of 'Reserve,' how can you practise all the Roman Ritual after having taken ordination vows in the Church of England?"

"I won't discuss that with you. I had better not," and Lindley remembered the letter he had received from Father Fakenham that very morning.

"The Protestants claim to be honest," said Julian, like one musing. "They call us living lies."

"That kind of tosh doesn't affect me. We have it on the highest authority that a tree is known by its fruits. Apply that to the position of the Church of England to-day. Where are life, vigour, activity, to be seen? Who are the men who are doing Christ's work, going into the slums, working among prostitutes, thieves, drunkards? Ever and always the High Churchman, the Anglo-Catholics. You know as well as I do that nine out of ten of those

Protestant chaps are simply a lot of drones. If a tree is known by its fruits then our case is impregnable. Take away the High Churchman from the Church of England and you have nothing but death. We are the only people who keep religion alive; the rest give the people nothing but husks to feed on. That is why I am a High Churchman. If you come down to hard logic, or if it is a matter of pure ethics, then the Protestants beat us. But what is Protestantism? It is simply an ethical system. I tell you, Christ is not to be found in the Protestant churches.”

Julian found his way into the streets again. His mind was still unsettled. His conversation with the three clergymen had affected him strangely.

“I suppose I shall have to give up the plans I had made,” he reflected. “I shall have to do what Father Bridgeman says. Last night I felt as though I would not, but there seems nothing else for it.”

He stopped before a great woollen mill, one of the many in the town which was supposed to belong to him. In the yard that surrounded it were signs of activity. Everything told of industry, of wealth. He knew that if he went inside the yard he would be spoken to as its owner. But he was not. The terms of his father’s will made it impossible. Not a penny of the vast wealth supposed to be his really belonged to him. And yet. . . . And yet. . . .

He went back to Hawkspoint, where he had a lonely lunch. After which he sat down to read. He selected a book which Father Fakenham had advised him to study carefully. It was “Catholic Belief,” by Doctor Bruno, and mentioned by Cardinal Manning as “one of the most complete and useful manuals of doctrine and devotion and elementary instruction for those who are seeking the truth.” He turned to the part which dealt with “secret discipleship,” and eagerly read the words which Father Ritzoom had mentioned to Fakenham in Oxford. “After being received into the Church *privately*, if weighty reasons in the judgment of your spiritual director justify it, such as loss of home, or *property*, or employment, and so long as those weighty reasons last you need not make your Catholicity public, but may attend to your Catholic duties privately.”

Surely—surely. . . .

He threw down the book and began to pace the room. He knew what Father Fakenham had in his mind, realized the inwardness of the suggestions which Father Bridgeman had made on the previous night. Surely, then, it would be right. He wanted nothing but his own, nothing that did not really belong to him, and this he wanted not for himself but for the extension of Christ’s Kingdom, the Glory of God.

But would he not be acting a lie? And could money gained by a lie be rightfully used for God's work? Somehow he could not consent to place everything in the hands of his spiritual directors before being fully assured of their intentions.

Presently he turned to the book-cases which lined the walls of the room and took down Newman's "Apologia Pro Vita Sua" and presently fastened upon a passage of the great Cardinal's earlier writings. "For myself," he read, "I can fancy myself thinking it was allowable in extreme cases for me to lie, but never to equivocate."

These were the words of one of the greatest men who had lived within the last century; a man who, reared in the Church of England, had gone over to Rome. Why should he hesitate when such men as Newman and Bruno spoke so plainly?

Then, even as the thought was passing through his mind, the words that had come to him that morning came rushing back to his memory. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

"No lie is of the truth."

He felt stifled. He must get out in the open air. A minute later he found his way into the park and was walking towards Birtwhistle. For a time he was almost unconscious of his surroundings. Then he knew that he was in Birtwhistle standing before the General Post Office.

A two-seater car was near the entrance. Surely he recognized it.

Then his heart gave a great bound, for coming out of the doorway were two girls. One was a stranger; the other he knew. She was the girl who had asked him to help her with the car. She did not notice him. She was laughing and talking with her companion. What a bright, happy-looking girl she was. Everything about her was healthy, vital.

"Have you got plenty of books for your journey?" asked the girl by her side.

"Yes, I got a regular stock of them yesterday."

"Oh, I do envy you. I wish I were going too."

"I wish you were. Just fancy, in a few days from now I shall be in Toledo, one of the most romantic places in the world. Oh, I am excited!"

A second later she was in her car, seated before the steering wheel.

"All right, Peggy? Then close the door; don't slam it."

She released the clutch and the car sped away. Neither of them had taken any notice of him. For that matter he did not know who they were, had no idea of their names.

For nearly a minute he stood on the flagged causeway watching while the car disappeared from sight.

“In a few days from now I shall be in Toledo,” he found himself repeating. He knew that she intended going to Spain, but to what part he had no idea. Now she had told him.

Before he realized what he was doing he was hurrying back to Hawkspoint.

“I’m going away to-night, Parker,” he said to the old butler.

“Going away, sir!” repeated the astonished servant. “For long, sir?”

“I don’t know yet, it may be a month or two. See that my clothes are ready, will you?”

“Yes, sir; certainly, sir. Are you going alone, sir?”

“No—yes; I am, though.” And he laughed excitedly. “Like Don Quixote, I’m going to seek adventures alone. Whether I shall pick up a Sancho Panza or not I don’t know. Perhaps I shall,” and he laughed gaily.

Parker made pretensions of having a taste for good literature. He had read Cervantes’ masterpiece and understood his master’s allusion.

“Then neither of those clerical gentlemen are going with you, sir?”

“No, I’m going alone.”

A look of satisfaction came into Parker’s eyes. Whether he knew the meaning of what had taken place in the house since old Andrew Boconnoc’s death I do not pretend to know. Certainly he had made no attempt to hide his dislike of Julian’s spiritual advisers.

“The best thing that could happen to him,” he reflected. “Those parson fellows would simply haunt him if he stayed here, and I’m sure the old master would hate that.”

“Of course, I’m sorry you’re going, sir,” he said aloud. “All the same, a holiday will do you good. Going far, sir—if I may make so bold as to ask?”

“To the Continent—to Spain,” Julian replied. “I’ll inform you as to my whereabouts, Parker.”

“Very interesting country, Spain, sir,” remarked Parker. “I’m told as how Cervantes wrote Don Quixote in Spain, in Toledo.”

“By Jove, so he did. I’d forgotten. By the way, Parker, say nothing to anyone as to where I am going.”

“Certainly not, sir.” Then to himself he added: “I wonder if there’s a girl in the question? I hope there is. Anything to get him out of the hands of those priest fellows.”

With quick footsteps Julian found his way into the library, and seized the telephone receiver.

“Hallo, is that Mr. Coad?” he asked, when he had got his call through.

“I’ll put you on to Mr. Coad, sir. He’s in his own office, alone.”

“Yes, Julian, what is it?”

“I just rang you up, Mr. Coad, to tell you I’m going away for a month or two.”

“Going away?—month or two?”

“Probably. I don’t know for how long, but I thought I’d let you know. You will, of course, attend to everything.”

“Certainly.”

“Of course, I know there are lots of things to attend to, but I should be no good, anyhow. I leave everything to you.”

“There, that’s that,” he said to himself a minute or two later.

He went to the writing-desk by the window and commenced a letter;

“Dear Father Fakenham——”

Having written this he hesitated. “Shall I write to him?” he asked himself. “Shall I tell them where I’m going? No, I won’t!”

He jumped up from his chair and threw down his pen hastily. “Dash it all,” he cried aloud; “I’ll be free.”

A week later he found himself at the door of the Fonda de los Caballeros. He had had a long and dreary journey from Madrid, and was tired and depressed.

There was much shouting and gesticulating while luggage was being deposited at the hotel door, and Julian was almost wishing he had not come, when, looking through an open doorway, he saw a face that set his pulses bounding wildly. It was the face of the girl he had hoped to meet, and she was sitting next to a young fellow he had known in Oxford.

CHAPTER XII

JOAN KILLIGREW

“Your train is several hours late,” the hotel proprietor greeted him; “but that is nothing. Trains seldom keep time in Spain. You will have dinner? Yes. I’ll show you your room and then in ten minutes it will be ready.”

The interior of the hotel was better than the exterior promised. His room was clean and comfortable, and he found himself eagerly anticipating the future. He had found the girl he had come to see, and more than that he had discovered an old Oxford acquaintance. He did not know Tom Bagshott intimately, but he knew that he had moved in a good set at Oxford and had taken a more than respectable degree.

But what was he doing in Toledo? Evidently he was on friendly terms with this girl. They looked as though they might be old acquaintances from the way they were laughing and talking with each other.

Something like pain shot through his heart. He knew not why. “Anyhow,” he reflected, “I shall soon discover who she is now, and learn all about her.”

A few minutes later he had finished his meal and found his way into the lounge where the girl sat. But he felt strangely diffident. He was disappointed that she was not alone, or had only ladies as companions. Why should Bagshott be with her? There were four of them playing bridge, and Bagshott was evidently her partner. He noticed that one of the other players was one of the ladies he had seen at Bridgetown. But after all, why not? They had come to Spain for a holiday and would naturally seek to spend their evenings pleasantly.

Neither of them looked up at his entrance. They were too engrossed in their game.

Although the day had been warm, the night was cold, and he was glad to find his way to the wood fire which burnt in an open grate. Although he had taken up a book, he did not read it. He found himself watching the girl’s face instead. Why it was he did not know, but he was disappointed. She was no longer the laughing, happy, grown-up child he had seen in the road outside Hawkspoint Park. There was a look of intensity, a kind of concentration on her face which had been absent then, and he wondered why she had so

impressed him. A feeling of antagonism was aroused in his heart against her, and yet she fascinated him. But the fascination was not that of a careless, hoydenish girl who had asked him to help her with her car, but something entirely different. The few bits of cardboard she held in her hand had seemed to have wrought a change. Her eyes had none of the laughter which had first greeted him, her mouth which had expressed whimsical helplessness then, was now set and determined. She was utterly oblivious to what was going on around her. All her faculties seemed to be concentrated on the few cards which lay on the table, and those she held in her hand.

Then suddenly, as if by magic, a change passed over her. Laughter came into her eyes again, her face relaxed, and she burst forth into merry chatter.

“Four tricks,” she cried. “Four in spades. That makes game and rubber. Didn’t I play like a book, mother? Yes, and you dared to double.—Four times nine are thirty-six. Doubled, seventy-two. Four honours thirty-six—two hundred and fifty for the rubber. Isn’t that good, partner? I wish I had re-doubled now.”

“Yes, if we had played for stakes as I wanted,” laughed Bagshott, “we should have made a tidy bit.”

“And that would have spoiled everything,” she replied.

“Nonsense. There would have been no harm in it.”

“No, perhaps not, but it would not have felt right. I have no argument against it, but somehow, playing for money seems like a degradation of sport. What’s the time? Would you like another rubber, mother?”

But before her mother had time to reply, the girl’s eyes, which had quickly swept round the room, caught those of Julian. At first, she gave a quick astonished start. Then, regardless of the others, she leapt from her seat and rushed to his side. “Fancy meeting you here!” she laughed.—She might have known him for years. She spoke with all the freedom and unaffectedness of a child. “Mother,” she went on, “this is the gentleman who helped me with my car that day. I had been to Birtwhistle and had promised to meet you at Bridgetown. I should not have been in time but for him. You remember, don’t you?”

Julian rose from his chair and the attention of the other players was immediately drawn to him.

“By Jove, if it isn’t St. Francis,” exclaimed Bagshott, rushing forward with outstretched hand. “This is great! But what in the name of the seven champions of Christendom brought you to Toledo, old man? I imagined that

you would be head over heels with law business. Mother, let me introduce you to Mr. Julian Boconnoc, otherwise St. Francis. This is my mother, old man. You should know each other; our place is not fifty miles from yours.”

Julian bowed to the two ladies who had risen from the card table. Mrs. Bagshott greeted him warmly, but the girl’s mother seemed less inclined to be friendly. For that matter she appeared somewhat annoyed at the greeting which her daughter had given him.

“It’s awfully good to see English faces,” Julian managed to say. “When I got here I almost wished I had not come. Everything looked so gloomy, but—I felt I could not stay in England. I . . .” he broke off confusedly as though he did not know how to finish the sentence.

“Of course we understand,” said Mrs. Bagshott, kindly. “We had, of course, heard of your loss,—the whole of Yorkshire was talking about it. You look pale and thin, Mr. Boconnoc, I hope your holiday will do you good.”

“If he can eat the food,” laughed the girl. “It’s simply terrible, Mr. Boconnoc. My mouth is all over blisters with trying to eat the bread. Are you staying in Toledo long?”

“I have settled nothing,” replied Julian, looking nervously from one to the other. “I only felt that I must get away from Yorkshire. I was like one being stifled. Are you staying long, Miss—— I’m afraid I don’t know your name,” he added. He could not help noticing the look of annoyance that again passed over her mother’s face. Evidently she was anything but pleased at the freedom with which her daughter spoke. Julian was not sure that she liked him, but the girl went on with easy assurance.

“That’s just like me,” she cried. “My mother is always scolding me about my manners, but I can’t help them. My name is Joanna, Mr. Boconnoc, Joanna Killigrew, called Joan by my friends. It’s an awful name, isn’t it? I suppose it hardly exists outside of Cornwall, and I’m told it’s seldom heard there, but that’s what it is. Years ago, when my father was alive, he used to call me ‘Pickle.’ Then I suppose later the servants called me ‘Terror.’ What they call me now I don’t know. But that’s my name, Joanna, otherwise Joan Killigrew. And, of course, my mother is Mrs. Killigrew. Have you brought a car, Mr. Boconnoc? I was awfully vexed that mother would not let me bring mine. I thought it would be such fun, but since I’ve been here I’m glad I didn’t. There’s hardly a dozen roads in Spain fit to drive on. Oh, they are terrible, simply terrible. I suppose King Alfonso had all sorts of plans about the roads when he married Princess Ena, but I’m

told that nothing hardly has been done. Do you know Spanish, Mr. Boconnoc?"

"Only a little, I'm afraid."

"The word most used in Spain," went on the girl, with her clear, ringing laugh, "is 'Mañana.' That means 'to-morrow.' If you go to a shop and ask for anything, they haven't got it—of course they haven't. They never have anything; but they always say 'Mañana.' It will be got to-morrow. That is their answer about having better roads in Spain. But to-morrow never comes with them. Still, I have enjoyed every minute since I've been here." She prattled on with all the easy familiarity of a child, although, at times, her face suggested something which Julian could not understand. Her eyes now were full of girlish laughter, but he could not help remembering their keen concentration a few minutes before when she had been playing her cards.

"Anyhow, you'll have a great time in Spain, St. Francis," broke in Bagshott.

"I hope so. But why?"

"Oh, you'll be able to spend all your time in churches. You see, I remember you at Oxford."

"Is that why you call him St. Francis?" asked the girl. "We have been to the cathedral here to-day, Mr. Boconnoc, and it's simply wonderful. For a time it held me spellbound, and it made me feel so awfully solemn; but I didn't like it."

"Why?" asked Julian.

"Because it's so cold and dead. It's simply awful in its grandeur; but it's ghastly for all that. I wanted to come out into the sunshine. It depressed me, made me miserable. It's so old, too, so terribly old; it suggests a dead religion instead of a living one. It makes you think of Good Friday, but never of Christmas Day. But, for that matter, all Spain seems dead. In a way it's grand, but everything seems to tell of death. Why, think of Toledo itself, 'lordly Toledo,' as it was called, 'the crown of Spain, the light of the whole world, free from the time of the mighty Goths,' as the guide books have it. It is just a city of the past. At one time it had no less than two hundred thousand inhabitants, while now, in spite of its glorious buildings, only thirteen thousand people live here. Just think of it!"

She had ceased being a child, and had become thoughtful, almost sad. She looked older, too; her laughter-loving eyes had changed, and spoke of a deeper nature than Julian had first thought possible.

“Anyhow, it’s time we went to bed,” said Mrs. Killigrew, speaking almost for the first time during the conversation. She had been watching Julian’s face closely, as if trying to make up her mind whether she liked him or not. Evidently her impression was not altogether favourable, for she bowed stiffly to him as she moved out of the lounge, followed by her daughter.

“Good-night,” laughed the girl over her shoulder. Then she stopped suddenly and turned “By the way,” she added, looking at Bagshott, “you have not told me why you call Mr. Boconnoc St. Francis.”

Bagshott laughed gaily. “No one ever called *me* that, anyhow,” he replied. “Perhaps you can guess why.”

“Were you a rake?” asked the girl, and her face changed to that of a child again.

“Hardly that, but I was never regarded as a saint.”

She gave them both a quick, searching glance, and then turning, ran after her mother.

“Tired, Boconnoc?” asked Bagshott, looking towards the fire.

“No, not a bit.”

“Then let’s have a chat and a smoke before we go to bed. By the way, you can get a decent whisky in Spain, although it is out of the world. Have one?”

“No, thank you.”

“Oh, forgive me. I’d forgotten you’re one of those pussyfoot fellows. Still, I’ll have one if you don’t mind.”

They were alone in the lounge and Julian, pulling out his pipe, moved towards the chair he had occupied when Joan Killigrew had first recognized him.

“I’m awfully glad you turned up,” said Bagshott, seating himself near him. “But what in the world led you to come here?”

“Difficult to tell,” replied Julian quietly.

“Oh, yes,” said the other sympathetically, “I expect I can understand. I lost my old dad two years ago, and although I still had the mater, it gave me a shaking up. It meant that the responsibility of everything came to me. Dad’s death left the mater prostrate and helpless, so naturally I had, as far as

possible, to take his place. It brought me up to my beam ends, I can tell you. I was a bit inclined to go the pace, but dad's death stopped that. I couldn't let the mater down, you know."

Julian nodded understandingly.

"With you I expect it's more so," went on Bagshott. "You, I understand, have no mother, and of course you're such a big pot that you feel another Rothschild. What does it feel like, old man, to have more money than you know what to do with?"

"I don't know," replied Julian, truthfully. He wondered what Bagshott would say if he knew how matters really stood.

"Of course," went on Bagshott, "you will not know for months, yet, how you stand. I remember when dad died it took a tremendous time to arrange the probate and clear up everything. Still, you will have pots of money."

Julian was silent.

"You've met Miss Killigrew before, it appears?"

"Only once," and Julian told him of the occasion. "She is a friend of yours?" he added.

"Wonderful kid," went on Bagshott. "Wonderful kid. Sometimes she might not be more than twelve or fourteen, she seems so utterly irresponsible; but really she's turned twenty-one. You wouldn't think it, would you? She is just a bundle of contradictions. One minute she is as feather-pated as they make 'em, and the next as serious as a judge. For that matter she is never ten minutes alike. When I met her first I imagined that a serious thought never came into her mind, but before long I found out my mistake. By Jove I did. I suppose there isn't a more pleasure loving girl in Europe than she, and yet, by gad, she *can* be serious! Do you know, she had a tremendous record at Girton. Carried everything before her. What do you think she went in for there?"

"Not the slightest idea," replied Julian.

"Metaphysics, ecclesiastical history, and by all the gods, theology—that for a girl! And yet, while she was carrying everything before her, she was just a happy, careless kid. She dances like a dryad, rides like a Diana, plays tennis like a champion, and is scratch at golf. Just think of it!"

"Have you known her long?"

“Three years about. Her mother and mine were school friends. I suppose their intimacy cooled off when they got married but the year before my dad died she visited our place.”

“Killigrew,” reflected Julian. “That’s a West country name, isn’t it?”

“One of the oldest in England, I suppose. In the past the Killigrews were by way of being the greatest pots in Cornwall. That was back in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts. They lived at an old house in Falmouth, called Arwennack, and the Killigrews were at one time governors of Pendennis Castle; but the name has nearly died out, I think, and I imagine that they are not very well off. Mother tells me that Mrs. Killigrew lives in a little house in Surrey. What did you think of her?”

“Who, Mrs. Killigrew?”

“No, Joan.”

“I’ve hardly seen enough of her to make up my mind,” replied Julian. “When I met her first I thought she was a bit of a hoyden.”

“That’s because you only saw one side of her. I tell you she can be the haughty, proud lady to distraction, and as reserved as they make ’em. She must have liked you or she wouldn’t have made friends so quickly. She has a sort of intuition which leads her to like or dislike people right away, and she is as stubborn as a mule when she has once made up her mind. In fact, in some ways she is one of the most unreasonable girls I ever met.”

A long silence fell between the two young men after this. Bagshott lay back in his chair and closed his eyes, while Julian steadily looked into the fire.

“I’m gone on her,” said Bagshott presently.

“Eh?”

“Dead gone. I’ve been asking her for more than a year, but up to now I’ve had no luck. She won’t take me seriously, although heaven knows I’d give my eyes to get her. Of course, you’ll respect my confidence, old man?”

“Naturally,” replied Julian.

“You see, you’re not an ordinary kind of fellow, and I can speak to you plainly. Besides, I feel in a confidential mood.”

“You say you have asked her?”

“Repeatedly, but it’s no use. You can’t make love to her in the ordinary way. She—she just laughs at you. You might think her shallow, but by heavens, she isn’t! She goes right down to the roots of things.”

“Has she ever given you any encouragement?”

“Not the slightest. I wish to heaven she would. I should know then that I had a chance. Before she knew the real state of my feelings she was as coquettish as you like, and you might have thought she was gone on me; but directly she knew I was serious she shut up like an oyster. You never saw a girl with such a fine sense of honour. She hates every form of lies as she hates hell itself. I don’t believe she would stoop to deception to save her life. She can forgive anything rather than deceit in any form.”

“I should think the fact that she has allowed you to accompany her and her mother here is a kind of encouragement,” Julian said slowly.

“Not a bit of it. Oh, I know I’m like a moth flying round a candle,” and Bagshott spoke almost angrily. “I know I’m a fool, too; but I can’t help myself. I believe I’d murder any chap that looked like getting her. But there it is. My mother would give her eyes to get her for a daughter-in-law, and I’m sure Mrs. Killigrew would be quite willing. Of course, I have not given up hope; I never shall until she is married to somebody else. I came to Spain so that I might. . . .” Tom Bagshott lapsed into silence again.

“But why did you come to Spain?” asked Julian.

“It was Joan’s idea. As I told you, she’s a strange mixture. She is as modern as they make ’em, and yet she’s deeply interested in religious subjects. She said she wanted to come to Spain in order to study Roman Catholicism in the most Catholic country in Europe. Of course, she could not come without her mother, and her mother asked mine to come with them. So, although I didn’t care a hang about Spain, I jumped at the chance of being with her. Of course, I’ve never talked to anybody else about this, but you’re different.”

“Different? How do you mean?”

“Oh, you’re half a monk. I hear you’re on the point of taking Holy Orders, and that you are an avowed celibate. Put in a word for me if you can, won’t you, old man?”

“If she’s the kind of girl you say she is, I should do more harm than good,” he replied. “Good-night, Tom; I’m going to bed.”

He left the room as he spoke, and found his way upstairs. When he reached his bedroom he walked round like one in deep thought. His conversation with Bagshott had influenced him more than he realized. He had to confess to himself that this girl, and this girl only, was responsible for his being in Toledo; and yet he had practically vowed to eschew the society of women. To be near her he had been disobedient to the wish of his confessor. He had refused ever since he left England to allow himself to dwell upon this fact, but now it came to him with poignant force. Was he not playing with sin? Was he not dallying with the world, the world he had promised to renounce? Had anyone told him three weeks before that he would be in his present state of mind, he would have been scornful, indignant; but now. . . .

Of course, his father's will had upset everything, while his letter had shaken his life to the very foundations. Then there were his talks with Father Fakenham and Father Bridgeman.

He took from his pocket a Roman breviary and began to read what he regarded as a divine office. He had not really taken Holy Orders, but he had taken them in intention, and he had taken them not as a Church of England minister, but as a Roman priest.

Yes, he must renounce the worldly thoughts that had occupied his mind. He must. . . . Great heavens, what a whirlpool of confusion everything was! Why had he not joined the Roman Catholic Church a year before when he wanted to? Why had Father Fakenham persuaded him against it? If he had done this he would not have had his present difficulties. Of course, he had listened to the priest's statements that what was wanted was not individual secession to Rome, but a bringing of the whole church over in a body, but . . .

He gave a sudden start. He remembered that to-morrow was Friday, a day of fasting, and he had received no dispensation not to fast. Besides. . . . Yes, he would go to mass on the following morning, and he would go to confession too. . . .

He little realized what influence this decision would have upon his future.

CHAPTER XIII

JULIAN'S CONFESSION

The following morning, according to his determination of the previous night, Julian rose early and made his way through the streets of Toledo. According to the guide-book he had obtained there was a church in Toledo, the Church of the Kings, where one or more of the priests understood English, and where English Catholics generally went. He was by this time in a very devout frame of mind. He had read devotional books far into the night, and had risen with the determination that nothing should turn him from what he believed to be the path of duty. What that duty was he was not sure. His mind was in too much of a tumult. But at any rate, he would seek Divine guidance, and would follow it, and be religiously true to it.

He had great difficulty in finding the Church of the Kings. He knew it was not far from the great cathedral, but he soon lost himself amidst the maze of narrow streets; Besides, it was difficult to find the church he wanted. He quickly found that Toledo was a city of churches, and that they were close together. But they were nearly all closed. Most of them were cold and dark. At length, he found the one he wanted and entered. In England, when he had gone to Roman Catholic churches, he had done so by stealth. Even although he had been at heart a Romanist, and had eagerly looked forward to the time when all England would become faithful, he had been taught that it was not expedient to openly participate in Catholic services. The country, he was assured, was not ready for open profession and would misunderstand his action. Here, however, he felt free. He was in a strange land, unknown to everyone, and he was in a land where the true church was the church of the nation.

If the truth must be told he felt somewhat disappointed on entering the Church of the Kings. It was far from clean, and the adornments of the altar looked tawdry and poor. He did not like the look of the priests, either. They were dirty, ill-shaven-looking men. Two of them looked positively evil. They had great thick lips and gave no suggestion of asceticism or spirituality. It was evident, too, that they had come from the common people.

Julian, although he would not have admitted it, was not free from snobbery. Practically all the clergymen he had been associated with were cultured, refined men. At any rate, they had the manners of gentlemen.

These Spanish priests, on the other hand, had the manners of yard dogs. Two of them were taking snuff while engaged in their sacred office, and openly spat on the floor of the church. It came to him as a shock, and more than once he felt like running away.

Still, the service attracted him, and as it proceeded he felt more and more solemnized. Here, at all events, was full Roman ceremonial, conducted by priests, about the validity of whose orders there was no doubt.

But he could not help being disappointed. After all, the human element influenced him, and material surroundings were not without their effect. Dirt he had always detested, and whatever were the circumstances by which he was surrounded, he had been meticulously careful about his personal habits and appearance. Thus, the sight of these priests wearing week-old beards, and with dirty hands and finger nails, disgusted him. It was with difficulty that he put them out of his mind, even during the most solemn parts of the service.

He had fully made up his mind that he would introduce himself to some of them as occasion occurred, but he refrained from doing so. After all, why should he? He had nothing in common with them.

The first person he saw on returning to the hotel was Joan Killigrew.

“Been sight-seeing already?” she greeted him. “My word, you are energetic! Where have you been?”

Evidently she was in her thoughtless, happy mood. She spoke with all the familiarity of a schoolboy.

“To the Church of the Kings,” he replied.

“The Church of the Kings. I never heard of it. Is it noted for anything in particular?”

“No, nothing in particular. It’s a humble little place.”

“And you have gone there before eight o’clock in the morning?” and she looked at him inquiringly.

“It’s the church where English Catholics generally go,” was his reply.

“But you are not a Catholic? I thought you. . . .”

He would not hide his light under a bushel. He would have the courage of his convictions. The truth must come to light sooner or later, and he would let her know at once.

“Oh yes, I am,” he replied, “and I have been to mass. I am an English Catholic,” he added.

“You mean that you have joined the Roman Catholic Church in England.”

“No—not quite that. I suppose I am what you would call an ‘Anglo-Catholic.’”

“Oh I see.” The tone of her voice had altered, and she no longer spoke with easy familiarity. He could not help noticing the change. “I must go to my mother,” she said, “I expect she will be down by this time. We are all having breakfast early to-day. We’re going on a long excursion.”

She left him as she spoke, and found her way into the hotel, while he stood gazing after her. The atmosphere had suddenly changed to him. It was true the sun was still shining brightly on the old city. In spite of its dark, sombre appearance, it looked attractive in the light of the morning sun; but everything had changed nevertheless. Was the girl one of those Protestant bigots who were for ever crying shame on such as he? No, that could not be. She was too much of a happy child for that, and yet, remembering what Tom Bagshott had told him, he felt uncomfortable.

Of course, he did not care what she thought of him. Why should he? Their’s was only a chance acquaintance and. . . .

But he did care. He knew he cared. Ever since he had first seen her he had been forming plans about her. He had come to Spain simply because she had come. He wanted to be with her. He, who for years had given up the society of girls, had determined to take every chance of improving their acquaintance.

When he entered the dining-room and saw the party of four sitting together at breakfast, he felt like an outsider. He saw, too, that Tom Bagshott was by her side, and that she was laughing at something Tom had said. Then she looked towards him, and laughter left her face.

He was making his way towards a vacant table when Tom Bagshott caught sight of him.

“No, no, Boconnoc, you must join us,” he cried. “See, here is a place for you. I told the waiter that you would be sitting with us.”

After greeting the elder ladies, he took the place that Tom had indicated; but the atmosphere was different from that of the previous night.

“We are going to Torrijos to-day,” Bagshott informed him. “It’s a most unholy hole from what I can gather, but it seems there are some frightfully interesting things to be seen there. It seems that old Father Parsons, who plotted against Queen Bess in the sixteenth century, stayed there for a time. In fact, he held one of his most important councils there. Personally, I don’t care a hang about Father Parsons or any of his doings; but Miss Killigrew is eager to go. Will you join us?”

Julian gave a quick glance at Joan Killigrew, hoping that she would second the invitation; but her attention was entirely taken up with her coffee and rolls.

“I suppose the roads are frightful,” went on Tom; “but that’s nothing in Spain. We have obtained the best horses in Toledo, and according to all accounts the best driver. You must come, old man. I’m told that the principal church there is simply a marvel of beauty.”

Again Julian looked at Joan Killigrew, but the girl made no sign whatever.

“It’s awfully good of you, Tom,” he replied, “but I don’t think I’ll tackle it. I had a fearful journey coming from Madrid yesterday and I’ll just loaf around Toledo to-day.”

A few minutes later the others had left him, and he felt strangely disconsolate as he watched the great, clumsy-looking carriage disappear. He did not know a soul, and he was utterly alone. He was altogether mystified, too. Why should the girl be so friendly one minute, and the next so utterly antagonistic? She had, on the previous evening, expressed the hope that they would see Spain together, and now she had been coldly repellent at the suggestion that he should accompany them on their excursion. Why was it? Of course, it could not be because he had told her that he was an English Catholic. That would be absurd. What did girls care about ecclesiastical differences? Still, he felt angry that she should be spending the day in Tom Bagshott’s company, when he—he. . . .

What should he do with himself? He knew practically no Spanish, and had yet to learn his way about this mediæval city. He opened a guide-book in order to discover places of interest, but he had no desire to go anywhere. What a fool he was to have come. He had acted like a madman throughout. . . . Still, he was interested. No one could help being interested in Toledo, which is perhaps one of the most romantic places in the world. Ere long he found himself on a spot from which he obtained a view of practically the whole of this wonderful fortress. For that was what it was; just a fortress, a

town built upon a rock. Hundreds of feet below him, at the base of the rock, ran the River Tagus, whose brown waters almost encircled it.

Yes, it was wonderful, wonderful beyond words. No wonder all sorts of legends had grown up around it. Some Spanish historians had it that the sun had, at its beginning, shone on Toledo. It was also spoken of as the centre of the world. Churches abounded, and there were historical buildings everywhere. The great Alcazar, although shorn of much of its former glories, was still wonderful.

Presently he had nearly forgotten his chagrin and disappointment. Toledo had cast its spell upon him—the narrow streets, the quaint buildings, the peculiar customs of the people, the sombre men and the dark-eyed, laughing girls. Yes, he was glad he had come.

Ere long he found himself in the cathedral square, and was looking upon what many historians declare to be the oldest Christian church in the world. It did not look as large as the cathedral at Westminster. But heavens, what a difference! Its proportions were tremendous. There was age, and dignity, and grandeur in every stone.

Beggars were at the great entrance door asking for alms. Fearful, hideous, diseased-looking creatures they were, and it struck him as odd, that there, in the most Catholic country in the world, and at the doors of the most renowned cathedral of that country, poverty should be so hideous, so uncared for.

He lifted the leather covering of the door and entered. As he did so he felt awed, overwhelmed by the awful grandeur of the place. Few people were there. Here and there he saw a lonely figure in the attitude of prayer, but otherwise the place was almost empty.

He genuflected before the altar.

At that moment the sacerdotal side of Julian Boconnoc became uppermost. The stern, strong, stubborn nature which he had inherited from his father had no sway over him at all. He had become, for the moment, a creature of the emotions. That part of his nature, which had responded so ardently to the influences which had been brought to bear upon him in Oxford, was supreme. The world represented by what he saw around him was the only world. This was the Church of Christ! Christ's body, Christ in actuality was on the altar before him. That little casket contained the Creator of the world!

It was stupendous, awesome!

He felt that he had sinned. He had allowed doubts to fester in his heart. He had allowed worldly thoughts to fill his brain. Even now, he was there in disobedience to his confessor's expressed wish. He had come to Toledo because of a pretty face, because a winsome girl had declared that she was going there. Yes, he had sinned, and he longed for absolution.

At that moment he caught sight of some confessional boxes, and almost like a man in a dream he made his way to one of them. Yes, he had determined to make his confession that day, and he would make it. Father Fakenham had told him that whenever he went to the Continent he went to mass every morning, and to confession never less than once a week. He remembered, too, that a young, ardent convert to Rome had told him that never had he received so much consolation and blessing as when he had confessed to a Roman priest in Venice.

He moved quickly to one of the confessional boxes. He heard a shuffling noise inside the box, and then someone spoke to him in words he could not understand.

"I know no Spanish, Father," he said.

Evidently the priest did not understand English, for there was an awkward silence.

"I know Latin—enough to make my confession," he managed to say in that language, but either his pronunciation was strange, or the priest's Latin was rusty, for the silence still continued.

"I speak French," said the voice inside the confessional box. "Do you?"

"Yes," replied Julian, and he began to think how he could frame his thoughts in that language.

When he came out into the church half an hour later, his mind was in a state of confusion. He could not remember what he had said. Perhaps it would come to him presently, but now his mind was blank. Everything was so unreal, too. What had he been doing? He had been telling his inmost thoughts; he had been relating much of his history to a strange man, to a man whose face he had not even seen, to a man whose voice was harsh and coarse. Was it because the language was unfamiliar to them both?

Yes, he remembered now. He had, in his halting French, told the priest a great deal, told him that he was an Anglo-Catholic, and that his heart was in Rome. Told how a year before he had practically made up his mind to join the Church of Rome, and had been dissuaded. He had mentioned several names, too, and the priest had asked him many questions. He remembered

that there was a new interest in the man's voice at this time. But it was all frightfully unreal—altogether confused. He was afraid he had been very foolish. He had said a great deal more than there was any necessity to say.

When night came he eagerly welcomed his friends back from their excursion to Torrijos. Ever since he had visited the cathedral he had felt lonely and strange. Their coming, therefore, brought new interest to him. But they had had a long and wearisome day, and in spite of interesting sights, were utterly tired. No one seemed inclined for conversation.

The next few days were uneventful. They wandered around the city sight-seeing, and on three occasions took journeys farther afield. On these occasions Julian had accompanied them.

But he did not understand Joan Killigrew's attitude towards him at all. Her manner, although always polite, was restrained, and although on rare occasions she dropped into the easy familiarity with which she had treated him when they had first met, she quickly assumed a more distant attitude. And yet he was sure he interested her. More than once he had caught her watching him as though she were curious about him; but they were never alone together and there was not the slightest intimacy between them. Then one day, when he had been in Toledo about a week, her manner suddenly changed towards him.

They had been having tea together in the lounge, after which Mrs. Killigrew, declaring that she had some letters to write, went away alone. The day's post had also brought Mrs. Bagshott several communications from England, which she said needed immediate attention, and her son was commandeered to help her. Thus it was that Julian and she were left alone together.

It was a glorious day, such a day as seldom comes to that part of Spain. In winter Toledo is freezingly cold, in early spring there is generally much rain, while summer is unbearably hot. That day, however, it was perfect. The sun shone brightly, but the cool breezes from the plains outside so tempered the air that it became like the elixir of the gods.

For more than a minute after the others had gone there was an awkward silence between them. Then Joan, looking at him suddenly, said with a laugh, "You're gloomy and depressed, Mr. Boconnoc, what do you say to a walk?"

"You and I together?" he asked eagerly.

“Yes, why not? The day is glorious, the most perfect we have had since we came.”

“I’d love to,” he cried.

“Then let’s start.”

A minute later they were out in the sunshine together. It was now half-past four in the afternoon, but the days had so lengthened that the glory of the day had not yet gone.

They made their way through the narrow streets past the Alcazar, and down the hill which led to the Wamba Bridge. Crossing this, the broad plain stretched out before them grim and stern; for Spain is in the main, sombre, and sad, and uninviting.

“Which way shall we go?” he asked.

“Let’s keep near the city,” was her reply. “There is a man following us, and I don’t feel like going far away.”

“He is only a priest,” replied Julian, “he will do us no harm. Here is a track which follows the course of the river.”

For some time they walked side by side in silence, although he noticed that she gave him furtive glances. She might be examining him, studying him.

“Mr. Boconnoc,” she said suddenly. “Why did you come to Spain?”

“Because *you* did.” He answered her almost before he knew the words had escaped his lips.

“Did you know I was coming here, then?” She was not in the slightest degree embarrassed, neither was there coquetry in her voice.

“Yes.”

“How?”

“It was more than a fortnight ago. I was standing outside the post office in Birtwhistle, and saw you as you came out with a girl. I heard you say ‘in a few days from now I shall be in Toledo.’ That’s why I came.”

“But I don’t understand.”

“Neither do I. My mind is in a state of chaos. I was bewildered then; I am bewildered now.”

Again a silence fell between them; evidently each had much to say to the other, and yet knew not how to say it.

“You are troubled about something, aren’t you?”

“Yes—no—I don’t know.”

Again the girl looked at him steadily. She was no longer the happy, careless child he had seen on the road outside Hawkspoint Park when she whimsically asked him to help her with her car. Her eyes were no longer laughing; they were earnest, thoughtful; there were wonderful depths in them.

“You tell me you are an Anglo-Catholic,” she said. “Is it about that?”

“Perhaps so, but not altogether.”

“Why are you an Anglo-Catholic, Mr. Boconnoc?”

“Because—Oh, it was this way,” and he spoke eagerly, almost passionately. “I was brought up a Puritan, a Protestant. The whole atmosphere of my home was to hate everything that savoured of Popery. And yet, if you understand me, I was not taught to be religious. My mother died while I was very young, and my father, while a stern, strong upright man, never encouraged me to go to any particular place of worship. I suppose I am cast in a religious mould, anyhow, I have always been more or less interested in religion. During the time I was at Harrow I didn’t much bother about it. The services at the Chapel meant nothing to me, and I made a joke of the occasions when I had to read the lessons. Still, I suppose that even then I was what might be called a religious boy. I went to Oxford and came under the influence of some holy men. Then I saw what I had hitherto failed to see. I realized that what was called the Reformation was a mistake, a ghastly mistake—a tragedy—a crime! That England had been robbed of her religion; that Protestantism, the only sort of religion I knew anything about, was no real religion at all—a mockery, in fact.”

“Then why did you not join the Church of Rome?”

“Oh, for one thing I suppose I was English, and for another I thought I found all that I needed among the men with whom I got acquainted. They were High Churchmen who claimed that the Church of England, truly understood, was a branch of the great Catholic Church. I am trying to say this in a detached sort of way, Miss Killigrew, and to tell you how things really struck me. I have been an ardent believer in the Anglo-Catholic position; I suppose I am now; yet I am not altogether satisfied. A year ago I

made up my mind to openly join the Roman Communion, but my spiritual directors persuaded me against it.”

“In what way?”

“Oh, they admitted that they understood me and sympathized with me, but told me that it would be a wrong step to take.”

“Why?”

“They urged—oh, I don’t like the word but it’s the only one I can think of—that it would be bad policy to join; that the whole movement of the English Church was towards Rome, and that I should best serve the Church by remaining in the Church of England and helping forward the great movement towards Rome, so that in a few years the whole church might go over in a body.”

“And they persuaded you?”

“Yes. After I had taken my degree I prepared for Holy Orders.”

“In the Church of England?”

“In the Church of England.”

“And all the time you are a Romanist at heart? Don’t answer me if you would rather not.”

“I was a Catholic, yes.”

The girl stopped in her walk, and looking at him steadily, she said, “And do you really mean to say, Mr. Boconnoc, that you seriously contemplated taking the ordination vows of the Church of England while all the time you were a Romanist.”

“Yes—I—I don’t think you understand.”

“No, I don’t think I do—I hope not, anyhow.”

“You hope not?”

“Yes, I hope not.”

“But why?”

“Because I have always been brought up to believe that our clergymen were *gentlemen*,” and she emphasized the last word.

He started like one stung. He had often heard this kind of thing said before, but had never been so affected. There was something in her manner,

something in the tone of her voice, which gave the taunt a new meaning, a new emphasis.

The obstinate, fighting part of his nature rose up strongly within him. Why should he take any notice of this girl? He had studied this question for years, while she had perhaps only given it a passing thought. Besides, he wanted to stand well with her, wanted to prove to her that his position was justified.

“But if Protestantism is a negation of the true Church, Miss Killigrew?” he said. “If the Reformation was a ghastly error, and if the only salvation for our country is in reunion with Rome, what then?”

“There is only one answer,” she replied. “Let anyone who feels that go to Rome, honestly, openly. There is no other course for a gentleman. Whether the Reformation was right or wrong may be a debatable point; but to take the vows, to profess Reformation principles, while all the while intending to do Rome’s work—no, that I *can’t* understand.”

“A tree is known by its fruits,” urged Julian.

“What do you argue from that?” she asked, quickly.

“That, as far as I can see, practically all the men who are really eager for the growth of religion, who are seeking to put life into the dry bones of our church, are those whom you stigmatize as traitors. Before the Oxford Movement the church was dead. Why was it dead? Because the life-blood of truth did not flow through its veins. Because it was disassociated with the fountain of truth. Because we had lost the true faith, the true worship. And it is because the English Church is seeking to be united to its Great Head that the life-blood is beginning to flow through her veins again. Yes, a tree is known by its fruits, and all this talk about dishonesty and disloyalty is rubbish.”

“You stand by that?” she asked. “You accept our Lord’s statement that a tree is known by its fruits?”

“Yes, I do,” he replied, eagerly.

“And you want to bring England back to Rome? You want to destroy Protestantism. You want to destroy the work of the Reformation?”

“The Reformation was damnable!” he cried. “It was the greatest crime ever committed. It disunited England from its great Fountain Head of truth and holiness. As for Protestantism, I hate it. It is a blank negation, a crime against God.”

The light of a fanatic came into his eyes; he had forgotten the sting which her taunt had given him. The training of the last few years had become uppermost in his life. The girl, on the other hand, had become silent. She might have felt that she was beaten in argument, and that he had left her no standing ground.

Silently they followed the track which ran by the side of the river. At their feet flowed the brown waters of the Tagus, while up above them stood the city of Toledo. Even under the light of the lowering sun it looked unreal, desolate, dead. As if by one consent, they both stopped and stood looking steadily at the rugged cliffs, and the desolate city which stood on their summit. For some time they stood in silence, then a new light flashed into the girl's eyes, while her lips trembled.

Looking at her, Julian knew she had something more to say.

CHAPTER XIV

“BY THEIR FRUITS.”

“Isn’t it fine?” she said, nodding towards the towers of the great cathedral.

“Yes it’s fine, but it’s ghastly.”

“Why?”

“Because it’s a city of the past. It’s only a corpse. It’s—it’s dead.”

“Isn’t that true of the whole of Spain?”

“Yes, I suppose it is.”

“And you would like England to become like Spain?”

“Of course not. I don’t understand.”

“Don’t you? I think my meaning is plain. You have just been denouncing Protestantism, and talking of your desire to bring England back to the Roman Church. Protestantism at all events made England progressive, strong. At the time of the Reformation Spain was the most powerful country in the world. It refused to have anything to do with the Reformation. There are scarcely any Protestants in Spain; they are hardly allowed to live. From the time of Ferdinand and Isabella they have been crushed, and persecuted. The Holy Church, as you call it, has had it all its own way here. It practically rules the country. That is what you want in England. Do you want England to become like this? Rome has made Spain what it is; and a tree is known by its fruits!”

“That’s not fair,” he cried. “The backward condition of Spain is not owing to the Church. Besides, even if it were. . . .” he hesitated.

“Yes, even if it were?”

“Better that than the rank materialism that obtains in England,” he cried. “Better that than that a nation should be given over to money-making. After all holiness is more than wealth, faith is more than power, than greatness, purity is more than a big banking account.”

“And of course you have holiness, and faith, and purity in Spain?” There was the suggestion of a sneer in her voice.

He was silent.

“Haven’t you?” she persisted.

“The whole of Spain is faithful anyhow.”

“Is it? I’m told that nearly all the educated people in Spain are giving up their faith, and while the masses of the people conform, they only conform because it pays them. As for holiness, purity, where is it to be found? Heaven save us from becoming like Spain.”

“But all Catholic countries are not like Spain,” urged Julian. “There’s France for example. France is educated, progressive.”

“Yes, but how?” cried the girl. “France was called the eldest daughter of the Church, and her loving mother, the Church, was so kind that she drove everything like freedom of thought out of it. Protestantism was practically destroyed by Louis XIV. The Edict of Nantes was destroyed because the mistress of King Louis XIV, instructed by a Jesuit priest, urged it. Huguenots were driven out of France by fire and sword. And what is the condition of France to-day? Practically a nation of atheists. Out of a population of nearly forty millions, all with the exception of about six millions have avowed that they have no faith. A tree is known by its fruits. That is what the Roman Catholic Church has done for France. For more than half a century the Church has been fighting like grim death to regain her power, with the result that the country has destroyed the last particle of the Church’s power.”

“Still the Catholic Church is the only church which can claim unbroken descent from the time of the Apostles,” urged Julian.

“Mr. Boconnoc,” cried the girl, “do read your history again; and do read it in the light of common sense and reason.”

“All the same I maintain,” he insisted, “that there is nothing in Catholic teaching, or in the Catholic faith that—that causes these things which you urge.”

“Isn’t there everything?” cried the girl. “The Roman Church is built upon a lie, upon forged decretals, upon teachings that have no authority. Why, think of the teachings in the New Testament, and then compare them with that of the Roman Church. What similarity is there between them? It’s like comparing the sun with the black darkness. On what does the real progress of a country depend? On what does real happiness depend? Does it not depend on the quality of its manhood and its womanhood? Nothing can stop the advancement of a great and vigorous people; nothing can, on the

other hand, make a people great in whose lives great lies fester. The Roman Church makes its people slaves. They have no right to think except on the lines which the Church lays down. The right of private judgment on religious matters is denied them. Unbelief in any particular dogma of the Church is regarded as the greatest of sins. And all that goes to destroy character, and reality, and life. That's why Roman nations have decayed, and that's why strong and progressive peoples have thrown it off as they throw off old wives' fables. And you say a tree is known by its fruits."

He did not answer her. A thousand thoughts came surging into his mind, but he was unable to express them. Besides, there was something in the girl's voice, and the intensity with which she spoke, that appealed to him. Perhaps had these things been said by a man he would have argued his case vigorously; but spoken by a girl, and a charming girl into the bargain, they had a different effect. Besides, they stirred chords in him which had been long dormant. They aroused within him something of the characteristics of his father, and brought to his mind what the old man had written to him during his last hours. The spell which the Anglo-Catholics had cast upon him was strong; but he was an Englishman, a Yorkshireman whose nature demanded freedom, and who felt the surgings of a great life within him.

"Forgive me," cried the girl. "I did not mean to say all this, but somehow I could not help myself. Besides, I am a little bit upset."

"Upset," he cried, "how?"

"I had a letter to-day from an old friend and it has made me very sad. I'm afraid I was very selfish in asking you to take this walk with me."

"I'm sorry you're troubled," he said kindly. "I—I wish I could help you."

"You would have no sympathy—you would not understand."

"I think I might. Anyhow I would like to try."

She was silent for a few seconds as if hesitating whether to confide in him.

"I told you I was a Cornish girl, didn't I?" she burst out suddenly.

"That you are of a Cornish family, yes."

"I have not lived there for years, although we still have a cottage there. My mother always insists on spending two months of every year in the old County. That was how I came to know my friend. She is older than I, several years older. She is the daughter of the squire of the parish. I won't mention

any names, perhaps it would not be fair. In the parish church town there was a miner's son who was a kind of genius. He was a great student too, and was looked upon as a phenomenon—a prodigy of wisdom and learning and all that sort of thing. He was very religious too. He became what they call 'converted' at a Methodist chapel, and there was some talk of his becoming a Methodist minister. Then he became friendly with the vicar of the parish, who lent him books and guided him in his studies. The squire also helped him; helped him with money to buy books, and in other ways. That was how my friend became intimate with him. He was a nice boy, as open as the day and as true as the sun. Lying and deceit were altogether alien to him. Strange as it may seem, my friend and this boy got more and more friendly. In fact they fell in love with each other. Through the squire's and vicar's influence and help he began to study for the church, and was admitted into one of the Church of England colleges. Presently it became known that my friend and this boy were engaged.

“Of course you can understand what that meant in a rural parish, and in a county where the feeling of caste is so strong. The very idea of a miner's son marrying the squire's daughter seemed unthinkable. But she loved him, and was faithful to him. In spite of all sorts of sneers, and not a little persecution on the part of her people, she stood by her choice, and paid little or no heed to what was said.

“Presently he was ordained and obtained a curacy. By this time her father and mother had fought down their prejudices, and tried to become reconciled to my friend's choice. . . .”

“Yes, yes, go on,” cried Julian when the girl hesitated in her recital. “It's quite a romance.”

“The romance has ended,” and Joan Killigrew spoke bitterly. “More than two years ago my friend could not help noticing a change in him. He was less frank, less open. Before this he had been eager to be married, and declared that he would never know what true happiness meant until they were married. Then my friend inherited wealth, which made marriage possible. But for a long time he kept on making excuses. He said that both his vicar and the bishop of the diocese deprecated early marriages and all that sort of thing. He professed to love her as much as ever, but he did not seem quite straight with her. Her father also became suspicious. He even went to the parish where he was curate and made inquiries, but could find out nothing wrong. This fellow's vicar was an old-fashioned churchman, who had nothing against his curate except that he tried to make the services

in the parish church more advanced. All this time he professed to be a strong Protestant. Then a week or two ago everything came out.”

“Yes, what happened?” asked Julian, who had become keenly interested.

“Only this,” was the reply. “This boy who, when I knew him, was as open and as honest as the day, had for years been acting a lie.”

“What, do you mean to say that he had picked up with some other girl?”

“No, nothing of the sort. He had, during the time he was preparing for Holy Orders, been under the influence of extreme Ritualists who had persuaded him to believe—what you believe. He had even, while writing love-letters to my friend, taken the vow of celibacy. He had practically become a Roman Catholic, and had joined a society, the purpose of which was to drag the English Church back to Rome. He had obtained his curacy on the understanding that he was a sincere Protestant, and all the time he was in the parish he was trying, little by little, to educate the people in Romish ways. In short he was doing what hundreds of other High Church curates have done—Rome’s work in a Protestant parish.”

Julian was silent. The story had turned out differently from what he had expected.

“However, the truth is out now,” Joan Killigrew went on. “After years of prevarication, and hypocrisy, and deceit, he has openly joined the Roman Church. He has even had the impertinence to write to my friend and tell her that even while he was a curate he had come to the conclusion it would be a sin for a priest to marry, and that he had refrained from letting her know his true position because it would lessen his influence while working as a clergyman in a Protestant parish. But that was not all,” and she became silent again.

“No, what else was there? The fellow must have been a mean cad.” He had forgotten his own position in his indignation.

“He actually had the impertinence to tell her that she would never find any happiness while she remained a heretic, and that true joy would only come to her when she joined the true Church. As you may imagine, Mr. Boconnoc, my friend’s letter has upset me. You see we have known each other ever since I was a little girl; and—and no Protestant gentleman *could* do anything like that.”

“But—but if his conscience. . . .”

“Please—please don’t talk to me about his conscience,” cried the girl. “It’s too nauseous!”

“But what could he do, feeling that it was his duty to join the Catholic Church?”

“He could at least have told her in the beginning,” cried Joan. “But no, he wanted her father’s help to pay for his college expenses. He wanted her father’s influence. Besides he was advised by his superiors to keep silent so that he might, without suspicion help to de-Protestantize the Church whose vows he had taken. Shall we go back now, Mr. Boconnoc? The sun will soon be setting and I don’t want to be late.”

They turned and slowly went back in silence. Close beside them ran the brown waters of the Tagus, and above them, like a huge black fortress, stood the city of Toledo.

“Have you read the history of Spain?” asked the girl presently.

“No,” he replied, “I’m afraid I’m very ignorant about it.”

“One of the most interesting stories in the world,” the girl informed him. “Ever since we decided to come here I have been reading it. I think there is no romance like the romance of Spain. When I came here first I felt like running away, but the more I see the more I become fascinated. You see its history is like no other. The story of Spain is not only a story of the Spanish, but the story of the Moors, whose influence, especially in the south, was for a long time paramount. Of course, too, Spain had a tremendous influence upon England. In fact we were practically ruled by the Spaniards during the days of Queen Mary. Shall you stay here long?” she added.

“I don’t know yet,” he replied, giving her a quick glance.

“I am eager to see the Easter Festival at Seville,” went on the girl. “I suppose it is the most resplendent in the whole of the Catholic world. But I so want to see Cordova, and Granada, that I scarcely know what we shall do.”

They had crossed the Wamba Bridge by this time, and were climbing up the hillside past the Alcazar. Presently they stopped before one of the few bookshops to be found in Toledo.

“I wonder if ‘Don Quixote’ can be bought here?” cried the girl. “It would be lovely to buy Cervantes’ immortal satire in the very city in which it was written.”

“Did he write ‘Don Quixote’ here?” He spoke absent-mindedly.

“Didn’t you know?” asked the girl. “We went to see the house in which he wrote it the first day after we came. It is a cow-house now,” she added.

“A cow-house!” cried Julian in astonishment.

“Yes. You see how the Spaniards reverence the memory of their greatest author. I’m told that the book is seldom read by Spaniards and that many of the priests are utterly ignorant of it. Fancy England allowing the house in which one of its greatest works was written, to be used as a cow-shed. Still Spain is Spain.”

“What’s that?” cried Julian, pointing to a small placard in the shop window. “*Bula; 75 centesimos?*”

“Don’t you know?” asked the girl.

“No, my knowledge of Spanish is very small.”

“They are indulgences, pardons for sins,” laughed Joan.

“Indulgences, pardons for sins! Impossible!”

“You can buy them if you like,” replied the girl.

“I don’t believe it,” was his indignant answer.

“The man speaks French. Try,” and there was a challenging note in her voice.

A few minutes later he came out of the shop bearing several slips of paper in his hand. In his eyes was a far-away look. He might have been puzzled.

“You see they don’t sell them with the same pomp and circumstance as they did in Dr. Tetzels days,” laughed the girl. “But I imagine they are just as potent.”

Julian did not speak during the rest of their journey to the hotel. Their walk and talk had influenced him more than he could say.

They were a pleasant party during dinner, and Joan Killigrew had, for the time, apparently forgotten her sorrow for her Cornish friend.

Mrs. Bagshott seemed much interested in two men who had taken a seat in a corner of the dining-room, one of whom was a tall, distinguished-looking Spaniard of about fifty years of age.

“Who are they?” she asked of Tom, whom she had seen speaking with them just before dinner.

“One of them is an Englishman,” replied Tom. “A Member of Parliament for the division adjoining ours. As for the Spaniard, he is a big pot in the Spanish Cortes or whatever they call it. A sort of Cabinet Minister, and holds a high position in the State. Señor Gomez is his name, I’m told.”

“He seems a very intellectual-looking man,” was Mrs. Bagshott’s remark.

“A future prime minister, I hear,” replied Tom. “But one can never tell. There are all sorts of underground influences in Spain which seem to destroy certainties. What do you say to a game of bridge to-night, Joan?”

“I should love it,” replied the girl.

“You must excuse me,” said Mrs. Killigrew. “I’m no good at cards, and after my last experience I’m ashamed to play.”

“I say, that’s a shame,” cried Bagshott. “Will you play, St. Francis?”

“I’m no good either,” replied Julian, “but I’ll make up a four, if you like.”

After dinner, therefore, while Mrs. Killigrew interested herself in a book, the others sat down at the bridge table. But the play was not of a very high order; indeed, after the first rubber, both Joan and Julian had apparently lost interest in it. They were listening eagerly to the conversation between the British Member of Parliament and the Spanish statesman.

“Yes, I love England,” remarked Señor Gomez. “I lived there for years. It is the freest and the most progressive country in the world.”

“Of course I agree with you,” replied the Englishman, with a laugh; “and naturally I am proud of my country.”

“And what do you think of Spain, Mr. Richards? You say you have been here nearly a month.” The Spaniard spoke English almost like an Englishman.

“Of course it’s very different from England,” replied the Yorkshireman.

“Different! There is the difference between death and life. Oh, I’m under no illusions. One cannot be Ambassador of Spain to the Court of St. James’s for several years without understanding what you mean. Naturally I love my country. That’s what makes it so sad.”

“In what way?”

“Your own eyes have told you. You have been to Seville, to Cordova, to Granada, to some of our other towns and cities. Time was when I was proud of Spain; but when I compare it with such countries as England, I am ashamed. It makes me, as a Spaniard who loves his country, sad. Our roads are mere tracks, our railways a disgrace; our municipal life rotten, our influence compared with what it ought to be almost negligible.”

“You speak strongly, Señor,” remarked the Yorkshireman.

“I am angry, I am indignant. The possibilities of our country are almost illimitable. It is fertile. It is rich in mineral. It has a fine seaboard. It has—almost everything, in fact. Still we are moribund. We do not breathe the breath of life or progress anywhere. When Alfonso came to the throne I hoped for better things. I said to myself, we have at last a man on the throne, a young man, eager, vital. I said, now we shall become great again. But. . . .” and the Spaniard shrugged his shoulders as though in despair.

“Aren’t you putting it too strongly?” asked the Yorkshireman.

“I am trying to put it as an American, or as an Englishman sees it,” replied the other. “I think of our population as it was three hundred years ago, and I see what it is to-day. I think of our wealth as it was then. I know what it is now. Time was when the name of Spain meant something; and now how much do we count in the life of the nations? But it’s not our fault,” he added. “The Spaniard has his faults, many of them. So has the Frenchman, so has the German, so has the Englishman, so has the American. Give him a fair chance and the Spaniard is as good as men of other nations.”

“A fair chance?” queried the Yorkshireman.

“A fair chance.”

“Then how do you account for your present stagnation?”

The Spaniard looked round the room and, seeing only a small party of bridge players besides himself and the Yorkshireman, he spoke freely.

“What I say is not meant to be shouted from the housetops,” he said lowering his voice, although not so low as to keep those at the bridge table from hearing every word. “I am hopeless about Spain,” he said at length, “unless. . . .” And again he hesitated.

“Unless what?”

“Hush!” he replied. He took a cigarette from his case, lit it, and then, lying back in his chair, lifted his eyes to the ceiling.

The Yorkshireman gave a quick glance round the room and saw a priest come in. He was of the usual type of the Spanish cleric. Swarthy, thick-set, black-haired, unshaven, and with a somewhat ingratiating manner. He glanced round the room as if looking for someone he might know, but seeing none but strangers he took up a newspaper and appeared to be reading it. Then he rang a bell. On the waiter responding to his summons he ordered some sort of syrup, drank it, and then, having bowed to the company, left the room as quietly as he had entered.

Meanwhile Tom Bagshott had dealt a new hand at cards and appeared to be thinking about his call.

“Two spades,” he announced, and there being no other call they commenced to play.

“It’s that fellow—I mean what he represents—that has ruined Spain,” said Señor Gomez to the Yorkshireman.

“What exactly do you mean by that?”

“What did Gambetta say to France something like half a century ago? *‘Clericalism. That’s your enemy.’* That’s true of Spain, truer of Spain than of any other country in the world. It’s been true for hundreds of years. Clericalism, and especially the Jesuits—in short, the Church has been Spain’s greatest enemy. All free thought, all advanced ideas, all efforts for onward movement, have been crushed by the clerics.”

“You mean the Roman Catholic Church?”

“When I say clericalism I mean the other; they’re identical. Spain is one of the, if not the, most ignorant countries in the west of Europe. Only about a fourth of our population can read or write. Who controls education in Spain? The Catholics, the Jesuits, the Church; and what education they have given has been no education at all. How can we compete with the world, señor, when all advancement in knowledge is stamped out? We had a man in Spain a few years ago who tried hard to establish a system of education in Spain. Education in the true sense of the word. Señor Ferrer; you have heard of him?”

“Yes, I’ve heard of him.”

“He was killed, murdered.”

“But surely,” said the Englishman, “that’s too strong. Was he not put to death after a public trial?”

“What was he put to death for, señor? Answer me that. For treason, for dishonesty, for immorality, for murder? Not one of these things. Nothing could be raised against his moral character.”

“But he was only condemned after a public trial in a Court of Justice.”

“Public trial! Court of Justice!” replied the other with contemptuous indignation. “He would not teach the Church’s dogmas. He simply taught his pupils facts. That was why he was murdered. The Church would not have it, and the Church is all supreme in Spain, señor.”

“But I thought you were a Catholic, Señor Gomez?”

Again the Spaniard shrugged his shoulders. “I suppose I am—if I am anything. I’m not an atheist, and not being an atheist I am supposed to be a Catholic. But I love my country. That is why these things grieve me. Why, think, Spain could be a rich country. But how can it be rich when the Church sucks it dry? Study the history of Spain for the last three hundred years, and think of the endeavours which have been made to uplift it. Ever and always they have been crushed by the Church, especially by the Jesuits. Time after time we were supposed to drive the Jesuits out of the country as enemies to the State; but they have always come back again. Think of all those little wars during the last century. The Queen Christiana affair, the Don Carlos business, the murder of Pym. What was at the back of it all? What hindered anything like progress in the nation? The Church, the priests, the Jesuits. Pooh! Now you know why we are moribund, degraded, señor.”

At this moment Joan Killigrew and Julian Boconnoc exchanged glances. They had ceased playing for some minutes. All were listening eagerly while the Spaniard spoke. They had become interested. They had forgotten that they were listening to what was supposed to be a private conversation.

“Our people as a whole dare not disobey the priests,” went on the Spaniard. “And of course they have a superstitious belief in their power. Besides, all faithful Catholics have to go to confession. They have to confess their inmost thoughts. They have to tell the priest everything. If they don’t . . .! They are not allowed to argue about religious questions. To think is sin. They must obey the Church. As a consequence we are what we are. Of course the educated people, as a whole, don’t believe. In many cases they have drifted to atheism, but they dare not confess their doubts. The wealth of the nation and all the positions which that wealth commands are in the hands of the Church. Thus you see . . .”

“I have always found the Spanish priests nice fellows,” replied the Yorkshireman. “Some of them are a bit rough, of course, but that I put down to their nationality.”

“Go to Seville in a few days’ time, and you’ll understand what I mean. Get at the inwardness of these Easter processions and celebrations, and what not. Think of the millions of money which will be spent on them all over Spain during that festival, and remember what it means, and what it has meant during all these years. Germany, England threw off the Church and became great, but the Reformation never touched us. We remained faithful! And, Dios, what has it meant!”

“I thought of going back to Seville for Easter,” said the Yorkshireman. “I want to see the show there.”

“*Show!*” repeated the Spaniard scornfully. “Yes, that’s what it means when you get to the heart of it. And have you booked rooms at the Hotel Madrid?”

“No.”

“Then you’ll have a difficulty in getting in.”

“I’ll send a telegram first thing to-morrow morning,” replied Mr. Richards.

“Telegram! What’s the use of that? It will very likely take a couple of days to get there. No, I should go. There are rooms just now as I happen to know, but in three days’ time all will be booked. If you go now you’ll get accommodation; if you wait you won’t. Of course you’ll have to pay five times over, but perhaps you’re prepared to do that. Why, it’s the biggest show of the year. It’s the priests’ harvest.”

“You’re hard on the priests,” laughed the Yorkshireman.

“I have reason to be. I could forgive everything, señor, if they did not ruin my country, if they did not stand for oppression, for slavery. Why, think: so much do our priests believe in liberty that for more than half a century they have practically disallowed Protestant services, even in Madrid. Of course, in theory we have, after much fighting and struggling and persecution, got religious freedom, but it’s only a name. Why the English Church in Madrid is not allowed to have a building that looks like a church, not allowed to advertise its services—and it’s the priests’ doings.”

“Well, I’m a Protestant myself,” asserted the Yorkshireman. “What we call in England a Dissenter.”

“Keep Protestant, señor. Keep the nation Protestant. Don’t let the priests get the upper hand of you as they have with us. I hear that thousands of clergy in the Church of England are trying to rejoin the Church of Rome. Don’t allow them to do it. If you do there will be trouble. You will suffer as we have suffered.”

“Of course I don’t believe in priestcraft in any shape or form,” said the Yorkshireman. “And I am dead against those Anglo-Catholic fellows who are trying to drag England back to Rome.”

“They will beat you if you’re not careful,” said the Spaniard. “Look here, señor, I was educated for the priesthood and I know what it means. I tell you this. Once let the poison of priestcraft enter a man’s nature and he becomes changed. Honesty and truth lose their meaning, and were I an Englishman, knowing what I know, I would fight like grim death against their designs. But perhaps I have spoken too freely. Only you asked me what was the cause of my country’s condition, and I have told you.”

A few minutes later the two men went out of the room, leaving the bridge players alone.

“Hot stuff,” laughed Tom Bagshott, “especially from a man who is a Catholic. He’s a holy terror.”

Neither Joan nor Julian said a word. They caught each other’s eyes as Tom spoke, and Julian remembered what the other had said only a few hours before. They had paid little or no attention to their cards for some time.

“I think I shall go to bed,” said Mrs. Bagshott.

“And I,” said Julian, “am going out for a walk.”

“It’s unhealthy to be alone in a Spanish town at night,” laughed Bagshott. “You had better not take any money with you. Shall I go with you, old man?”

“If you don’t mind,” replied Julian, “I would rather be alone.”

A minute later he was out in the streets of Toledo.

CHAPTER XV

REVELATIONS

Julian's mind was in a whirl. Nothing had happened, and yet, as it seemed to him, everything had happened. Nothing was clear to him, nothing was settled.

That was why he wanted to be alone.

He would have given anything to have remained at the hotel talking with Joan Killigrew, but he was afraid. He knew he was afraid, and yet he was not sure why.

He had told himself while dressing for dinner that night that she was a bigot and a pedant. Just a shallow-pated silly girl who liked to parade scraps of what she called knowledge. He told himself, too, that he disliked her, that he was sorry he had met her. But he knew it was not true.

Why did his heart beat so madly when her eyes flashed into his a few minutes before?

Then suddenly everything was explained. He knew why he had come to Spain now, knew why he wanted to follow her like a dog, knew why, although she angered him so often, the sound of her voice charmed him.

He loved her.

Yes, that was the explanation of everything. She had cast a spell upon him which he knew would never be removed. That was why he was afraid. For it was a sin to love her. They lived in different worlds. He was a Catholic, and she was a heretic who opposed his dearest hopes.

His mind flashed back to Birtwhistle, to Hawkspoint. He heard his father's will read, heard the words which destroyed his every hope and altered the whole outlook of his life. There was his father's letter, too, the letter which was written with the old man's dying hand, the letter which he had read again and again. He almost knew it by heart.

"Test everything, prove everything before you decide," Andrew Boconnoc had written, and he had come to Spain ostensibly to obey his father's wishes, but really because he knew that Joan Killigrew was coming.

Then all the old problems came back. The cruel terms of the will, the ghastly alternative.

Of course he could not be a Protestant. Of course he could not promise to give up his faith; and yet—was it right to remain in the Church of England while his heart was in Rome? Was it right to try to bring back the English church and the English nation to Rome by professing to be a member of the Protestant Reformed Church? . . . But, if by so doing one helped to bring in the reign of Christ? . . .

Then he remembered the conversation of that afternoon, followed by those damnable lies which Señor Gomez had uttered a few minutes before. For of course they were lies. How could the true Church curse a country? . . . But the man was so sure. . . . He ought to know, too. He was a Spaniard, a Spaniard of position and education.

Oh, it was all maddening. Everything was confusion; chaos. . . . Yes, it was no use trying to fight against it; he knew that he loved her—that he would never cease loving her. But it was all hopeless, cruelly hopeless. Even if she cared for him it was hopeless. . . .

What had he to offer her? If he did not obey the conditions of his father's will he was penniless. He had just one year in which to decide. But that meant nothing. Oh, God help him!

For a minute he gave wings to his fancy. He pictured himself as a happy lover. He fancied himself looking into the lovelight in her eyes, straining her to his heart while his lips met hers. Oh, it was heaven to think about it! Everything was forgotten in his mad dream. For the moment he was willing to forfeit everything—*everything* in order to call her his own!

Then he was brought back to the realities of life again.

Near him two men were talking. He could not hear a word they said, neither could he, in the darkness, see their faces, but he became interested in them. In the light of a window by which they passed he saw them. They were priests.

Almost unconsciously he made his way towards the great cathedral. Something in the old building with its wonderful history drew him towards it, and presently he stood beneath its shadow. Gloomy, ponderous, magnificent, it rose above him. He crept within the shadow of one of its buttresses and sat down on a stone. The night was moonless, and looking up he saw in the great dome of the heavens myriads of stars shining. How little everything seemed in the thought of those stars! Infinite space filled with countless worlds. And behind them all was God! Did God care? Did the Infinite God who made all those worlds confine Himself to the little ways of

man? Would God care whether a man were a Catholic or a Protestant? All He cared about was truth—truth—truth!

He heard steps approaching, also voices. It must be the two priests he had seen a few minutes before, and they were still talking eagerly. They came up close to him; in a few seconds more they would pass him, but there under the dark shadow of the buttress they could not see him. As they passed one of them uttered a word which for two or three seconds made his heart stop beating.

Fakenham!

The two men passed on, still continuing their conversation, while he remained as if fastened to the stone on which he sat.

Fakenham! Who could be in Toledo who knew of Fakenham? He was sure he had heard aright. The man was only three yards away from him when he uttered it. He was talking in English, too, but the word Fakenham was all he could distinguish.

Minutes passed and still he sat there trying to discover some meaning in what he had heard. A sense of fear had come into his heart. Not the kind of fear he had had when thinking about Joan Killigrew, but something different. He felt sure Father Fakenham would be angry with him for coming to Spain without letting him know his whereabouts. He had told no one in England where he was. He had simply sent a telegram to Parker from Madrid saying that he had arrived there. Had Father Fakenham discovered where he had gone, and was he following him? He felt like a schoolboy who had been playing truant, and feared the master's rod.

Again he heard footsteps approaching; heard, too, the low murmur of voices. He sat still, wondering, expectant. The two priests came to the cathedral door, and stopped as if with the idea of entering.

“That was how he found out. . . . He went there for confession. . . . The Father who happened to be in the box knew about Fakenham and he immediately communicated with me. Oh, it was all right. . . . It was not under the seal of confession that he mentioned Fakenham's name. Of course I immediately sent to the college where he had been preparing for Holy Orders, and I thought it best to come straight away. Bridgeman will be here to-morrow or the day after. . . .”

The voice was strange to Julian. He had never heard it before, but there was a curious resonance which impressed him. It was thoroughly English, and yet it was un-English. Julian realized that they were talking about him.

The two men still stood a few yards from the great doorway not far from where the young man sat. A kind of instinct kept him silent, kept him from making any noise whatever. In the darkness he might be a part of the great buttress against which he sat.

“The situation is difficult.”

“You have no need to tell me that. I should not have taken this long journey to Spain if it were not. A man of my age, between seventy and eighty, does not travel in Spain for pleasure.”

“Oh, but you are wonderfully young, Ritzoom. I am only fifty and yet you’re as strong as I am.”

“I’m not a cripple, thank heaven; still, I don’t easily take these long journeys like I used to. But I felt I must. Over two millions of money, my dear man—no, not pesetas—pounds! What could not be done with two millions of money . . .?”

“And you mean to get it?”

The other laughed, but there was no joy in the laugh. Instead there was a peculiar quality in his voice which might mean anything.

“Those Anglo-Catholics are doing well for us in England. Father Bernard Vaughan used to say that the Catholic priests in England had no need to do missionary work there, the Ritualists were doing it so much better. And we want England, my friend. From every standpoint we want England. Personally I hate the country. I hate its narrowness, its insular prejudices, its conceit. All the same it’s a great country, and in a way it dominates the world. That’s why we encourage those Ritualist fellows. You see they are *Englishmen* and they appeal to their country as such. They do not call themselves *Roman* Catholics. They call themselves Anglo-Catholics. . . . But they are doing our work!” And he laughed like one amused.

“And they have got hold of this young fellow—Boconnoc, you call him?”

“That’s the name; one of the richest young men in England.”

“But there’s this will.”

“Yes, I know that. Fakenham was able to repeat it almost word for word. It creates difficulties—but Holy Church must have that money.”

The other said something in Spanish, but Ritzoom quickly stopped him.

“No, no Spanish here,” he said almost angrily. “Of course it’s not likely that there’ll be any eavesdroppers here at this time of night, but I always like to be on the safe side. No one knows English except you and me, so we’ll talk in that language.”

“And you say this youth is as clay in the hands of Fakenham?”

Ritzoom hesitated. “He was, but I don’t like the evolution of events. He has come here against his confessor’s will. I’m afraid there’s a woman in it.”

“A woman! But didn’t you tell me that he was a celibate by nature?”

“My friend, I am old enough to know that in youth men’s views change rapidly, and since having put it to the test I’m more anxious than ever!”

“How is that?”

“He had a long walk with a girl this afternoon. To-night he was playing bridge with her at his hotel.”

“Trust you to find out everything!” laughed the man.

“It was of course child’s play,” replied Ritzoom. “No sooner did I arrive in Toledo than I set my agents to work. Toledo is not London, my friend, but I am anxious.”

“Have you found out anything about the girl?”

“Not much. She is here with her mother and two other friends. I hear she is very attractive, and that she had a brilliant career at Cambridge. Her name is Killigrew. She comes of an old Cornish family. Her name was a household word there hundreds of years ago. Her father is dead, and although I imagine she has means, she is not rich.”

He went on telling him other things about her.

“My word, Ritzoom, you’re a walking encyclopædia. How did you find out all these things?”

“I don’t know that that matters, provided I *do* know. The great thing is that she is a danger at present, and increases my difficulties.”

“Of course Boconnoc has not the slightest idea you are here?”

“I always travel incognito,” replied Ritzoom, “especially when I have a big job on hand—and this is a big job. *That money must come into our hands, my friend.*”

“But if . . .”

“There must be no ‘ifs.’ Thank heaven I have learnt in time, and can see my way.”

“But the will? You say it was drawn up with devilish cunning, that it will not allow a penny of the money to come our way?”

Ritzoom laughed merrily. “I have got over many bad wills in my time,” he said meaningly. “I will admit it is a tough proposition, but once let me get this young cub safe and I’ll manage all the rest. As I said, there will be difficulties. For that matter I have had them already. Fakenham, in spite of the fact that his whole position is one great lie, and that he is one of the most advanced of the Anglo-Catholics, has had his English scruples. However, I have removed them. This young fellow, however, especially if a girl gets in the way, may be difficult.”

“What, in a word, is he like?”

“From what Fakenham says he’s a duality. On the one side he’s as soft as milk, a pious nincompoop ready to swallow anything. On the other, however, he has the Yorkshire doggedness, obstinacy. However, once get him to sign a paper leaving everything in the hands of his superiors, and I’ll see to the rest.”

“But bearing the details of the will in mind, how can you do it?”

Again Ritzoom laughed merrily. “Didn’t I tell you that I had more than once matched myself against lawyers’ wits, and lawyers’ documents,” he replied. “You will see when the time comes. But it’s getting late, and Father Hernandez will be getting anxious about me. Our ways part here. You live, you tell me, in the Plaza de España while Father Hernandez’s house is in the Quatro Calles. *Buenas noches*, my friend. May the Saints have you in their keeping. Keep a good heart.”

Julian waited until their footsteps died away before moving. He was afraid. Why, he could not explain. The priests had each gone their own way, and yet he waited long after they had passed out of sight and hearing. He wanted to be sure that neither of them knew anything of his whereabouts.

Then the great cathedral bell began to toll, and in spite of the fact that the walls of the huge building were several feet thick and composed of solid rock, he felt the quiver of the old masonry.

“Eleven o’clock,” he reflected, and came out into the open. By his side stood the massive cathedral, almost overwhelming in its gigantic proportions. Above the grim blackness of the building he saw myriads of stars shining.

He took a deep breath, and as he did so it seemed to him as though a weight fell from him; as though invisible chains by which he had been bound had snapped asunder. He felt strangely free.

“And they mean to have my father’s money,” he said aloud. “It’s not me they care for; it’s the money. I’m only a pious nincompoop.”

He was indignant, angry. The Yorkshire part of his nature with all its stubbornness rose up within him. He would no longer be the creature of others. He would think his own thoughts, fight his own battles, live his own life.

“Ritzoom, Ritzoom,” he reflected.

The name was in some way familiar to him. He had heard it somewhere, but where? Then he remembered. Ritzoom was a great Jesuit. A man deep in the counsels of the Black Pope, a man supposed to possess a master mind. . . . And he and Fakenham had been discussing his affairs. They had been plotting between them how to get hold of, and how to use, old Andrew Boconnoc’s money. . . .

And Father Bridgeman was coming to Toledo the next day, or the day following. He, too, was Ritzoom’s tool.

He was too angry to think clearly or consecutively. Presently, however, his mind became more calm. Of course, in a real vital sense, what he had heard did not affect his religious views at all. The Church was still the Church. Of course, too, although Father Fakenham and Father Bridgeman were in league with Ritzoom they did not represent the bulk of Anglo-Catholics in England. Hundreds, thousands of them would rather die than be implicated in such a dishonourable proceeding; and yet . . .

After all, they were not thinking of their own gain. Even if their plans were carried out, not one penny of his father’s money would go to *them*. It would all go to the Church. It would all go to establishing faith on the earth—and was not this what he had desired? Was not his father’s will an evil will, inspired by the spirit of the Devil? And would it not be a good thing to destroy the works of the Devil? Surely it would be a glorious victory if this money, made by a bigoted Protestant, could be placed in the hands of these faithful Fathers in God and be made a means of overcoming Protestantism. . . .

But no; all his early training, all the stern honesty he had inherited from his forbears surged up within him. It would be *wrong*. It would be a *lie*. It would be devilish. But he felt afraid. There, in the silence of the night,

within the shadow of the old cathedral, and with the dead city lying all around him, he feared meeting Father Bridgeman, feared what he would say to him. Would he not again become as clay in his hands? When he was again brought under the influence of Father Fakenham would he not again yield to the spell of his teaching, and become—as he had been?

Again his Protestant upbringing asserted itself. Why should he be afraid? What reason had he to fear? Why should he be a puppet to move when these men pulled the strings? By heavens, no! Unconsciously his muscles became tense and his hands clenched.

“I’ll be master of my own actions! I’ll be the slave of no one!” he cried aloud.

He thought of Joan Killigrew, and in a second there flashed before his eyes the picture of her. He saw her, not as a student at Cambridge interested in dialectics, but as a laughing-eyed siren. He fancied her as he saw her that day when they first met. What a picture she made as she came to him with a whimsical look in her eyes and a mock fear in her voice as she asked him to help her with her car! Not a heroine of romance, but a natural, healthy girl who loved truth and hated lies. He would tell her—yes, he would tell her—everything. She would be able to help him. He remembered the story she had related to him that very afternoon about the Cornish boy who had played false with her friend.

But dare he? Would she understand? Would she not despise him? Besides, would not her influence drag him away from the truth? While in her presence he hated the life he had hoped to lead, hated the thought of taking Holy orders in the Church of England, with the hope of bringing England into subjection to Mother Church. Surely that could not be right?

No, he would not only get away from the influence of the priests, he would get away from her too. He knew that his mind was unhinged, and that he was unable to think out things clearly. He must get away alone, and in loneliness he must fight out the problem which lay before him.

When he reached the hotel he found the place in almost entire darkness, although the door was unlocked. He thought everyone had gone to bed. Then he heard a cough. It was the hotel proprietor who sat in his little office making up his accounts.

“You are late, señor?”

“I have been out for a walk.”

“So your friend told me. But why should you? Toledo at night has no attractions for a young man. In Seville, in Barcelona, in Valencia, yes. But here——” The Spaniard spread his hands helplessly.

“I want to go to Seville—I want to go at once,” said Julian. A sudden thought had flashed into his mind.

“At *once!*” queried the Spaniard with a laugh. “You know something of the train service in Spain by this time, señor. Trains only run three times a week from Madrid to Seville. One goes to-morrow morning, then there will not be another until Saturday.”

“To-morrow morning!” cried Julian. “Then I could not get to Madrid until to-morrow night, try as I might. What a country!”

Again the Spaniard shrugged his shoulders. “It is a great country, a fine country,” he protested.

“With a train service like that!”

The Spaniard thought a minute. Then he snatched at an old time-table.

“What’s the good of that?” asked Julian, looking at the book. “It’s five years old.”

Again the Spaniard shrugged his shoulders with a laugh. “Trains never change their time in Spain,” he said. “But wait. You want to get to Seville at once?”

“Immediately.”

The hotel proprietor looked at his watch. “It could be done, señor. Now do not say that we cannot make dispatch in Spain.”

“But how?” asked Julian.

“You are willing to pay?”

“Anything in reason.”

“The train from Madrid to Seville stops at Puebla de Montboro to-morrow morning at seven o’clock. I could get señor there in time to catch that train if he is willing to pay for horses and a *diligence*. But the señor will have to pay well. Besides, we always expect twenty-four hours’ notice when one of our guests leaves—else we charge——”

“Put it in the bill,” cried Julian, “and order the *diligence*.”

“But what will the señor’s friends say? They do not intend to leave.”

“Look here,” cried Julian eagerly. “You know how to keep your own counsel, don’t you?”

The Spaniard laughed significantly.

“Do not tell anyone where I am gone, no matter who. If anyone comes to inquire, say I took a sudden determination to leave. Tell no one where I have gone.”

“If it is señor’s will—certainly.”

“And what is more”—a sudden thought struck him—“you are a Catholic, señor?”

The Spaniard shrugged his shoulders.

“You are friendly with the priests? You go to confession?”

“I never go to confession. As for the priests, I have displeased them.” And there was a changed note in his voice.

“Then if anyone comes here asking where I am gone . . .”

“Not a word shall pass my lips, señor; not a word.”

An hour later Julian had packed his bags, paid his bill and sat in a huge clumsy carriage. A few minutes more and he had crossed the Wamba Bridge and was making his way towards the place the hotel proprietor had mentioned.

A little after daylight the following morning the carriage in which he sat drove up to a little station.

CHAPTER XVI

CHAOS

It was late in the evening when the train slowly lumbered into the station at Madrid. Julian had been travelling throughout the whole day. Although the train was supposed to be express, and he was frequently told that it was the fastest in Spain, it took him more than twelve hours to do something like two hundred miles. That, he was assured, was really rapid travelling for that country. This he found to be a fact. Indeed, on examining a time-table which he had bought, he discovered that in order to go from Seville to Malaga, a fashionable watering-place in the south of Spain and about sixty miles from Seville, the journey would take him thirteen hours. He was understanding more and more each day what the condition of Spain actually was. Arrived at Seville he drove to the Hotel Madrid. He remembered that Señor Gomez mentioned it in Toledo, and heard later that it was the best hotel in Spain.

Yes, the hotel manager told him, he could have a room, but it was good for him that he had come so early. In a week's time, in four days, every room would be taken. He was receiving letters from various parts of the country every day from people who wanted to attend the Easter Festival. Of course, señor knew how grand these celebrations were, knew that people came to them from all parts of the world, and that Seville would be crowded. No doubt the señor had travelled to Seville in order to witness them.

Julian found that his information about the quality of the Hotel Madrid was not altogether false. While, perhaps, not equal to the Hotel de Paris in Madrid, it was still a comfortable hostelry. He saw, too, that Moorish influences were more marked in Seville than in Toledo. The courtyard in the middle of the Hotel Madrid, for example, bore many marks of Moorish architecture. As, after his evening meal, he sat drinking his coffee beneath a great palm, while a fountain played near him, he might have fancied himself in the Far East. All the decorations were Oriental. Everywhere had the Moors left a deep imprint on their one-time possession.

On the following morning he was up betimes, and with all the eagerness of youth was keen to see the life of this Spanish city. For a time, at all events, the influences of his visit at Toledo had somewhat passed away; indeed, to-day they seemed almost like a dream. As he looked out of the window the morning after his arrival, and saw the sights, and heard the sounds of this ancient capital of Seville, he seemed to be living in a kind of

fairy-land. For years it had been the dream of his life to visit Seville, the most Catholic city of the most Catholic country in the world. Oxford, with its gleaming spires and its renowned colleges was to him almost like a city of shadows. Birtwhistle became dim and indistinct. Even Hawkspoint, the home of his family, the old house around which so many interests of his life had centred, seemed far, far away. He was in Spain, in Seville, the city of faithful Catholics, the city of romance.

The sun was shining brightly, the sky was clear, the air was keen and strong. Everywhere around him the vegetation revealed the fact that winter had gone and summer was becoming triumphant.

He was alone. But what did that matter? Nay, rather he was glad that it was so. He was unhampered. He could do as he would and no one would care. He had plenty of money, and all the pleasures that could be had were his for the asking. He made his way to the dining-room and took his seat. A few minutes later a young man, rather older than himself, came and sat near him.

“Gee, I’m hungry,” he remarked. “I was told I should have no appetite when I came to Spain, but up to now I’ve eaten like a horse. How long will they be with breakfast, I wonder?”

“I ordered mine ten minutes ago,” replied Julian.

“American?” queried the stranger, looking at him questioningly.

“No, English.”

“I’m American. I come from Cleveland, Ohio, which, as you may know, is a very considerable city. I’m here on a holiday. I guess I’ll stay here for the Easter celebrations. Then, after seeing a few other Spanish towns, I’ll go to Italy. I’m here all alone,” he added.

He was a pleasant-looking young fellow, with light blue eyes, and fair hair and moustache. His clean-shaven face made him look younger than he really was. Actually, as he told Julian afterwards, he was twenty-seven.

“I guess you’re here with friends?” he remarked.

“No, I’m here alone.”

“That’s fine. Know any Spanish?”

“Very little.”

“Neither do I. I guess my knowledge of it would not cover a very large coin, although I’ve worked hard at it for the last six months. I’m supposed to

be here on holiday, although I'm in the way of picking up a bit of business if I can; but I guess my old dad won't get rich with what I make in Spain. Nothing seems to have moved here since the days of Noah. I guess you don't look like a business man?"

"No," replied Julian, "I came here on holiday—and to see the Easter celebrations."

"Are you a Catholic?"

"I'm interested in the Catholic Church. It has been the dream of my life for years to be here at Easter. Are you a Catholic?"

"Not by a long piece. The Catholics are moving heaven and earth to get hold of America. They make a fair show, too. They are putting up cathedrals and churches like mad, but they don't cut much ice. You see, nearly all the new Catholics in America come from countries like this, and we don't like them much. I dare say you have heard that there's a good deal of crime in the States, and I guess it's a fact; but the crime is not committed by Americans. It's the work of those darned people who come from Spain, and Portugal, and Poland and Italy. My old dad is a Presbyterian, and I was brought up to that way of thinking myself. All the same, I'm glad to be in Catholic Spain. Of course, it's a back number, but it's mighty interesting."

"Have you been in Seville long?" asked Julian.

"A little over a week, and I've gone around quite a bit."

"And you like it?"

"It's all right for a visit; but I would as soon live in a museum as here. Think of the train service, the telephone service, the telegraph service. Why, Moses watching his sheep out in the desert was up to date compared with the Spaniards. They are the kind of people who would be run over by a funeral. I was told that Spain was a back number, but I had no idea that it would be as bad as it is. You came last night, didn't you?"

"Yes, I came by the Madrid express."

"Madrid express, gee! that's a good joke. Got any plans for to-day?"

"No," replied Julian. "I just thought of loafing around."

"I'll put you wise if you like. You see, I've been here quite a while, and know my way around. I've got Murray's Handbook nearly off by heart, too; I mean that part of it about Seville."

Directly after breakfast the two young men started out together, the American talking rapidly and Julian delighted to have such a pleasant companion. He had travelled widely in America, and had, years before, been to England.

“I think I told you my name was Cyrus Peter Harding,” he said. “Everyone calls me Cyrus P. to distinguish me from my old dad, who is called Cyrus F. I graduated at Harvard, and was afterwards taken into my dad’s business. He’s a motor-car manufacturer, and I tell you we turn them out pretty slick. What! you’ve never heard of the Flying Dutchman cars? They’re the last word, and American roads are just covered with them. No, they’re not Tin Lizzies like old Ford’s buses. They are just A1. As I told you, my dad asked me to combine business with pleasure, and sell a few thousand here in Spain, but they buy nothing in Spain but candles and incense for the churches. There’s hardly a road in Spain fit to run a car. You should come to the States, Mr.—, what did you say your name was?”

Julian told him.

“And you’re not in business?”

“No, I’ve only just left Oxford.”

“Just so, but you mean to go into business, of course?”

“No, I thought of entering the church.”

“Gee! the church, eh? There’s no money in that. What denomination?”

Julian hesitated a second. “I—I don’t know,” he stammered.

“Ah, well,” said Cyrus P. Harding, after a short pause, “we don’t make any difference in the States between the various denominations, although, naturally, I regard the Presbyterian as the best. The Episcopal Church holds the highest social position, I suppose, but then, as you may know, it’s the smallest.”

“Surely not?” queried Julian.

“Fact, I assure you. The Presbyterians number more than five to their one, while the Methodists are something like nine or ten to their one. Still, we are all alike over there. I say look.” And he pointed to a large, richly appointed conveyance drawn by fine horses. “Do you know who that is?”

Julian was silent.

“He’s a kind of boss of the Catholic Church here in Seville. There are curious stories told about him,” he added.

“What kind of stories?”

The American hesitated and then laughed. “Of course, it would not be allowed in the States,” he said. “The Catholic Church is always purest in Protestant countries; but I’m told this johnny is all sorts of a Don Juan.”

“Impossible!” gasped Julian. “I don’t believe it.”

“I didn’t believe it at first. In fact, I was as astonished as you are; but when I had heard the same stories from several quarters, I concluded there must be something in them.”

“But it’s ghastly! Impossible!”

“I suppose it is not often he rides through the streets of the city,” remarked the American, “but see how the people regard him. See what reverence they pay him! See how they are bowing and scraping to him. As though he was the Almighty come straight down from heaven. And doesn’t he look well fed? He doesn’t fast much, I guess.”

“Yes, the people reverence him,” cried Julian indignantly, “but doesn’t that prove that those stories are lies? These people would not pay homage to him as a holy man if what you say is true.”

“I tell you I felt just the same as you do at first,” replied the American. “But I find that these things are differently regarded in Spain. Their standard of morality is not the same as ours. In fact the morality of the whole Catholic priesthood in Spain would not be allowed to exist in America for twenty minutes. You see, there is no public opinion here, and no vigilant Protestantism to put a check on things. Let me tell you what I’ve seen and heard since I’ve been here.”

Five minutes later Julian was bewildered, shocked. His feelings were outraged.

“It’s all one big blasphemous lie!” he protested. “You simply speak as a Protestant bigot.”

“I’m sorry I’ve angered you,” said the American. “I thought you would be interested to know.”

“But not that kind of thing!” cried Julian. “Besides they are all lies, damnable lies!”

“I hope they are,” said the American. “It’s ghastly to think of, isn’t it? But before I came to Spain my dad got me some letters of introduction to some of the principal commercial people in the country; also to some

lawyers, as well as to some of the head bosses in the Spanish Parliament. What I told you I got from them. They are not men who talk lightly; and—and, by the way, you're not a Catholic, are you? You told me you didn't know which denomination you belonged to?"

"Yes—no—I don't know."

"I'm sorry," said the American, "downright sorry if I've hurt your feelings, but I've only told you what's generally talked about. You see, after all it's only a condition of things that any candid person might naturally expect—an enforced celibacy, and good living accompanied by an idle life. But we won't talk any more about it now. There, that is the Alcazar, and that is the cathedral; one of the biggest and grandest in the world, I suppose. I guess it's no use going into the cathedral now, it's filled with workmen who are busy preparing it for the Easter celebrations."

In this young Harding was right. Numberless men were at work cleaning, decorating and generally making ready for the great festival. In fact, as Julian quickly discovered, the whole city was practically given over to it. Seville was a city of churches, and the Church ruled everywhere. Seville, he was told, was the most religious city in the world, and during the next few days everything would be given over to religion. In a sense, it was what he had expected, what he had come to see, what he hoped for. England had no such festival. London, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham—all the chief cities of the country, were simply great industrial centres, given over to money-making. But the centre of life in Seville was religious, Catholic. It was here the Church was to be seen in its glory. This he had been told again and again.

No, he simply could not, would not, believe what Harding had told him. It was blasphemous, damnable! It was all a great lie born in Hell. He had heard and seen enough while he had been in Spain to stagger him; but this . . .

"Look here," said Harding, "I've bothered you, haven't I? If I had known you were a Catholic I would not have said a word."

"But it's lies!" cried Julian.

Harding was a little bit nettled. He did not altogether relish Julian's repeated denial. "Look here, Boconnoc," he said, "naturally you don't believe these things. You look on me as a common globe-trotter in Spain who has told malicious and defamatory stories; and perhaps you don't want to know the truth."

“I do, I do!” cried Julian. “Great God, I do!”

“Then you shall hear for yourself just as I have. I have invited three men to dinner to-night, two of whom have lived in Seville for twenty years. They are Americans. They are not Protestants. They are not anything, in fact, in that way. They are simply what you call men of the world. The other is the chief merchant in Seville. Perhaps one of the richest men in Spain. They are all of them men of high position, and they all of them know English. I’ll introduce you simply as a young Englishman who has come to Seville for the Easter celebrations, and they will tell you what the condition of Spain and the Spanish Church really is.”

During the remainder of the day Julian tried to drive from his mind everything which the young American had said, to give himself over to the spirit of this old city, but in this he was not altogether successful. It was true there was much to interest him. Everything was new to him, and the life of the place intrigued him beyond measure. In one sense it was ideal. The thought of the life of a great city being almost altogether given over to the greatest Church festival appealed to him with tremendous force. The ordinary life and vocations of the city did not seem to count, only in so far as they affected the life of the Church. The Church was all. It was supreme; and yet in spite of everything great haunting fears were not absent. He quite understood that in a country like Spain there would be occasional lapses from morality, even in the priesthood; but to be told—what he had been told, was horrible! How could that man——? No, he could not, would not, believe it!

He returned to the hotel that night just in time for dinner. He noticed that while there were several new-comers the hotel was not yet full. Three days later, he was informed, there would not be a single room empty.

“It will be a record Easter, I think,” the manager informed him. “I could have let every room in the house twice over from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. As it is, I’ve had to engage a number of bedrooms outside. Next Thursday night there will be a tremendous crush. People will be walking on each other’s heads.”

He found Harding’s visitors just as the young American had described them. They were all past the meridian of life, and had the appearance of men of authority. He saw, too, that not only the waiter, but the manager, treated them with great deference, and he himself had become distinguished by sitting at the same table with them. During dinner there was nothing out of the ordinary in their conversation. The old Spanish merchant told many

humorous stories concerning Seville, while Julian could not help laughing at the Americans' descriptions of the way Spaniards did their business.

“On the whole I like the Spaniards,” said one of them. “But you must not judge Spain by English standards, Mr. Boconnoc. If you do you'll be disappointed. You see Spain, and especially Seville, are in some ways but little removed from the time of Ferdinand and Isabella. Of course, the country has been obliged to catch something of the spirit of other countries; but even in those things which they have borrowed they are a hundred years behind the times. You see, in Spain, they practically live in mediæval days. The motto of the Church is *Semper Eadem*—always the same—and Spaniards have, more than any other country in the world, been true to their Church. They do not want to be anything but mediæval. The peasants would no more think of disobeying their priests than they would think of flying to the moon. In other countries the Church has had to march with the times, but here it is at a standstill.”

“But the people must wake up some time,” remarked Harding.

“Never,” replied the Spaniard; “the Church doesn't want them to wake up, and the Church is supreme. And after all, why should Spaniards wake up? They would only become discontented. As it is they are ignorant, but they are happy.”

“And dead,” broke in Harding.

“Yes, dead if you like. But compare Seville with, say, Barcelona. There you have something of the spirit of what is called progress. There you have Socialism, and unrest. Are the people any better? I doubt it.”

Presently, when dinner was over, they moved into the lounge and in a secluded corner they continued their conversation.

“We saw a high dignitary this morning,” said Harding. “My English friend here was shocked at what I told him. Shocked, too, at what I told him about the standard of morality among the Spanish priests. In fact, he would not believe me.”

“Oh, there are many pure, simple, good men among the Spanish clergy,” replied the old Spaniard. “Men who love their flocks and are faithful to their teachings, but, as Mr. Rickard says, you must not judge Spanish morality by English standards. For example, there is little or no drunkenness in Spain. That is regarded as a very grave sin, but the other . . .” And the old man shrugged his shoulders.

“But do you mean to tell me that such stories as Mr. Harding related to me this morning are true?” And Julian spoke indignantly.

“What stories?” asked the Spaniard.

That night, when Julian went to bed, he was in a state of mind difficult to describe. For the last two years he had been led to believe that celibacy on the part of the priesthood was a holy estate. He believed that it was necessary in order to live the highest possible life. As for unchastity on the part of the priesthood, it was to him ghastly beyond words. Cloistered as the last two years of his life had been, and meeting only with men to whom such things were deadly sins, he naturally thought that a similar purity obtained throughout the whole Church. But this was ghastly—terrible! And what was more, the old Spaniard, and the two Americans who were resident in Seville, spoke of it as a mere commonplace, as something which no one denied, or ever thought of denying.

Throughout the next few days he spent much time with Harding, not only in visiting various places in the city and its environs, but in studying the life generally. Seville was in a state of preparation as if for a great fair. It might seem as though the ordinary avocations of life had been suspended. Preparations for the great festival were paramount. Everything was given over to religion, or what they called religion.

Again and again he asked himself the question that Joan Killigrew had put to him as they walked by the side of the Tagus, beneath the beetling cliffs of Toledo. Would he like England to become like Spain? Would he like the country to be dominated by the Church of Rome? He had argued that a tree was known by its fruits. How did that apply, even in Seville, the most religious city in the world? If a tree were known by its fruits, Seville ought to be the holiest city in the world—the freest from crime, corruption, and vice. The Church held supreme sway there. No one denied its mandates. No protest was made against its dogmas. It had all power, and yet he heard on all hands stories of chicanery, corruption, vice. Morality seemed to be divorced from religion. On every hand there were houses of ill-fame and sin, and yet the Church, which was all-powerful, appeared and sin, and yet the Church, which was all-powerful, appeared to make no protest. What was the use of implicit faith if that faith were not accompanied by higher standards of life?

He tried to drive painful questions from his mind, tried to believe those things which, during the last two years, he had been taught to believe.

He had neither seen nor heard anything of Father Fakenham, or Father Bridgeman. This was a great relief, for he feared meeting them. He recalled the conversation he had heard within the shadow of Toledo Cathedral, and remembered that Ritzoom had told his brother priest that Bridgeman was on the way there. He wondered whether they would follow him to Seville.

Neither had he seen anything of Joan Killigrew or her friends. Perhaps they had decided not to come to Seville but had persisted in their determination to visit Cordova and Granada.

During the days preceding Easter Sunday he had implicitly obeyed all the rules of the Catholic Church. He fasted much, and prayed much. When doubts came he fought them down; but in spite of everything fears haunted him, doubts troubled him.

Then came Easter Day. On Good Friday and throughout Saturday he attended the services at the great cathedral, fighting his doubts continuously. But on Easter Day hope rose triumphant. He would doubt no longer. It was the Day of Days. . . .

Amidst thousands of other worshippers he knelt in the vast space of the cathedral. . . . He remembered the teachings of the Church concerning the Mass, the Eucharist. He knew that all Catholics claimed that the Real Presence of God was in the Eucharist. . . . He called to mind what the Council of Trent had proclaimed concerning it; he remembered that the Church sternly declared that, after the Consecration, what seemed bread and wine was not bread and wine at all, but the Living Body of Jesus. . . .

Yes, presently the great Miracle would be performed, and he waited breathlessly. The Central Doctrine of the Catholic faith would be seen in verity. . . .

He watched, and waited, and prayed. . . .

Thousands of people knelt around him. Many women were sobbing. . . .

Then the mystic words were uttered: "*Hoc est corpus meum.*" "*Hic est sanguis meus.*"

There seemed a great confusion around him. Bells were tinkling, incense rose heavenward.

According to the teaching of the Church, God was being placed on the altar!

What had happened?

Nothing had happened! The bread and the wine were bread and wine still! . . .

It came upon him like a whirlwind, a tornado. There had been no miracle. It was all a mockery, a mere fairy tale. There was no reality in it. He felt as though the ground were slipping from beneath his feet, as though the end of all things had come. . . .

His heart stopped beating, his brain reeled, the past seemed to become as nothing.

Then, even while the ceremonial of the Church went on, even while thousands of people around him prayed, something more terrible than had ever come to him before filled his mind.

The whole thing was a lie. Christianity was a lie. There was no truth in any of it. There might be some creative force at the back of everything, but as for the rest, it was superstition, lies. It was all a great mumbo jumbo to delude the people!

For some time he remained stunned, then, like a man in wrath, he forged his way towards the entrance door of the cathedral. He could not stay there any longer. He wanted to breathe the fresh air of the world outside. He wanted to get away from all this tawdry show, and . . .

An hour later he reached the country beyond the city. Here all was quiet and calm. The trees everywhere were beginning to put on their mantle of green. Flowers were blooming, buds were bursting. It was strangely silent. No chorus of feathered songsters was to be heard, for there are few, if any, singing birds in Spain. But he was almost glad of this. He wanted quiet to face facts as they now appeared to him. He wanted to understand his own mental condition; for he knew he was changed, changed to the very foundations of his life.

Hour after hour he remained alone; but he could not analyse the processes through which his mind had gone. Perhaps, later on, he would be able to do this, but now everything was blank. One great fact he knew: he did not believe. His faith had slipped from him like a mantle. Belief had gone out of his life.

He was not a Protestant. Protestantism had no more foundation than that which called itself the Church. Creeds of any sort were repugnant. All was a bundle of lies—he did not believe.

Towards evening he found his way back to Seville. The religious ceremonials were in the main over; many of the visitors were making their

way towards the railway station. The city was given over to mad revelry. Seville had become more than ever like a great fair. Groups of hooligans were going up and down the streets; shows and booths abounded; entertainments of all sorts were open to the public; musical instruments blasted out uncouth sounds.

Julian laughed aloud. It seemed ridiculous after what had taken place earlier in the day. But what did it matter? The people were enjoying themselves. It was all a show.

On entering the hotel he tried to find Harding, but he did not persist in his search. This was because, on looking around the courtyard, he saw three priests who were talking eagerly. Two of them he knew, and he gave a quick guess as to the identity of the other. The two were Father Fakenham and Father Bridgeman; the third he imagined was Ritzoom, and because he did not want to meet them he rushed away like one afraid.

Presently he was able to analyse his state of mind, to understand why he had become what he was. It was his father's will, it was the letter he had written. Up to then he had believed, believed without question. After that he had begun to ask questions.

No, he did not believe. Nothing but that which appealed to his senses had any reality to him. The influences of the last two years became as thistledown. The men with whom he had been brought into contact had simply played upon his emotional credulous nature. He had been a fool. All that talk about the one true Church being the only channel of Grace, and about priests duly ordained in the long line of succession being the only ones who could make the sacraments valid, was all so much hocus-pocus. Why, if there were a God at all it was all so much blasphemy. Fancy, he had been taught that when he received Holy Orders he would be able to transform bread and wine into the actual body and blood of God!

He shuddered as he thought of it, and then threw the whole conception from him as utterly without foundation.

It was possible, probable, although he did not know it, that the whole of his experiences since he had come to the Continent had led him to his present state of mind. No doubt, too, his meeting with Joan Killigrew, and their conversations together, had all had their effect on him, while the condition of Spain, its poverty, its stagnation, its filth, and its decadence, all did their work. And besides all this, the conversation he had heard between Father Ritzoom and the unknown priest had embittered him. Then there were those stories which had been told him about the morality of the

Spanish priests. Whether they were true or whether they were false, they all helped to bring about his present state of mind, while the scene in the cathedral was the culmination of everything. It was simply not real. It was only a relic of the pagan ceremonials which ought to have died thousands of years before.

“God in a box!” he laughed scornfully. “God carried around on men’s shoulders! Good lord, what a fool I have been!”

Then the memory of his father’s words came back to him. “Test these things, prove them, do nothing in a hurry. I have given you a year that you may be able to come to your senses.”

Yes, and the old man had been right. Andrew Boconnoc’s will had given him a shock; his letter had shaken him to the very roots of life. What he had been striving after, fighting for, had no real meaning. He did not believe.

He felt faint and ill, and presently he remembered that he had fasted all day; that for nearly a week he had scarcely eaten enough to keep body and soul together. He went downstairs, and after having with difficulty obtained something in the shape of supper, he went to bed and slept for several hours.

“Two gentlemen were inquiring for you last night,” the manager told him next day.

“Who were they? Did they give their names?”

“No. They were English clergymen, I think. They seemed much disappointed at not finding you.”

Julian laughed. All his fear of his late confessor and the Head of his college had gone. He knew why they had followed him, but he did not care.

“Are you staying much longer in Seville?” asked Harding.

“No, I think I shall be on the move soon. I’ve not made up my mind yet where I shall go—probably to Cordova or Granada.”

He spent most of the morning with the young American. They had become very friendly by this time, and spoke to each other freely.

“Of course, you joined in the celebrations yesterday?” Harding said.

Julian laughed. “I went to church,” he replied.

“What did you think of it all?”

“I would rather not tell you,” he said after several seconds’ silence. “Anyhow, it’s over, so let’s talk of something else.”

Harding looked at him questioningly. He did not understand his altered demeanour, the almost flippant way in which he spoke.

While the two young men were sitting at lunch after their long morning together, the waiter brought two cards and placed them before Julian.

“The gentlemen are waiting to see you, señor,” he said.

“All right, Alfonso,” he replied, “tell them I’ll be out presently.” And he quietly finished his lunch.

CHAPTER XVII

FATHER FAKENHAM'S FAILURE

The two priests met him with outstretched hands as though they were delighted to see him, and yet there was a suggestion of reproach in their words.

“Won't you sit down?” asked Julian quietly. “I presume you have something to say to me.”

“We have much to say to you,” replied Father Fakenham, and there was an assumption of authority in his voice. “You will naturally want to explain several things to us. I did not quite expect this treatment, Julian, my son. When I told you, after your late father's funeral, that I did not expect you back at the college for a time, I did not give you liberty to travel about as you pleased.”

“You thought I needed protection, I suppose—a kind of male nurse?” His voice was hard and flippant. He was sorry afterwards that he had given way to his feelings.

“What do you mean by that?” asked the priest.

“Forgive me,” said Julian, “I spoke without thought.”

The priests exchanged glances, and for a few seconds there was a silence. Neither of them understood either the flash of his eyes or the tone of his voice. Julian remained like one waiting for something.

Seated around the old Moorish courtyard were groups of people drinking their coffee; departing guests were bidding good-bye one to another; the fountain at the centre was playing merrily. There was a hum of voices everywhere.

“We want a private conversation with you,” said Father Fakenham at length. “There is a good deal we wish to discuss with you, and naturally there are many things you wish to tell us. Is there no place in the hotel more private than this?”

“I dare say I can manage it,” replied Julian, “but up to now the hotel has been so full that it has been impossible for me to get anything more than a bedroom. However, so many people have left, that I have no doubt I could get a private room. But is your business so particular as to require privacy?”

“My son!” protested Father Fakenham, in astonishment.

Julian looked at his watch. “I have an appointment with an American friend at a quarter to three,” he said, “so I can give you just three-quarters of an hour. I hope that will be enough. There, lots of people are leaving; is not this place quiet enough for you now?”

There was antagonism in his every tone, and both the men felt it. What had happened they did not know, but the Julian Boconnoc they had seen last was not the Julian Boconnoc who spoke to them now. Still, neither of them were men easily turned aside from their purpose.

“We should like a more private place than this,” asserted the priest.

Julian hailed a passing waiter. “Alfonso,” he said, “is the manager in? Would you tell him I would like to see him a minute.”

“Certainly, señor,” said the waiter, with a smile, and hurried away to the manager’s bureau.

“I’m sorry to bother you,” remarked Julian, when the manager appeared, “but these gentlemen wish a private conversation with me, and it’s rather public here. Have you a room at liberty where we need not be disturbed?”

A few minutes later they were alone in a private room; the two priests greatly astonished and not a little anxious, while Julian, with fast-beating heart, tried to appear calm.

“Now then, Julian,” said Father Fakenham, again assuming his old air of authority, “I must speak plainly. What is the meaning of this?”

“The meaning of what?”

“What has come over you since I saw you last? Why have you, in opposition to Father Bridgeman’s expressed wish, come to Spain alone? Why do you meet us in this fashion?”

“I am sorry if I have not met you with the courtesy due from one gentleman to another,” replied the young man. “But perhaps it will save time if I inform you at once that my views have changed.”

“Changed! How? In what way? Tell me immediately!” The tones of the man’s voice were so arrogant, and his manner so much like that of an angry schoolmaster speaking to a refractory boy, that for the moment Julian was tempted to be impertinent; but he did not yield to the temptation. He remembered the years he had yielded obedience to these men, and that they were both old enough to be his father.

“I will be quite frank with you,” he said, after a few moments’ reflection, “and perhaps it will be better to say what I have to say at once, without waiting. I no longer believe in the so-called Catholic Church.”

His statement had an entirely different effect upon each of the men. Father Fakenham rose to his feet in hot protest. He was angry, indignant, resentful. Father Bridgeman, on the other hand, who had spoken but little during their interview, laughed like a man amused. Nevertheless, he was keen, alert, watchful.

“You no longer believe in the Catholic Church!” cried Father Fakenham. “How dare you say such a thing!”

“Because I must be truthful.”

“Perhaps he’s thinking of his father’s will,” interposed Father Bridgeman, who laughed again.

Julian’s colour rose as the latter spoke, and he had difficulty in repressing the angry retort that came to his lips.

“And what are the reasons for this remarkable change?” asked Fakenham.

Julian tried to tell him, but the priest would not have it. He demanded faith and obedience without question.

“Silence!” cried Father Fakenham sternly, when Julian tried to justify his position.

“Very well, sir.”

This was followed by a painful silence. Father Fakenham looked towards Bridgeman as if seeking help, and then finding none, again turned his eyes towards Julian. Evidently he had come to an *impasse*. This young man was no longer the tractable, easily managed novice of a few weeks before. He stood before them, pale, and evidently much excited, but there was no suggestion of yielding in his eyes.

“Remember your vows, your vows of obedience to me, your spiritual father.”

Julian remained motionless, except that his hands clenched and unclenched themselves.

Again silence fell between them. Father Fakenham was evidently considering his best method of procedure. He had had difficult cases to deal with before, but never one like this. By nature he was stern, autocratic; and

his priestly assumptions had, during the years, emphasized these traits in his character. For more than a quarter of a century he had exacted absolute obedience on the part of those under him, and there is no autocracy like the autocracy of the priest. He had been like the centurion of olden time. He had said to this man "Go," and he went, and to that man "Come," and he came. But now he was staggered, bewildered. The youth, who a few weeks before had obeyed his every word without thought of protest, or even questioning, had changed. His look did not suggest defiance so much as a quiet determination to follow his own convictions.

Father Fakenham felt that he had made a mistake. He had not realized the stubborn Yorkshire side of Julian's nature. He ought to have remembered the effect which his father's will would naturally have upon him. He ought to have acted differently. Moreover, he ought not to have assumed the attitude of authority at once.

"Of course, Julian, my son," he said presently, "your present state of mind is only a passing phase. You simply could not break my heart by becoming apostate. You could not go back upon your most sacred convictions."

Julian did not speak a word.

"I am trying to be patient with you," went on Father Fakenham. "I remember that you are young and susceptible to passing influences, but this kind of thing must stop."

Still Julian did not speak.

"I ought to have remembered that you have passed through difficult times, that your mind was upset. I ought to have realized that under the influence of a great blow you might do strange things. That is why, as soon as I learnt that you had come to Spain, I determined to follow you. You need guidance. You must leave the busy world and come back to your old life."

Again he looked at Julian's face, but the young man showed no sign.

"I have made arrangements for you to go back to England at once," continued the priest. "You must take the next express train to Madrid."

Still the young man had made no sign save that his lips quivered.

"You will make your preparations at once."

"No." Again there was nothing of defiance in the tone of his voice. It was simply the quiet assertion of a man who had made up his mind.

“You disobey me, then?”

“I do not propose to return to England at present.”

“Remember your vows,” said the priest sternly. Again he tried to break down the opposition by the force of his authority, by the weight of his personality.

Julian looked at his watch. “Is that all?” he asked. “If it is, there is no need for me to trouble you any longer.”

“Do you mean to say that you defy my will?”

“I propose to disregard it, certainly.”

“But—but—tell me the meaning of this madness.”

“I was trying to tell you, but you silenced me. I simply refuse to accept your authority.”

“Then—then you have become a Protestant, a heretic?”

“No, I am not a Protestant—as the word is usually understood.”

“What do you mean?”

“I believe—nothing: that’s all. I have no faith. I have given up the whole thing.”

“What! you have become an atheist?”

“Yes, if you like.”

“And yet you were at the cathedral yesterday. You were one of the worshippers at the Easter celebrations.”

“Yes—that was the last straw,” and Julian laughed bitterly.

“Tell me what you mean by that!”

“I don’t think I’d better; I don’t want to offend you, to hurt your feelings—more than is necessary, but yesterday was a mockery—a great lie!” For the moment he had lost control over himself.

“Stop blaspheming! Surely you must be mad.”

“I think I have been mad, or I should not have believed what I have believed. Fancy!”—and a feeling of wild abandon possessed him. He was no longer able to put a check on his words. “If there is a God at all, what I saw yesterday was blasphemy. Those men calling themselves priests, pretending

to turn flour and wine into the actual body and blood of God! To carry around God in a box! Blasphemy! *That's* blasphemy!"

"Silence!"

"I will not be silent. I tried to believe, tried to hold fast to the things you taught me; but it was impossible. The whole thing was a sham, a show, and an empty show at that. And that's the kind of thing you want to bring back to England. You want England to be governed by the so-called Church that teaches that! You want to drag us back to superstition, to idolatry and lies. You want to make England like Spain."

His face was pale, his eyes shone with an unnatural light, his voice was hoarse and tremulous.

"I tell you to be silent!" cried Father Fakenham, outraged by the young man's persistence.

"Look here, sir," and again Julian mastered himself, "I did not mean to speak like this, but you have goaded me to it. I believe you are sincere in your beliefs; perhaps you are acting conscientiously—although it is difficult to see how you can be."

"What do you mean by that? How dare you, whose eyes have been blinded by pride and unbelief, say such things?"

"Rather, my eyes have been opened, opened as they never were before. I understand, now, the taunts which used to be levelled at us."

"What taunts?"

"The taunts that you, and such as you, were playing into the hands of Romanism, of mediævalism and superstition. That you, having taken the vows of the Church of England, were trying to bring back that Church to the tyranny of Rome, while you pretended to be loyal to the Church whose vows you took. What is that but a great lie?"

"And what of *you* who talk of honour and truth!" exclaimed Father Fakenham. "What of the vows *you* took, of the obedience *you* promised?"

"They were the vows of a callow boy," replied Julian. "It was a sin to allow me to take them. But they don't matter; they have no more weight with me than the resolutions I made when I was two years old."

"Then you don't believe?"

"No," he cried, almost fiercely.

“Not in the Christian faith?”

“No.”

Again Father Bridgeman spoke. For a long time he had been listening and watching, but he had kept silent.

“I don’t think we need to take this seriously, Fakenham,” he said, and there was a cynical laugh in his voice. “Of course, it’s easy to understand. It’s only a few weeks since his father’s will was read. You know the terms of that will. It simply means that he is giving up his faith rather than lose his fortune. Two millions of money!—well, it’s a big sum.”

Again an angry retort rose to Julian’s lips; but he suppressed it. He would not discuss such questions with these men.

“But an atheist! an atheist!” cried Father Fakenham. “It’s too awful to think about!”

There was no doubt he spoke sincerely, and from his heart. Unbelief was to him a terrible thing. It was the sin of sins. It was ghastly beyond words. In his own way he was a sincere man, an honest man; but in accepting Jesuitical doctrines, his conceptions of honesty and truth had become warped.

“I don’t think you need trouble, Fakenham,” said Father Bridgeman, still with the same smile upon his lips. “His atheism is only skin-deep. He will see a way to adjust it. You see, it’s all come in a few weeks, and it will as quickly go. He has given up the Catholic faith because if he doesn’t he will lose his money. His father’s will definitely states that. As yet he doesn’t realize that the will also states that he must be a believer in the Protestant Evangelical doctrines. The one is just as binding as the other; therefore, if he remains an atheist he will be a pauper. He’ll come round to his beliefs all right.”

The words stung Julian like the fang of a scorpion. Strange as it may seem, too, they came to him as a shock. He did not realize this. It had never come into his calculations. Yes, this man Bridgeman was right. That was his father’s direct and distinct stipulation. “The rest of my property of whatsoever nature I bequeath to my son Julian, only on condition that he be true and faithful to the Protestant religion.”

Of course, he knew what the old man had in mind. He feared that his son would remain in the chains of Popery, and because old Andrew Boconnoc hated Popery he determined that not one penny of his wealth should go in support of Roman-Catholicism, or of Anglo-Catholicism, which he despised

more than the other. He had no thought of his son becoming an atheist—that was altogether outside his calculations. But the words were there. Before he could enter into his inheritance he would have to declare that he was a true and faithful believer in the Protestant Evangelical religion. Father Bridgeman, who had been watching him closely, saw the effect of his words, saw that he had struck a blow under which the young man reeled. For a moment he felt sorry for him. He knew that this was not what old Andrew Boconnoc had meant. He understood the inwardness of the will perfectly; knew that it was not in the old Yorkshireman's mind to disinherit his son for giving up faith in the Christian religion. Nevertheless, in his chagrin and disappointment, he took pleasure in stabbing him. Besides, who knew what that sealed document contained? It might be possible. . . .

“Ah, he did not realize that!” and there was something like a snarl in Fakenham's voice.

“No,” replied Julian, who by this time had somewhat recovered himself, “I had not thought of it.”

“Then—then . . .”

“Excuse me, I do not wish to discuss this matter further. As it happens, it is not your business.”

Again Father Bridgeman laughed cynically. “You need not trouble, Fakenham,” he repeated; “the man who would give up the Catholic faith for two millions of money will not find it difficult to give up his new-born atheism. Let me see, it will be about twenty-four hours that he has been an atheist. It is only of mushroom growth.”

Every nerve in Julian's body quivered with pain at the taunt, but he repressed the angry words which rushed to his lips.

“I'm afraid my time is up,” he said, looking at his watch, “and I need not detain you any longer,” and walking to the door he opened it, and held it while the two men passed out.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ALCAZAR GROUNDS

Julian's interview with the two priests had taken longer than he had imagined. Moreover, when they had gone, his mind was in such a tumult that he had remained alone in the room in order to calm his thoughts. When he reached the courtyard where he had promised to meet Harding, the young American had gone. Unheeding of the time, he had not realized that it was far past the hour they had arranged to meet.

Although he was sorry not to have kept his word with the young American, he was glad to be alone. He was in no fit mood to talk with anyone. Everything was confused. The world seemed a mad maze.

A few minutes later he found himself walking along the banks of the Guadalquivir, the great muddy river which flows through Seville. The town was still *en fête*. Although bank holidays were not known in Spain, Easter Monday was generally regarded as a holiday. He walked some distance along the bank of the river, and then turned back. He was in no mood for the shouting crowd which was enjoying its holiday. Heedless where he went, he walked on until presently he found himself within the precincts of the Alcazar. To his surprise he found that the place was almost deserted. Here and there groups of people walked, but the multitude of merry-makers found their pleasures elsewhere. Seating himself on a bench which stood near an old dungeon, famous in history, he gave himself over to reflection on what had taken place.

Yes, he was disturbed at what Father Bridgeman had pointed out to him, but not greatly. After all, the question of money affected him less than he had imagined. It is true he loved his old home, and he knew it would cause him a terrible wrench to give it up, but Julian was no money lover for money's sake. For years his mind had been filled with the idea, not of enjoying the wealth which he knew his father possessed, but with the thought of giving it for the extension of the faith which had seemed to him the only thing worth living for.

It was all very strange, and it was with difficulty that he realized it. He had come to Spain, shaken by what had taken place, but with no very serious doubts in his mind. Now it seemed to him as though there was a great blank in his life. The old cathedral which lifted its lofty towers above the

surrounding buildings near by had no meaning to him any more than a Hindoo temple might have. Hindooism, with its many gods and its fantastic faith, was just as real to him as Christianity, whose priests were supposed, by a few words, to turn flour and wine into God. The one was as unthinkable as the other.

Away in the distance he heard the shouts and laughter of merry-makers, but here all was quiet. His very surroundings tended to peace and repose. The atmosphere of the old Alcazar, built by Moorish hands, suggested dignity and restfulness, while the sight of the grey old cathedral in the near distance had a soothing effect. He could not understand it. The day before, he had left it in hot anger and defiance. He remembered how he had fought for his faith. How, when the whole fabric of his belief seemed to be tumbling around his ears, he had struggled to keep hold of what he had formerly believed. It was an hour of agony; but he could not help himself. It was during the supreme part of the service that the shattering blow had come. When he heard the priest uttering words by which a stupendous miracle was supposed to be performed, and when in his heart of hearts he knew that it had not been performed, everything became a mockery.

That was why he could contain himself no longer. That was why the whole fabric of his faith was shattered.

Again he traced the processes which had been at work since his father's death. The reading of the will had staggered him because his fond hopes would never be realized. Then came his long talk with Father Fakenham, the subtlety of whose words did not so much impress him at the time, but which afterwards troubled him so greatly. This was followed by the coming of Father Bridgeman, his meeting with Joan Killigrew, his determination to come to Spain—and what followed. Yes, as he saw it now, everything had tended to undermine the foundations of his belief, until at length when he had heard the priest mutter the words, "*Hoc est corpus meum,*" and again a little later, "*Hic est sanguis meus,*" the utter unreality of everything came to him. That flour and that wine were *not* changed by the priest's words. It was a black lie to say that they were. He realized it to the very depths of his being. It was a lie. Then everything else went.

He knew that the Sacrifice of the Mass was the very centre of Catholic faith and doctrine. It was accepted as the very life-blood of the Church. It was because the Reformers in the sixteenth century had denied the Mass that they were denounced by bell, book and candle.

And this was what he, as an Anglo-Catholic, had been taught to believe. This was what all Anglo-Catholics wanted to restore to England. And it was an unbelievable mockery.

That was why his faith had been torn up at the very foundations. All his other experiences had been undermining these foundations, and thus, when he had seen what appeared to him as a ghastly travesty of truth there in the old cathedral, everything fell. . . .

He tried to face the future. Yes, Father Bridgeman was right. The words of the will were plain, and at the end of a year he would become a pauper. But he did not trouble much. He would be able to earn a living. For, of course, he would make no claim on his father's wealth. Remembering the words of the will, he could not; and after all, it did not matter.

But it *did* matter. He loved his old home, and it would be like tearing out his heart-strings to see it occupied by strangers. Besides—yes, he had not forgotten;—he would never forget. When he remembered the night when he had sat by the buttress of Toledo Cathedral, he knew it was not so much the conversation of the priests as the realization of his love for Joan Killigrew that caused him to leave the old city. He had believed that to love her was sin. He had not, at that time, given up his faith, and he was a priest at heart. But now. . . .

He heard a trill of joyous laughter and the sound of footsteps. He knew whose voice it was—there was no other in the world like it.

A few seconds later he had started to his feet and was speaking incoherently. Tom Bagshott and Joan Killigrew were not six yards away. They also had chosen to visit the Alcazar that afternoon.

“Heavens, if it isn't St. Francis!” cried Bagshott. “When did you come, old man?”

“I've been here more than a week. I—I—but what are you doing here? When did you come? I thought you were going to Cordova or Granada or one of those places. Don't you remember, Miss Killigrew—you told me you were going there?”

“But why did you leave Toledo in such a dickens of a hurry—and like a thief in the night?” asked Bagshott.

“Things happened—no, I can't tell you what they were, but I had to come away—you see—there were reasons.”

“But did you make up your mind suddenly?”

“Yes—no—I don’t know. I had to come, that’s all. And you, when did you come?”

“Oh, we were only two days behind you,” Tom Bagshott answered. “The mater suddenly came to the conclusion that she didn’t want to go to Granada or Cordova, at least just yet, so we came on here. We had a dickens of a job to get rooms, I can tell you; but we were quite lucky after all. We are at the Hotel Valencia. It’s rather a poor little show as a whole, but they have given us their best rooms, and as we managed to get a good sitting-room, we have fared royally. I wonder we have not seen you. Where are you staying?”

Julian told them.

“That’s where we tried to get; but they would not look at us. Crowded out, they said. Have you seen the processions and all the rest of the—celebrations?”

“Yes,” replied Julian, but there was that in the tone of his voice that stopped Tom Bagshott from asking further questions.

“By the way, Joan,” went on Bagshott, looking at his watch, “it will be five o’clock soon, and both your mother and mine told us that they would not keep tea waiting. We must be going back.”

A pang of jealousy shot through Julian’s heart. He remembered what Bagshott had told him on the night he came to Toledo, remembered how he had said that for years he had been trying to get Joan Killigrew; and that he would never give up trying. Had he succeeded, he wondered? He had never heard him call her by her Christian name before. And now he uttered it with an air of proprietorship.

“Must we go so soon, Tom,” answered the girl. “I love this old place better than any other in Seville. It’s so quiet, too, after the pandemonium of yesterday. It’s just lovely.”

“Yes, it’s all right,” replied Tom; “but I dare not disobey my respected mother, and orders are orders.”

“Well, if we must, we must,” the girl replied whimsically. “Won’t you come with us, Mr. Boconnoc?”

In spite of the pangs of jealousy, he accepted her invitation with alacrity.

“I’d love to,” he cried, “if—if I’m not in the way.”

“Why should you be in the way? It’s true you have behaved very badly in running away from us as you did; but as a sign of your repentance and our

forgiveness we shall take no refusal.”

Of what happened during the next hour Julian had only a vague idea. The walk through the crowded streets, the many questions asked him by Mrs. Bagshott when he reached the hotel, and many other things, made little or no impression upon his mind. The one great thing that filled his mind was that Joan Killigrew was near him, and that he must talk with her alone. Of what he would say to her he had no clear thought, but he knew he must be very frank with her, that he must hide nothing from her. Again and again during tea-time, and during the gossip which took place afterwards, he tried to get a moment alone with her, but in vain. It might seem as though Tom Bagshott were especially watchful of her, and that he regarded her with a proprietary air. But he noticed that she wore no ring, neither were there any suggestions on her part that anything particular had taken place.

His chance came as he was leaving the hotel. She was evidently in an expansive mood, and in her frank, friendly way, accompanied him to the door.

“Miss Killigrew,” he said, “I want a long talk with you.”

“And you look frightfully serious about it, too,” she replied, with a laugh.

“I *am* serious. Something terrible has happened to me.”

“Terrible?” she repeated.

“Yes, I think that is the right word. I want help. I want advice—oh, I’m not speaking lightly, Miss Killigrew!”

“Is it bad news you have heard?” asked the girl anxiously.

“Bad news?—yes—no—I don’t know. But I am alone in the world. I have no friends.”

“Isn’t Tom Bagshott your friend?”

“No, not in the sense I mean. He’s a good chap; but our friendship is only skin-deep. He would not understand me.”

“And should I? I’m a stranger to you; I never saw you until that day when my car broke down.”

“No, I know; but you will, won’t you? I don’t mean five minutes. It will take me at least an hour to tell you—everything.”

“You have some Oxford friends here,” replied the girl. “I saw them only this morning—two priests. Tom told me that since taking your degree you have been studying Divinity under one of them. Father Fakenham, I think he said his name was. Did you know they were here?”

“Yes—yes, I know. But I can tell them nothing.”

“Is it about your father?” asked the girl. She seemed like one afraid to pledge herself, and there was an anxious look in her eyes.

“Yes, my father—and others. I know I am asking a lot of you, Miss Killigrew; but could you meet me to-night, after dinner? Shall I come and fetch you? Please say yes.”

The girl looked into his face like one frightened. “Are you ill, Mr. Boconnoc? You—you look very pale. Oh, I forgot. I suppose you have been fasting a great deal,” then, noting his tremulous lips, she went on, “Mother and Mrs. Bagshott have arranged to go to some place of amusement to-night; but—but I need not go.” Then, like one taking a sudden resolution, she said: “If you will be here at half-past eight, I will be ready.” She rushed away hurriedly, as she spoke, leaving Julian at the hotel-entrance.

He walked towards the Hotel Madrid like a man in a dream. He did not know at all what he was going to say to her, but he knew he must speak. At least, she would sympathize with him. She would understand his state of mind. Ever since his father’s death the world had seemed a great meaningless turmoil. Perhaps,—yes, she would understand. She would help him. Of course, he could not tell her about his love. That would be madness, but the rest . . .

“Hello, Boconnoc, where in the world have you been since lunch? Have you been with those Holy Fathers ever since? When the hotel manager told me you had taken a private room and that they were still with you, I thought it was no use waiting, so I went off by myself.”

He scarcely knew it was Harding speaking, although he explained his reason for being late; but he spoke almost as an automaton—his mind did not register what he said.

“Shall we go to some show to-night?” Harding asked, as they neared the hotel. “Or have your priests any special regulations for Easter Monday?”

“I don’t know,” replied Julian; “but I’m not going to any place of amusement, thank you. I want to be alone—that is, I have an engagement.”

Harding asked no further question. He was a young man of understanding. He had, with some anxiety, noted Julian's pale face, noted, too, that his visit to Seville was having a deeper impression upon him than the casual observer would see. "He doesn't want to foot the merry music to-night," reflected the young American, "and if I mistake not, religion is at the bottom of it. I guess I'll let him alone."

In spite of his perturbed state of mind, Julian dressed with great care. Why it was he could not have told, but he was careful in selecting spotless linen, and a white vest and tie. He also discarded his ordinary dinner-jacket and put on a tail-coat. He might have been going to a fashionable dance. When he had completed his toilet he examined himself carefully in a long looking-glass and could not help being pleased at his reflection. Like all the Boconnocs had been for generations, he was tall and stalwart, and he had had the advantage of a good tailor. His clothes hung somewhat loosely around him, nevertheless he presented a fine figure of a man. Indeed, when presently he walked into the dining-room many eyes were turned towards him.

"A fine-looking chap," was remarked again and again; "but doesn't he look pale and thin?"

This was true. He did look pale and thin, nevertheless the new light of his eyes seemed to atone for it. There was a look of expectancy, of wonder, in them, and the mobile, sensitive mouth spoke of resolution. Moreover, the broad forehead, surmounted by a mass of dark brown hair brushed horizontally across his brow, was a fitting crown to such a face.

Precisely at half-past eight he was at the door of the Valencia Hotel and found Joan Killigrew waiting him.

"You see, I have kept my word," she laughed, nervously.

"I knew you would."

"You would not be so sure if you knew the trouble I have had with my mother. I had to tell her I was coming out with you. You see, although in some senses I am an awfully modern girl, in others I am Early Victorian. Mostly I do as I like, but I never keep anything from her."

"I'm glad you told her," he said. "It's generally quiet after dinner in the courtyard of my hotel. I hope it will be to-night. Shall we go there?"

Without another word the two walked away together, and in a few minutes reached the entrance of the Hotel Madrid. It was a glorious night. Scarcely a cloud flecked the sky. The moon, nearly at its full, lit up the

whole heavens; the air was warm and balmy, too; almost as warm as a June night in England. He led her into the courtyard and ordered coffee.

“Let me take your cloak,” he said; and the girl felt his hands tremble as they touched her shoulders.

She, too, had been more careful than usual in her attire that night, and Julian thought she looked wondrously fair as she took the chair he offered her.

“By gad!” said Harding to himself, who saw her as he passed out of the hotel, “Boconnoc is a young man of judgment. She is the real article and no mistake. The most striking-looking girl I’ve seen since I’ve been in Spain. What eyes, what teeth, what a chin, and what a complexion! Holy Mike! but she’s no common or garden girl.”

It was evident, too, that she had thrown a kind of spell on Julian. All the influences of the last two years seemed to have left him. He appeared bright and gay and talked almost merrily. The girl, who had expected him to be entirely different, looked at him and wondered. She realized, for the first time, how handsome he was, what a fine intellectual face he had, and how many admiring glances were cast towards them both.

But the old courtyard was no fit place for the talk he wanted. There was a hum of voices everywhere, and nearly every chair in the place was occupied.

“I’m sorry,” cried Julian at length, “I hoped we should be left alone. Usually there’s scarcely anyone here of a night, but many of the visitors are not yet gone. Besides, I feel stifled here. Shall we go out? We shall be able to find some quiet place where we can talk.”

A little later they were again in the streets, and, as if by one consent, they made their way towards the Alcazar. In the near distance was an open space given over to travelling shows, swings, roundabouts, and all the rest of the impedimenta of a fair. It was here that the greatest crowds gathered. By the time they reached the Alcazar even the raucous music, ground out by machinery, had become dim.

Again they found the place almost deserted. As far as they could see, only a few lovers, and a group of Americans who declared aloud that they wanted to see the old place at night-time and in the light of the moon, were to be seen. Julian led the way to the seat he had occupied that afternoon, and the two sat down.

For some time neither of them spoke. The girl, who during the time she had been in the hotel lounge had been gay and light-hearted, now seemed apprehensive, fearful; while Julian, now that his opportunity had come, felt as though there were a weight upon his lips. Perhaps there was something in the very atmosphere of the place that accounted for this. Everything was old, almost lifeless. The grey Oriental building, which had stood there throughout the centuries, cast weird shadows around, while the people who occasionally passed them looked unreal. Once, as a Spaniard with his cloak thrown across his shoulder and his hat drawn down over his eyes passed them, Joan Killigrew shivered and instinctively drew nearer to him. But even then the words which hung upon his lips refused to be uttered. Bright as was the light of the moon, sweet as was the scent of the spring, there seemed to be something mysterious, almost magic, in the air.

“Won’t you take me back, Mr. Boconnoc?” she asked, and there was a tremor in her voice. “I do not think I like being here; I’m—I’m a little afraid.”

“No, no, not yet. There’s nothing to be afraid of, and I have much to tell you.”

Then, suddenly, the eerie spell of the night was broken. Not a dozen yards from where they sat someone started singing in a clear, tenor voice. Neither of them could understand a word that the man sang, but each instinctively knew what it was. It was a Spaniard serenading his mistress. Instinctively, too, each of them began to translate what they imagined he was singing in Spanish, into English.

The song ended, and there was a hushed silence. Even the Americans whose voices they seldom failed to hear, ceased to talk. A few seconds later there was a passionate A-a-h! followed by murmuring voices.

“He had been waiting for her,” cried Julian. “He did not know where she was, so he sang to her, and she came to him. There’s romance all around us.”

The thought in his mind was strangely out of accord with his own feelings, but in a way which he could not explain, he felt able to tell the girl by his side what was in his heart.

CHAPTER XIX

A MAN AND A MAID

“Has Tom Bagshott told you anything about me?” he asked suddenly.

“No, nothing, except . . .”

“What?” asked Julian when the girl failed to finish her sentence.

“It scarcely matters, does it? Besides, it was nothing. He simply said that when you first went to Oxford you were a gay happy fellow, but after you had been there a little time you became changed. He said some Anglo-Catholic priests got hold of you. I think that’s nearly all.”

“I suppose he told you,” blurted out Julian, “that my father was a very rich man, and that I am his only heir?”

“Yes, he told me that.”

“Well, I’m not. I am practically penniless.”

“But—but I don’t understand.”

“You will in a minute. No one else knows anything about it except those who had to do with the making of my father’s will. Tom Bagshott thinks—practically everyone thinks—that I’m a millionaire; that—that—but it’s all a mistake, he hasn’t left me a penny.”

The girl could not help looking astonished.

“I think I told you that afternoon when we were walking by the Tagus that my father was a Protestant of Protestants, and that I was reared in a Protestant atmosphere.”

“Yes, you told me that.”

“I told you, too, that shortly after I went to Oxford I came under the influence of men like Father Fakenham and Father Bridgeman, who converted me to their way of thinking. They call themselves Anglo-Catholics; but they are really Romanists at heart, and their dearest hope is to do away with the Reformation; to bring the Church of England into allegiance to the Church of Rome. I told you how I became an eager convert, that I accepted with avidity all that they taught, and that I longed to join the Church of Rome, but they persuaded me against it. You see, the great aim of their life is to so de-Protestantize the Church of England as to

bring it over to the Church of Rome in a body. That work has been going on for nearly a hundred years. That is why they, and hundreds of others, remain in the Church of England when their heart is with Rome and their faith is in Rome. But they remain in the Church of England because they believe they can do Rome's work better by doing so."

"Yes, you told me that—and—and—it's disloyal, dishonest!" cried the girl indignantly.

"Perhaps they do not think so; indeed, I'm inclined to think that many of them are sincere, devout men who believe that they are doing the work of God by destroying the Reformation and by de-Protestantizing England. To be called a Protestant is, to thousands of them, an insult. Anyhow, no one was more eager than I to see England a Roman Catholic country. That was why I studied for Holy Orders. That was why I looked forward with joy to the time when I should be able to give my father's fortune to the Church for the purpose of accomplishing this. Those men cast a spell upon me, hypnotized me. I saw with their eyes, heard with their ears, understood with their minds. It was the passion of my life. Am I making you understand? I'm anxious, very anxious, to do this."

"I think so."

"A few weeks ago my father died, and on the day of the funeral his will was read. He left everything to me on condition that I was faithful to the Protestant religion. You see, he knew all about me—of my hopes, of my desires—and he made this will in order that they might be impossible."

"But do you mean to say that he entirely disinherited you if you would not give up your faith?"

"Yes; let me explain."

Rapidly he sketched the outline of the will, and then told her of the sealed document which was to be opened at the end of a year; told her that if at the end of that time he could not obey his father's conditions every penny of his fortune would be otherwise disposed of.

"So you see, Miss Killigrew," he went on. "I am practically penniless. I have my allowance for one year—a liberal allowance, I'll admit—but at the end of that time I shall have nothing, absolutely nothing."

For nearly a minute a silence fell between them. Each of them ceased to notice the pedestrians who promenaded the Alcazar grounds, neither of them heard the shouts of revelry away in the distance.

“Believing as he did,” said the girl slowly, “I suppose his action was natural—but it was very cruel.”

“I’m not so sure of that,” replied Julian. “You see, his contention was that Romanism, Roman superstition, priestcraft, ruined a country—he believed it was an evil thing. Besides, there was not only the will. There was a letter. He wrote it just before his death. He told me that what he did he did in love. He said he did it to save me. He wanted to give me time to reflect, to test everything. And so I had a year in which to make up my mind!”

“But did he think so meanly of you as to imagine that you would give up your faith for the sake of inheriting his money?”

“No, not in the way you think. All the same, I imagine he had hopes. What he tried to do was to give me a staggering blow, to place the alternative before me suddenly. And it *was* a staggering blow. I don’t think I’m a money-lover, but I *do* love my old home, and of course I’ve been reared in the thought that I was a rich man’s son. For a time I could not think coherently.”

She turned and looked at him; saw that his face was hard and set, that his eyes were staring into vacancy. “And had you made up your mind?” she asked.

“Yes,” he replied. “I have made up my mind. I told you I was a pauper, didn’t I?”

“And so you are still an Anglo-Catholic? You will be an English clergyman, all the time believing . . .”

“My father, in that letter I spoke of, besought me to test everything, to prove everything; and although we had never been great friends, I wanted to obey him. That was why I would not listen to the counsels of those clergymen; that was why I came to Spain—at least partly. My father insisted in his letter that Romanism meant death to the best life of every nation in which it held sway. I did not believe it. So, knowing that Spain was the most Catholic country in the world, I came here.”

“Well?” asked the girl, and there was eagerness in her voice.

“That’s what I wanted to tell you about. I’m not boring you, am I?”

“No, no,” cried the girl excitedly, “go on.”

“Do you remember asking me, after we had been a few days in Spain, whether I wanted to see England become like Spain?” he asked.

“Yes, I remember.”

“I didn’t answer you. Somehow I couldn’t. But I can answer you now. No, I would not like England to become like Spain. And I saw this: every country that has come under the dominion of Rome—and in the measure in which it has come under the dominion of Rome—has been cursed with a great curse.”

“But—but I thought you said you were not a Protestant, and could never become one.”

“I am not; I never shall be. That is what I wanted to talk to you about. Oh, it’s horrible—horrible, Miss Killigrew! I wonder I haven’t gone mad.”

“I don’t understand you.”

“I don’t wonder at that; I scarcely understand myself. Miss Killigrew, I think that, naturally, I am a lover of truth. I was always a truthful boy, although I seem like a prig in saying it. I inherited it from my father and mother. I think my father understood things too. He saw that those men at Oxford hypnotized me, and that the glamour of an old system fascinated me. That was why he did what he did. That was why he made that will. Ever since then it seems as though the foundations of my life have been shaken. Everything has been tested. On my way to Spain I came through Paris. As you know, France has given up faith. It is a nation of atheists. If the Roman Church is the Church of God, why did France drift to atheism? Then I came to Spain where the Church is all-powerful—what effect has it had upon the nation? Since I have been here I have read something of the history of the country, and I have not been able to close my eyes to the fact that the greatest enemy to Spain has been the Church. Then I found out another thing which I don’t want to talk about; it seems so mean, so contemptible. But I discovered that it was not my soul that the men whom I trusted cared about, so much as my money. They were interested in me largely because I was supposed to be rich, and because I would be able to fill their coffers. Of course they would not use that money for themselves. It would be all devoted to the Church. All the same the fact had its influence upon me, and made me see more and more as my father saw. Then all the rest followed. The stories about the immorality of the Catholic priesthood here—stories about chicanery and fraud in the public life. Then it came to me that the Catholic Church in Spain was a great shop where everything was bought and sold. It was money for Masses; money for pardons; money for forgiveness of sins; money for prayers. . . .” He started to his feet, and walked a few yards away from her, still with the same far-away look in his eyes, the same

stern set face. Then presently he came back to her again. "But I would not give up. I told myself that I was only an ignorant boy, that I was betraying my Lord by harbouring such questions and thinking such thoughts. Then the end came."

"The end came! What do you mean?"

"It was on Sunday at the great Easter festival in the cathedral—the greatest of all festivals, the day which is held the most sacred throughout the Catholic world; it was then my eyes were opened."

"How? In what way? I don't understand you."

"No, I don't suppose you do. I scarcely understand myself. In a way I fancied that I still believed, and I eagerly looked forward to the great festival for the confirmation of my belief."

The girl was silent. In the light of the moon she could see his features working convulsively, his eyes burning like coals of fire.

"I knelt and prayed with the rest of them," he went on. "In spite of everything I tried to believe. Presently I watched while what is said to be the most tremendous miracle in the world was supposed to take place, watched while that Spanish priest was supposed to turn flour and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ. If it were true, then Seville—Spain—all the Catholic world should be heaven! But it all came to me in a moment. It was *not true!* It was one great big show, one great big lie! *The flour and wine remained flour and wine!* Then the whole structure of my faith came shattering down around me."

"Yes!" cried the girl breathlessly. She had entered into his feelings. The passionate tones of his voice vibrated in her own heart. She saw as he saw, felt as he felt. "Of course I sympathize with you," she said at length. "As a Protestant I naturally . . ."

"Oh, don't, Miss Killigrew!" he cried. "After all, what is Protestantism but another form of the same farce? And if there's any truth in Christianity, don't you see—but there is not. The whole thing is a fable from end to end. The whole thing is a make-believe. There is no God who hears prayers. There is no God who cares. And of course all the trimmings about saints, and Masses, and indulgences, and penances, are all a part of a great show, born in an age of ignorance, and bolstered up since for the purpose of making money."

"Then—then," she stammered presently.

“I am an atheist,” he replied in a hard, bitter voice. “All that kind of thing which I formerly believed is a great blank in my life—it’s—it’s a great black lie. There is no truth in any of it.”

Again a long silence fell between them, save for the sobbing breaths which Julian drew.

“Why did you tell me this?” she asked presently.

“I don’t know. Something compelled me to do so. I thought—you might sympathize. I thought—no, I don’t know what I thought; but I wanted to unburden my soul to somebody, somebody who would at least try to understand—I am alone in the world. I have not a friend to whom I can go.”

“Do you want my advice?” she asked after another long silence.

“Yes, I do,” he responded eagerly.

“Then I should say, follow your father’s instructions. Test everything, prove everything—do nothing in a hurry. I—I think I can understand what you feel,” and there was a little quiver in her voice. “Perhaps it’s all natural. The shock of your father’s will, the influences of his letter, your new surroundings, made everything unstable; and now you have given up the false it seems as though there is no truth in anything. But there *is* truth, Mr. Boconnoc.”

“I have shocked you, haven’t I?” he said with a bitter laugh.

“Yes, you have shocked me, pained me—but that’s nothing.”

“At any rate you know now that I am not a millionaire; for, of course, I must abide by the conditions of the will. I cannot say, and never shall be able to say, that I am a faithful Protestant Christian. Why—why——” and again he started to his feet, “the whole thing is as unbelievable as the story of Cinderella!”

Again there was a long painful silence between them. Away in the distance were shouts of the merry-makers, while close at hand happy lovers passed them by, but neither of them took any notice. He sat staring into vacancy, filled with a desolation which overwhelmed him, while her mind was occupied with the story he had told her.

She suddenly started to her feet. “I must be going now,” she said. “I—I’m very sorry for you, Mr. Boconnoc.”

He started like one awakened out of a sleep. “No, no, there’s something more I must tell you. Please sit down again.”

She obeyed him, but there was a look like fear in her eyes.

“I want to tell you why I left Toledo so suddenly—to—to explain my discourtesy. I ought to have told you first of all, but I was afraid. I am afraid now.”

“Why are you afraid?” She, too, had become excited; her pulses were throbbing madly.

“I felt I must tell you everything—first,” he stammered. “It would not be fair else. If I kept anything back from you it would be mean, cowardly. That’s why I have told you the whole miserable story. I am penniless, or shall be at the end of a year—if I don’t profess to be what I’m not. And I can’t do that—no, I can’t do that. It would be contemptible. All the same I could not help myself, and—and . . . you are not engaged to Tom Bagshott, are you?”

“Engaged to Tom Bagshott—certainly not!”

He drew a deep quivering sigh. “Yes, *that* is real,” he said, and he seemed like one talking to himself rather than to her. “It’s the only real thing that is left to me. I came away from Toledo because I discovered that I loved you. I knew my love was hopeless, that I was mad to allow myself to think of you, but I could not help myself. I think it came to me when I first saw you, although I did not know it then—I wanted to tell you—good heavens, how I was tempted to remain in Toledo! But I fought it down. I felt it would be a sin. I believed—or thought I believed—that I was still faithful to the Church. I had vowed that I would never allow love for a woman to enter my heart; that I would be a celibate. That was why I ran away as I did. I knew that if I saw you again I should not be able to help myself. That was why I came to Seville. I knew of the Easter celebrations, and I hoped and prayed that here, in the most Catholic city in the world, I might be able to conquer myself, conquer the doubts which were constantly rising within me.”

Again he started to his feet and walked away a few yards from her. Then quickly returning he went on: “All the time there were two voices pleading within me; two parts of my nature fighting for the mastery. But I would not think of you. I drove you from my mind—at least, I thought I did. Then, during all the miserable days I have spent here, I realized what the Church, what religion, had done for Spain, and—and all the rest of it. . . . Everything went. . . . It was all a ghastly mockery and a miserable, unbelievable fiasco. . . . Then this afternoon I saw you, and I knew that although my faith had gone, my love for you had not gone. It seemed the only thing left to me . . . the *only* thing! Do I make you angry?”

She made no sign whatever. She was looking steadily at the old Moorish building as though it possessed some strange fascination for her.

“Oh, do speak!” he pleaded. . . . “Oh, I know! . . . I know what a miserable fool I must seem to you! But I can’t help myself. My hopes are gone, my faith is gone, everything is gone—except that. But I do love you, love you with every power that I possess. I have nothing to offer you . . . except that; but if you could give me some hope, just a ray of hope that . . . that . . . Can you?” he pleaded.

But the girl made no answer. Her eyes were still fixed on the old Moorish arches which stood out plainly in the light of the moon.

“I think . . . I must go,” she said presently. “I’m sure it is getting late.” She rose to her feet as she spoke.

“Yes, yes, I know I have told a miserable tale,” he went on, “but please don’t think I am not in earnest. When I say I love you I mean it, mean it with every fibre of my being. I’ll work for you, I’ll slave for you, I’ll . . .”

“*Please*, Mr. Boconnoc,” she interrupted him.

“Then you can give me no hope? You despise me?”

“I think I did despise you when we were in Toledo. I thought you were acting a dishonourable part, and it was difficult to have any respect for you.”

“And you don’t despise me now?”

“No. I believe you are honest now, and no one can despise honesty. But do you wonder that I can’t take you seriously?”

“Why?” he asked.

“Ask yourself. Do you think you understand what you are saying? Are you sure of the state of your own mind? Not that it matters. I never dreamt of such a thing. I never imagined, until to-night, that such a thing had ever entered your mind. Of course, it’s impossible, utterly impossible.”

“Then you can give me no hope?”

“Not in that way.”

“But—there is no one else?”

“You have no right to ask that.”

“Yes I have,” he cried passionately. “I know I seem a fool to you; I know you think of me as one who a few weeks ago professed to believe what I

have since found to be a lie; you think of me as fickle, as one who doesn't know his own mind; but I know my own mind about *that*. It's all I have—it's *everything* to me!"

They had left the grounds of the Alcazar, and were walking in the direction of her hotel. When they entered the busy streets and threaded their way through the crowds of merry-makers, further speech became impossible. When at length they came to the door of the Hotel Valencia she held out her hand.

"Good-night," she said.

"Have you nothing more than that to say to me?" And his voice had a tone of pleading in it. "If you send me away like that, what is there left to me?"

"Your manhood, your self-respect, your life," was her reply, and it seemed to him that while there was scorn in her voice, there was something else, something which for the moment he could not understand.

"But can't you give me a word of hope, of . . . of comfort?"

"I would only repeat your father's words," was her answer. "Test everything, prove everything. Good-bye," and she entered the hotel leaving him standing in the street.

"But mayn't I see you again?"

"No, no—but I wish you well. Good-bye."

CHAPTER XX

THE JOURNEY THROUGH SPAIN

In spite of everything her words nerved him, almost cheered him. She had said nothing, promised him nothing, and yet he felt a new confidence, a new resolution. Might she not mean . . . ?

For more than an hour he wandered through the streets, witnessing everything, yet seeing nothing. Seville was given over to revelry, but it made no appeal to him. This most Catholic city in the world might have had no standard of morals, no religion, so much did it give itself over to the pleasure of the hour. But he scarcely thought of it. What had he to do with the effect of faith on morals? He had no faith. He was like a ship on a stormy sea, without rudder and without anchor.

And yet not altogether. Joan Killigrew's words kept constantly ringing in his mind, and at every repetition there seemed a new meaning in them.

"Test everything, prove everything." Did she imagine that the faith which had left him so quickly could return just as rapidly? Did she understand him better than he understood himself?

But no, she was wrong. All faith, all possibility of faith, had gone. It had left him. It had gone out of his life. He believed nothing—nothing.

"Test everything, prove everything." Yes, that was what his father had written him when his hand was almost too weak to hold a pen. And he had tried to obey him—but with what result? Everything had turned out differently from what his father had expected. He had never imagined that in testing the mediæval dogmas in which he had come to believe, he would come to see that there was no foundation for anything. And it was not altogether a matter of the intellect. It was something deeper, something more fundamental. Faith had left his life. He simply *could not* believe, there was nothing in him that made it possible. He had been living in a fool's paradise; like a child he had placed dependence on a fairy story. Then, suddenly he had grown up, and the fairy story had become what it was.

He reached the great open space where the crowds gathered, and where the merriments of a country fair were still in full swing. Harsh music was still ground out, all sorts of shows were open for inspection; everything was vulgarity all compact.

A couple of Spanish girls came and spoke to him.

“You Ingleesh,” said one. “You take us into the show,” and the girl laughed shrilly as she spoke.

He shook his head.

The girl, who knew a little English, went on, “Then you dance, señor? You take us there,” and she pointed to a kind of booth. “There is dancing there, and wine—beautiful wine, Spanish wine; and there is much fun.”

The girls meant no harm, they were only silly, giggling creatures anxious to enjoy the pleasures of the holiday, and seeing him alone, spoke to him. Perhaps they admired him.

Well, why not? No one would know, no one would care. Why not enter into the revelries of the city?

“Test everything, prove everything.” He gave a start as the words came to his mind. Did she mean that he should test his love for her, prove his love for her? Did she doubt him, doubt the abiding qualities of his love?

“Come,” pleaded the girl. “One peseta each; that is all. There is a beautiful floor, and the band is good.” They were evidently of the servant class and probably very poor.

He took a five-peseta piece from his pocket and gave it to them. “No, señoritas,” he said, airing his little Spanish, “I do not dance; but here is money for you. Go. Good-night.”

The girls laughed gaily and kissed their hands to him while he walked away towards his hotel.

“Hello, Boconnoc, got back?” It was Harding who spoke to him.

“Yes,” replied Julian, “and I’m tired.”

“I did not know you had any friends here,” remarked Harding presently. “I saw you with a young lady as I went out two or three hours ago. She looked English.”

“Yes,” replied Julian. “I knew her in England. I did not know she was in Seville.”

“But seeing she is here I guess you’ll stay on for a while?” laughed Harding.

“No, I shall leave to-morrow.”

“With the young lady’s party?” ventured Harding.

“No,” replied Julian, “I do not know when she is going. She is staying with her mother and some friends at another hotel.”

“Got any plans?” asked the American.

“No, I’m at a loose end. I think I’ll knock about Spain a bit longer.”

“Bully!” replied the young man, “I’m just in the same fix, but I feel kind of lonely going around by myself. What do you say to our doing Spain together? I’ve done Madrid and Barcelona, and Valencia and Ronda and Seville. Now I’d like to go on. What do you say to going on to Cordova and Granada, and Saragossa?”

“All right,” replied Julian, “let’s.”

“That’s great. I find there’s a belated sort of train which leaves here at noon to-morrow for Cordova. Heaven knows what time it will get there, but that doesn’t matter. Like you, I’m tired and I’m going to bed. Good-night.”

Julian had come to his resolution suddenly. He longed more than words can say to remain in Seville and attach himself to Mrs. Killigrew’s party, but remembering the tone of Joan’s voice he knew that he ought not. By a kind of intuition he realized that she did not want his company, and then remembering what Harding had said on the day of his coming to Seville, he suddenly made up his mind.

The next morning, soon after breakfast, Alfonso the waiter came to him and whispered to him.

“Those two clergymen; they come again, señor. They ask for you. They are waiting for you.”

Julian had not expected this. He had thought that after their last interview they would want to see no more of him.

“I told them you were leaving to-day,” went on Alfonso.

“And what did they say?”

“Nothing, señor. They just looked at each other like this,” and he gave a significant wink. “Then they said: ‘You tell him it’s imperative that we see him.’ ”

When Julian reached the covered courtyard both rushed to meet him with outstretched hands. They might have forgotten their previous interview.

“Ah, Julian,” cried Father Fakenham, “we are lucky to catch you. The waiter told us you were leaving to-day. Is that so?”

The young man assented.

“Surely you won’t do that. Seville is glorious just now. Besides, it’s full of interesting places, places I would like you to see. And there are some people I would like to introduce you to. Could not you manage to stay a day or two longer?”

“It’s very kind of you, but I’m afraid my plans are made.”

“Not if I wish you to, Julian?” And Father Fakenham spoke half in tones of authority and half in pleading. There was something parental, almost compelling, in his manner.

Julian shook his head.

“My son,” went on the older man, “I don’t believe what you told us yesterday. Both Father Bridgeman and I have been thinking about it, discussing it, and it’s too—too impossible. Why, Julian, remember,” and the priest’s voice sank to almost a whisper, “remember the sacred hours we have passed together, remember the visions we have seen, the hopes we have cherished. You can’t, you simply *can’t* mean what you told us!”

Still Julian did not reply. He did not want to enter into another argument.

“There is no devil so terrible as the devil of unbelief,” went on the priest. “Remember that faith is the great condition of salvation, and that the sin of unbelief is the worst of all sins. Surely you can’t be guilty of that.”

“Besides,” interposed Bridgeman, “it can’t be real. This so-called atheism is but the sick fancy of an unhealthy mind. You’ll come to your senses.”

“Thank you, Father Bridgeman,” replied Julian; and there was a touch of anger in his voice.

“No, no, my son, do not be angry,” pleaded Father Fakenham. “What we say we say in love. We can’t bear the thought of your being an apostate and unbeliever. We can’t bear the thought of your becoming lost.”

“Lost!” he could not help repeating.

“Yes, lost to the Church, lost to all eternity. Oh, remember, Julian, this is a crucial hour in your life. Think of what a lost soul means. Think of the anger of God.”

Both men realized that they had touched a wrong note. They saw his eyes harden, his lips become compressed.

“Father Fakenham,” replied the young man, “I did not seek this interview, and I do not wish to say anything to hurt your feelings, but if you believe in a God who, according to your Catholic doctrine, will send a man to an eternal hell for not believing what he simply *cannot* believe, then . . . then it’s no wonder people are throwing off religion as they would throw off a worn-out garment.”

“But you did believe,” urged the priest.

“I accepted,” Julian corrected him, “accepted without question; but when I was faced with grim realities, when I saw the inwardness of it all. . . . No, forgive me, I did not mean to say so much.”

“But think, my son.” And then these men pleaded with him, remonstrated, commanded. They brought out the whole armoury of their faith. For, in their way, they were both earnest, sincere men, who believed that they were doing the will of God. To them it was terrible to see so promising a disciple give up what they believed to be the one true faith, the one hope of salvation.

“And will *nothing* that we can say or do move you?” asked Father Fakenham at length.

He shook his head.

“I cannot believe it! I shall still continue to hope for you, to pray for you. Come, my son, let me beseech you to come with us where we can be alone, so that we can test everything to their foundations. Surely you will not give up your faith so lightly.”

“I shall test everything, prove everything.” But he did not look at them as he spoke. His mind seemed far away.

“But how, my son? What are you going to do?”

“I am going to travel through Spain. I propose to . . .” He ceased suddenly.

“Yes, yes, but not alone, Julian. You need advice, guidance. Father Bridgeman is waiting to place himself at your disposal. He will accompany you and explain those things which trouble you.”

“No,” replied Julian firmly, “I do not desire Father Bridgeman’s company. I have made other arrangements.”

“Is there not some woman at the back of all this?” asked the priest. “We heard that you were philandering in Toledo with a . . .”

“I beg your pardon,” Julian interrupted. “And will you please understand, Father Fakenham, that I am responsible for my own life, and that for the future I do not intend to allow anyone to interfere with my affairs.”

“But, Julian, let me plead with you. You are known to be the heir of a huge fortune, and you will be beset on all sides by harpies who will . . .”

“Excuse me,” Julian again interrupted; “but you know as well as I that I shall not be rich. Knowing the conditions of my father’s will as well as I do, you must be aware that I shall be free from that danger.”

A quick, significant glance passed between the two priests, but not too quick to escape the watchful eyes of the young man. These men were still thinking about his money. The condition of his soul was not the only thing that interested them: nevertheless this was the only reference made to his father’s will, and when the priests left him it was with beseeching words to return to the Church whose arms were open to receive him.

Julian was strongly tempted during the morning to go to the Hotel Valencia, ostensibly to say good-bye to the party staying there, but really to obtain a further word with Joan Killigrew. He refrained from doing so, however, remembering the look on her face when she had bidden him good-bye on the previous night.

By noon he and Harding were in the train bound for Cordova.

“I’m as light-hearted as a bird,” remarked Harding. “The thought of having company during the remainder of my holiday in Spain is just fine. But say, old son, you look washed out; you look troubled, too. Is there anything I can do to help you.”

“Not at present,” replied Julian.

“But there’s something on your mind, isn’t there? I’m not in the sere and yellow leaf yet, but I’m older than you. If there’s anything I can do to help you, I’d like to do it. Have those two priest fellows got any graft on you?”

“Why should you think so?”

“Only by putting two and two together. I saw they were after you yesterday; they were with you again to-day. They followed us to the station.”

“What!” queried Julian, “followed us to the station?”

“Yep. I have been watching them, and they have been accompanied by a most remarkable-looking old party who looked at you as though you were a long-lost son. There he is now standing near the booking-office. He’s looking at our carriage.”

The blind was drawn over the window pane by which Julian sat, but pulling it aside he saw that Harding was right.

“Striking-looking old boy, isn’t he?” remarked Harding.

Julian did not speak. He was fascinated by the appearance of the man who looked steadily towards his carriage. An old man he was, yet sturdy and strong. He had wonderful eyes, too—large, penetrating, compelling, the eyes of a master of men. Julian was almost afraid as he looked at him. A few yards away from him were Father Fakenham and Father Bridgeman, both of whom seemed to be talking earnestly. But he took little notice of them. It was this wonderful old man who attracted him as if by a kind of spell.

When, a few minutes later, the train snorted its way out of the station, it seemed to him as though a great burden were rolled from his heart, and he heaved a sigh of relief.

Throughout May and June the two young men wandered as their fancy led them through Spain. Then as, day by day, the summer heat grew, they went northward until they reached Barcelona. From there they went to Corsica, and from Corsica they returned to France, from whence they travelled on to Switzerland. But it was in Spain that Julian’s chief interest lay, and he stayed on, even when Harding would gladly have left. While in Seville he had happened upon a good book-shop and had visited it more than once. He discovered, too, that the bookseller was an educated man who had a keen interest in collecting works, not only of the past history of his country, but those of a later date. Indeed, the most modern books bearing on the life of Spain were in the shop, and many of them were in English. Julian had bought several of these, and during his sojourn in the country read them eagerly. Through them he tried to understand why Spain was ever in the rearguard of the nations, and why the Church of Rome, which was all-powerful in the country, seemed to have placed the hand of death upon it. For, although he told himself that he had cast off the last shred of religious belief, he was still interested in it. He was constantly recalling the words of Joan Killigrew, “Test everything, prove everything”; and so, without any apparent reason, he found himself constantly trying to explain why,

wherever the Church had supreme power, it meant death to all enterprise, and all onward movement.

“I say, Julian,” cried Cyrus P. Harding one day, “you ought to come to the States. It would be an eye-opener to you after being in this funeral of a country.”

“I should like to.”

“Then come. I’d give you a bully time, and I’d show you round to some purpose. We Americans are not dead like these Spaniards.”

“Have you ever travelled in South America?” asked Julian.

“Sure. Directly I left Harvard my father insisted that I should go there for a time.”

“Did you enjoy your visit?”

“Much in the same way as I’m enjoying Spain. You see, South America was colonized from Spain, and the Spaniards took their priests with them. You have the same thing there as you have here. Corruption, superstition, tyranny, death. In the North our forefathers struck for liberty, liberty of conscience, liberty of soul, and it gave them light.”

“And do you regard liberty as the keynote of your greatness?”

“Sure. It was that which gave us our vim and our go. That was why we threw off the thralldom of England back in the days of George Washington. Mind you, we were not always true to it. Up to 1864 we legalized slavery, and it was the best day’s work the States ever did when it threw it off. Slavery is always death to progress. That is why this country is such a back number. There’s no religious freedom here. You see the Church of Rome stands for authority, and that authority means tyranny. That’s why I think the Church of Rome is a danger to America. We give Roman Catholics freedom there, but, by gosh! if they got into power they would give us none.”

Julian remembered the words of Laveleye which he had just been reading: “We Roman Catholics demand perfect freedom for ourselves in Protestant countries, for their principles require it; we deny it to you, for it is contrary to our principles.”

Yes, that was it. They demanded freedom in England, but they would deny it to England if they once had a majority. He remembered what Señor Gomez said in the hotel at Toledo, and in the light of his later reading his words had a peculiar significance.

In 1876, when the Spanish Constitution endeavoured to give liberty to Protestants in Spain to live openly as Protestants, the Pope protested and said that such a thing “was an innovation offensive to the sacred rights of the Church.” As a consequence of the Pope’s protest the government had to withdraw those rights, yielding supinely to the demands of the Church. Then, for thirty-four years, the Protestants of Spain had to suffer petty persecutions on the part of those who regarded them as they might regard vermin, whom they allowed to live because they could not destroy them. In 1910 the young king and the government determined to restore what was the plain meaning of the Constitution and made endeavours to do so, but again the Church protested and declared that “the change is less a privilege granted to the infinitesimal and insignificant minority that does not belong to the State religion, than a humiliation inflicted on nearly the whole Spanish people.” Later still, in 1923, the Liberal government determined to remove the disabilities which were laid upon Spanish Evangelicals, but in vain. Then came something else. The League of Nations was born, and became a factor in the life of Europe and of the world. One of the fundamental doctrines of that League of Nations was that there should be religious liberty if not religious equality. Spain was to be a member of that League of Nations, and many hoped that a new day of liberty would dawn, but again the dead hand of the Church was felt. The Cardinal Archbishop of Saragossa wrote a letter to the Prime Minister, saying that if the programme of the government included religious liberty to Spanish Evangelicals, “the whole force of the Roman Church would be employed against his government at the election.”

It was the same story all over the land. For ever and always when there was a movement towards liberty, towards progress, towards the rights of conscience, the Church stood as the representative of oppression and slavery. And the Church was all-powerful in Spain. What wonder, then, that the nation was dead? The Church was a power opposed to liberty, and it was a Church which never changed.

And the Anglo-Catholic section of the Church of England was trying to bring back the Church of England, trying to bring back the whole country, into union with Rome!

Julian realized more than ever now the meaning of his father’s hatred of that system. Doubtless there were millions of good, sincere, honest Christian people in that Church, but the Romish *system* meant tyranny, death.

Wherever he went it was the same story. In nearly every town he visited the power of the Church was supreme. In the centre of every city the towers

of its great cathedrals rose dominant. They threw their shadows everywhere, and they were typical of the influence of the Church. Practically all public offices were in the hands of the Church. The Church decided elections. The Church was supreme.

“Holy Mike!” exclaimed Cyrus P. Harding during their visit to Saragossa, “what a hole! The Church is supreme, and the city is degraded, and dying. What an argument for the infallibility of the Church! If Spain is the result of an infallible Church, may the Lord have mercy on it!”

It was towards the end of July when at length the two young men reached Grindelwald, and it was here that Julian received a great shock. They had arrived at the Bear Hotel towards evening, and after dinner Harding sat reading some English newspapers. Julian, on the other hand, was gazing pensively towards the Eiger which rose snow-peaked and tremendous.

“Say, Julian, I guess there’s something here that will interest you,” remarked Harding.

“Yes, what is it?” But few English newspapers had come his way for many weeks, and when he had happened to see them they were mostly several days old.

“Birtwhistle, Yorkshire, that’s where you hail from, isn’t it?”

“Yes, what of that?”

“Then I guess this means you,” and he handed him the newspaper, at the same time pointing to a particular paragraph.

Julian took the paper listlessly, but a moment later his every nerve was quivering, and his eyes were fastened on the spot which Harding had indicated.

The paragraph was headed:

A STRANGE WILL.

CHAPTER XXI

THE NEWSPAPER PARAGRAPHS

This was what he read:

“Some months ago there appeared in our columns a notice of the death of Mr. Andrew Boconnoc of Hawkspoint, Birtwhistle, Yorkshire, one of the most striking figures and perhaps the most influential commercial magnate in the North. As will be seen in another column, he left considerably over two millions of money, and owing to the manifold nature of his property probate has been somewhat delayed. As we announced at the time of his death, Mr. Boconnoc left one son, who, it was generally assumed, would be his heir. It now appears that beyond bequests to several old servants and various charitable institutions, the bulk of his great fortune was left to his son only on condition that he was faithful to the Protestant religion. It was stipulated, moreover, that not one penny of his money should in any way go to the Roman Catholic Church, or to the Anglo-Catholics, whom the deceased gentleman evidently held in great aversion. The will declared, further, that if his son did not, both in the letter and in the spirit, conform to the conditions laid down he was to be disinherited. It appears that Mr. Julian Boconnoc, the son, who, we are given to understand, belongs to the most advanced section of Anglo-Catholics, is given a year in which to make up his mind, and if he refuses to obey these conditions the whole of this vast fortune goes into other channels. What those channels are we are not yet in a position to state. They are contained in a sealed document which will be opened at the expiration of a year from the deceased gentleman’s death.”

“Have you read it?” presently asked Harding, who was closely watching Julian’s face.

But the young man did not reply. His eyes were still fastened on the paper as though some magnet held them there. It was easy to see that he was astonished, angry.

A few seconds later he turned to the heading of the newspaper, *The Northern Informer*. It was a paper which was read widely in the north of England and was published in one of the principal northern cities. The date was three days old.

“Read it?” repeated Harding a little later.

“Yes, it’s outrageous! How dare they!”

“I guess it’s natural,” replied Harding, with a laugh. “Gee! if such a thing as that happened in America a whole page would be devoted to it. Photographs of all the principal parties would appear, and particulars, some true, but mostly false, would be given at such length that they would reach from here to America.”

“But it’s ghastly!” cried Julian. “What right has the world to know of my affairs?”

“Then it means you?”

“Yes, worse luck.”

“Holy Mike, more than twelve million dollars! Is that part of it true?”

“I suppose so.”

Harding was silent. He was calling to mind the first days he had spent with Julian in Seville—remembered, too, the conversations they had had, and how deeply he was interested in the Roman Catholic Church.

“Well,” he asserted at length, “I guess you’ll be able to conform to these conditions.”

“In what way?”

“I guess you’ll have no difficulty in promising not to give any of your money to the Holy Roman Church, or to any of its satellites.”

Julian was silent.

“I’m pretty broad-minded myself,” went on Harding, “and I’ve no doubt that in many ways the Roman Church is doing a great deal of good, and I know that some of its priests are very good fellows. All the same, if I have any money to give away to religious objects I shall not give it to a system which means what it has meant in Spain. My word, Julian, but our travels there have opened my eyes as they were never opened before!”

Again there was a silence between them, while the young American continued to watch Julian closely.

"I must congratulate you, my dear boy," he went on at length. "It's no slouch of a fortune. Why, even among our multi-millionaires of America you'd be able to cut a big figure. I tell you, you'll have the world after you."

Julian shook his head.

"But you will. Why, think, man—with a fortune like that you could marry a Duke's daughter. Besides, from what I can hear, the real estate of rich people is generally a great deal more than is stated in the newspapers. What bowls me over is that you have not stayed in your own country and watched proceedings. Of course you'll go back right now?"

Again Julian shook his head.

"But why not?"

"Because . . . Oh, it would not interest you."

"Great Sam, but it would! Of course, if you don't want to talk about it I'll be as silent as Balaam's ass before it brayed, but . . ."

"Cyrus P., old man," interrupted Julian, "I'd like to tell you . . . everything, but . . . it's all such an unholy muddle. Besides, why should I bother you?"

"Julian, my son," replied the young man, "we have got to be pretty friendly these last few months, haven't we? I kind of cottoned on to you when I first saw you, and we've been pretty much together since. I saw at the time that you were right bothered; but seeing you didn't want to talk about yourself I just respected your feelings. All the same I'll tell you straight, as I've told you more than once before, I look upon you as a good pal, and I'm a good listener."

"Let's go for a walk," cried Julian; "it won't be dark for hours, and . . . and . . . I reciprocate your feelings, old man."

A minute later they had left the hotel and were walking quietly up the village street. The season had not yet reached its height, and but comparatively few people were to be seen. They passed the Hotel Eiger and made their way towards the church. For some time neither of them spoke, but when at length the simple old edifice with its unimposing steeple had been passed, Julian broke the silence.

"I can't tell you all, Cyrus P.," he said, "but I'll tell you as much as I can."

“Take your time, my son,” replied the young American. “Gee! but if one of our American boys were to come into a fortune like that he’d want to broadcast it. But you English people are so darned secretive. How in the name of Holy Mike you have kept such a thing to yourself all this time fair beats me; but go ahead.”

Whereupon Julian told him his story; described the old life at Hawkspoint, the influences of his early days, and the atmosphere of his home. He described his father, too, in such strong, vivid outlines that Harding was able to visualize the old Yorkshireman, to realize his stern strength, his imperial grasp of commerce, his unyielding integrity.

“Then I went on to Oxford, and after I had been there a year I got under the influences of those parsons,” Julian resumed, “and without exaggeration they made religion a new thing to me. Religion, as I had understood it, was dry and unattractive—a matter of doing right, of keeping clean, and being straight and honest; a matter, in short, of pure ethics. But these men added a new element. It was not that I lived a straighter life through them or anything of that sort. It was the *mystery* of the Ritual that appealed to me, and they had no difficulty in making me see as they saw, and to believe that the Church of Rome was the fountain of all grace. I got to hate the Reformation and all that it meant. I believed that religion in England was a false thing only in so far as it was not associated with the Roman Church. I prepared for Holy Orders in the Church of England, only in the hope that I might help to bring back England to the Church of Rome. This was to be the crowning glory of my life.”

“I guess I see what was in your mind,” remarked Harding.

“Then came my father’s will and the reading of it.”

Evidently everything was vivid to the young man’s mind, for he described what had happened in clear outline; told what Fakenham had said at the time the will was read; described the conversations which took place afterwards.

“Gee! but that was a deep move,” cried Harding. “As specious as Aristotle’s reasoning, and as clever as a gentleman whose name shall not be mentioned.”

“But it was the reading of my father’s letter that staggered me most,” declared Julian presently. “I saw into his mind, his heart. I realized that he loved me, and I realized, too, although I had not known it, that I loved him. I saw his scorn for the Anglo-Catholic position; saw how dishonest it was to

him. He believed in me, too, believed that I was honest at the core of my life. What he did, he did because he loved me, and wanted to save me from what he believed would be paralysis to my being, and ruin to my life. People have called him a bigot, a narrow-minded sectarian . . .”

“Yes, but he was a grand old man for all that,” interposed Harding. “The kind of man who has made England what it is.”

“Anyhow it staggered me, shook my life to the very foundation. He made me want to test things, prove things; to get to the bottom, to arrive at the very heart of what I proposed to do.”

He was silent for a few seconds and then went on. “Thus it came to me that whatever was good in the Roman system must be found in the country where it had complete sway, and that if there was one country more than another which was untouched by the Reformation, it was Spain. So to Spain I went.”

“And I guess that made you see that the old man was right?” interposed Harding.

“No, it didn’t—except in a way. I tried to explain the condition of Spain in a way that would satisfy myself; but the time we spent there disillusioned me, upset me, even although I told myself I was still a believer.”

“Great Sam! but you must have had a lean time!” exclaimed Harding presently, after Julian had enumerated the things which had come to him. “I had no idea, when I told you those stories, of what you were thinking.”

“It was not that,” cried the young man. “It was not the other things I have told you about which brought an end to everything.”

“What did?”

Julian told him. He related his experiences in the old cathedral, described how something rose within him protesting against and defying the monstrous thing he had been trying to believe.

“I could not speak to you about this,” he declared. “I tried to, but something closed my lips. It was not a matter for idle gossip. It was not a matter about which one could talk lightly at all; but it was the end of everything for me.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“I have never tried to pray since then,” and Julian spoke in slow, measured words. “All that part of me is dead, dead as cold iron. I saw that

the whole huge superstructure was built upon a lie, and then everything—*everything* in life fell; came crashing down around me. As you know, what we have seen during the last few months has simply confirmed my experiences of that day.”

“Julian, old son,” said Harding after a long silence, “I guess if I were you I’d go back to that old home of yours.”

“I long to,” cried Julian, “but I have been afraid. I felt I had no right there.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“Don’t you see! By my father’s will I am his heir only on condition that I am faithful to the Protestant religion, and I am not. I don’t believe in it, I don’t believe in anything.”

“Yes, but your father never meant it in that way.”

“How do I know? Anyhow, there it is. I’m not my father’s heir; I never expect to be.”

“There is such a thing as conscientiousness going mad,” argued Harding.

“All the same I could not do it. I should feel, I should know, all the time, that I was rich through false pretences.”

“Then are you going to stay on here as we decided?”

“I think so. You see, according to my father’s will I inherit nothing unless I abide by conditions that are impossible to me. As I told you, he gave me a year to make up my mind. Meanwhile I have the right to live in the old house, and a liberal allowance is made to me. But I have no say in anything. I have no right to command anything. Of course everything is placed at my disposal for use, but nothing more. And now, if you don’t mind, old man, we will say no more about it.”

Harding took him at his word, and the two returned to the hotel.

For the next three days they spent a comparatively uneventful time in Grindelwald. They took the usual excursions, and entered into the ordinary pleasures of this Swiss village. On the day after his arrival he wrote to Parker, and to Mr. Coad, the lawyer, telling them of his whereabouts, and of his intention to stay on the Continent some time longer; but beyond this he had not notified anyone of his change of address. He was somewhat surprised, therefore, on the fourth day after his arrival at Grindelwald, to find that a newspaper had come for him. On opening it he saw a column

marked in blue pencil. This column contained a resumé of what *The Northern Informer* had published, but had not contented itself with a mere statements of facts.

“We shall be interested to know,” he read, “what the effects of this will will be on old Andrew Boconnoc’s son. Will he remain true to the faith he professed for several years before his father’s death, or will he find that his conscience has compelled him to give it up? We are informed that this young man went to Spain shortly after the will was made known to him, in order, as he declared, to study the Catholic faith on Catholic soil. We should not be at all surprised to hear that the condition of Spain has made him a Protestant. Money, and especially when there is such a large amount of it, has a tremendous influence over conscience. As the Americans say, ‘dollars talk,’ and we are afraid that the days of self-sacrifice and martyrdom are over. Protestants often boast that their fathers died for the truth. We wonder whether this young man will sacrifice over two millions for the faith to which he was so devoted. The writer has more than once heard him declare that Protestantism was the negation of religion, and that, in the words of Lord Halifax, the Reformation was a dark and in some senses a damnable spot in the history of the Church! If, therefore this young man decides to sacrifice his faith for money, we think we shall understand. But it will be very sad.”

He looked at the paper and saw that it was called *The Herald of the True Faith*. He had never heard of it before, but instinctively he somehow connected it with Father Fakenham. “Read that, Cyrus P.,” he said to Harding, who sat near by poring over his letters.

Harding returned him the paper with a smile.

“I have seen that sort of thing lots of times,” replied the American.

“What, this?” and Julian pointed to the column.

“Man alive, do you think such a thing could happen without publicity? Why, the papers have been full of it. I’ve kept them away from you, because I was afraid you would be worried. I guess those gentlemen I saw in Seville are responsible for a good deal of it. Did you tell them what you told me?”

“Something of it, I expect.”

“I thought as much.”

“Why?”

“Because one of the papers spoke of you as becoming an atheist, and professed to wonder whether you would not regard Protestantism and atheism as identical.”

For a time Julian did not speak. He sat for several minutes staring into vacancy. Then turning to the paper he read the article again.

“Cyrus P.,” he exclaimed suddenly, “I’m going home to Yorkshire. Will you come with me?”

Harding looked at him steadily for a time before he replied. “No, Julian, not at present. Perhaps I’ll come later, but not now.”

“Why, old man? I’d love to have you. It will be lonely there with no one to talk to.”

“Then why go?”

“Because I feel I must. I long to get back.”

“I think you’re right,” replied Harding. “If I were you I’d go right now.”

Julian looked at him questioningly.

“You see,” went on Harding, “I think your secret is out. People are beginning to connect you with this wonderful will, and that being the case you won’t have much peace. But I won’t go with you just yet for two reasons. One is that I’ve got a letter from some friends at St. Moritz who want me to pay them a visit; and for another I think you’ll be better alone. Get back to your old home, my boy, and see how things strike you. Perhaps in a fortnight’s time, if you still want me, I’ll accept your invitation.”

The next day Julian started for England.

CHAPTER XXII

TWO PRIESTS AND A LAYMAN

Birtwhistle is not a beautiful town, neither can the countryside surrounding it be described as attractive. Mostly all the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire are barren, smoke-begrimed, and unlovely, and Birtwhistle was no exception to the general rule. And yet, in a way, the countryside was striking. The rugged hills, the sudden valleys, and the general features of the district gave a suggestion of grandeur; moreover, Hawkspoint was so far away from the town that it was but little affected by the smoke which was belched forth from hundreds of mill chimneys. Many of its trees, too, were large and stately, and they gave an air of comfort and restfulness to the grey old building.

To Julian it was a paradise on earth. Even while the spell of the Continent had been strong upon him, his heart had been crying out for home, and but for the peculiarity of his circumstances he would have yielded to the temptation. Never had he loved it as much as on that August evening when he returned to it.

“Thank God, you have come, Mr. Julian,” cried Parker, who, with moist eyes and trembling lips, met him at the door. “I hope you’re better, sir.”

“I don’t look ill, do I?”

“No, sir, you look a hundred times better. You have not that graveside look which so troubled me when you left home. You must be a stone heavier, too. I hope you have come to stay, sir.”

Yes, it was very pleasant to be welcomed in this way, and as Julian went round the house speaking to the servants he noted the air of comfort which everywhere prevailed. He could not make himself believe that in a few months he would have no right to be there. It seemed too fantastic for thought.

“Now tell me everything, Parker,” he said to the old butler, as after dinner that night he was seated in his father’s chair in the library.

Parker looked rather uncomfortable. He, with the whole countryside, had read and discussed the will which had lately been made known, and it was uppermost in his mind now.

“We have greatly missed you, sir,” he commenced. “Indeed, the house has seemed like a vault. What with the master taken away from us, and you gone, everything was very sad.”

“But Mr. Coad has attended to everything?”

“Oh yes, sir. He has been here regular, and he’s been very kind and thoughtful to us all.”

Parker thereupon went on to detail the many things on which he had had to consult Mr. Coad in relation to the general working of the house.

“But it’s a terrible pity, sir,” he declared after an awkward pause.

“What’s a terrible pity, Parker?”

“It’s the will, sir, if you will excuse me for saying so. Of course it’s all come out now; the papers have been full of it. Why, the *Birtwhistle Advertiser* had three columns about it, and afterwards there was a lot of correspondence printed. It cut me to the quick, sir, to see my old master discussed in a public newspaper, and—and—I don’t want to offend you, sir.”

“Don’t be afraid, Parker,” encouraged Julian. “Speak quite plainly.”

“Of course, sir, I expected the Socialists to have their say about it—they have their say about everything; but what I don’t like is the people talking about the way your father left his money. It’s not their business, anyhow.”

“I have not seen a Birtwhistle paper all the time I’ve been away, so I know nothing of it.”

“No, sir, and even if I had known your address I should not have sent any on. What right had those people to discuss your father and you? Not but what it’s a terrible pity. Excuse me for saying so, sir.”

“What’s a terrible pity, Parker?”

“Of course it’s not my place to speak, sir; but when I think of this place going to strangers, and all because . . . forgive me, sir . . . all because you want to be a Papist, it nearly breaks my heart, sir. I’m no theologian, but I’ve been a member of the Wesleyan body nearly all my life, and I know it’s the true religion, because it’s founded on the Word of God.”

“And isn’t the Catholic faith founded on the Word of God?” Julian could not help asking.

“That’s it, sir. There was two whole columns in the *Birtwhistle Gazette* describing what they call the Anglo-Catholic religion. I read them through, sir, every line of them. They described the services which you attended, and the doctrines which you believe in. Then I turned to the New Testament and read that through, and—forgive me, sir, but there was nothing in the New Testament about the Mass, and the Adoration of the Virgin, and Purgatory, and Confession, and Absolution, and all that sort of thing. I know I’m only an ignorant man, sir, and I’m afraid that religion is at a very low ebb in the town, but . . . but forgive me, sir, I did not mean to say so much. I hope you’re not offended.”

“No, I’m not offended, Parker. Is there anything more you have to tell me?”

“Well, sir, a good many people have called and asked about you.”

“Yes, who?”

“Mr. Gascoigne for one, sir, and . . . and the vicar of St. Michael’s, who calls himself Father Lindley, for another.”

“Did Father Lindley call?”

“Yes, sir, only three days ago. He wanted to know when you were coming home.”

“And did you tell him?”

“I didn’t know, sir; that is not exactly, so I said nothing.”

Julian could not help smiling. He thought he understood the old man’s mind, and he knew he had but little faith in Father Lindley.

“There were several strangers too, sir. One said he came from Oxford.”

“What was his name?”

“I don’t know, sir. I’ve got all the cards put aside. I’ll fetch them right away.”

“No, never mind; that will all come in time.”

“There was a young gentleman called Bagshott, too, sir.”

“Bagshott? Tom Bagshott; did he call?” asked Julian eagerly.

“Yes, he came about a week ago. He motored over; he said he had seen you in Spain and was particularly anxious to know when you were coming

back. He was very much disappointed when I could not tell him, and he told me he would be away in Scotland during the whole of August.”

“And have either Father Fakenham or Father Bridgeman called?—you remember them, don’t you?”

“Yes, sir, I remember them. No, they have not called, but I had an idea that the Oxford gentleman came from them.”

After that Parker went on to tell him of the general gossip of the town and related to him all he knew of the friends of his early boyhood. The old servant seemed very anxious to ascertain Julian’s plans; but concerning these the young man told him nothing.

Julian remained at Hawkspoint during the whole of August and a large part of September. He made no calls and seldom went into the town. He invited no company and had but few visitors. Mostly he spent his days motoring around the countryside alone. During the evenings he browsed among his father’s books. For a young man not yet twenty-four he was living a lonely and perhaps an unnatural life. Most young men of Julian’s age never trouble about religion at all. Their interests lie in golf and tennis and cricket and a thousand other things which go to make up a young man’s life. But Julian was different. He was cast in a thoughtful mould, and he had inherited deep religious instincts. Doubtless that was why he was trying to work his way back to some foundation of truth.

But nothing came to him. His old faith was dead. A blank negation had taken the place of that spiritual eagerness which had at one time characterized him. He simply could not believe. All those things which had attracted him so much during his Oxford days were now a violation of his intelligence. They mocked his reasoning powers.

He never went to church, indeed he seldom went out of the grounds on Sundays at all. This puzzled old Parker greatly.

“What does it mean?” he repeatedly asked himself. “In the old days he was always at church, always surrounded by priest fellows. He had a crucifix in his bedroom, too, while now . . .”

In a way Parker was glad of this, although he said nothing about it to anyone. He was much troubled about old Andrew Boconnoc’s will. The thought of seeing young Master Julian disinherited, homeless, because he persisted in being a kind of mongrel Papist, angered him beyond words. But if he never went to church, and never prayed, although it was very sad from

Parker's point of view, might it not mean that he was cutting himself free from the priests?

It was with a sad face that, one September evening after dinner, the old butler came to Julian in the library.

"Two gentlemen have called to see you, sir."

"Yes, who are they?"

"One is the man who calls himself Father Fakenham. The other is a stranger, sir," said Parker in lugubrious tones.

"I could not help calling, Julian," Father Fakenham greeted him a minute later. "I thought for the sake of old days you would give me a welcome. This," turning to his companion, "is a friend of mine, the Reverend Anthony Ritzoom. We are not in the way, are we?"

"No; as you see, I am alone."

As Julian looked at Father Ritzoom he felt something of what he had felt in the railway carriage at Seville. The man possessed an uncanny power. As his large, compelling eyes rested upon him the young man felt as though he were probing his very soul. What did Father Fakenham mean by bringing him?

"Let me ring for refreshments," he said after the first greetings. "Have you dined? I have just had my dinner, but . . ."

"No, no," protested Father Fakenham, "we dined at the Boconnoc Hotel in the town; but I have no doubt Father Ritzoom would be glad of a whisky and soda."

Julian could not help thinking, although both spoke naturally and heartily, that an air of unreality pervaded everything. He felt sure he knew why these men had come. Doubtless they had been discussing him since he had seen them last, and hot rebellion rose within him.

"This is a great change after Spain," remarked Fakenham presently. "Did you stay there long?"

"Yes, until the end of June. Then the weather became so hot that we went on to Corsica. From there we went to Switzerland."

"You say 'we,' Julian; you had a companion, then?"

"Yes, I had a companion."

"I hope a profitable one?"

“Oh yes, I think so.”

There was a silence for a few seconds.

“The last time I saw you,” went on Fakenham, with a somewhat nervous laugh, “we parted under somewhat painful circumstances. I hope I find you in a . . . more reasonable frame of mind now.”

“The last time you saw me!” repeated Julian. “Let me see, that was in the Seville railway station. Yes, I remember now. You were with Father Bridgeman. This gentleman—Ritzoom, you said his name was, didn’t you?—was also there. Naturally you felt quite at home in Spain, sir?”

“I feel at home everywhere,” remarked Ritzoom. “But why should you think I felt particularly at home in Spain?”

“Because the Jesuits are so numerous there, and have such tremendous influence in the country.”

Both men were somewhat nonplussed at this. Neither of them had any idea that Julian knew of Ritzoom’s ecclesiastical whereabouts. But Father Fakenham recovered himself in a moment.

“Julian,” he said in fatherly tones, “you know that I have always been an advocate of frankness. You have guessed why I came here to-night, and why I have brought my friend. I have been sorely troubled about you, my son. I was grieved at the rebellious state of your mind while you were in Seville. Surely it was only a passing fancy—a wile of the Devil. Forgive me that in my anxiety about you I have come here unbidden. But you cannot wonder that I who was for years your spiritual father, and who by God’s mercy led you into the light, cannot bear the idea of your being a castaway. Come, my son, be frank with us. Tell us what is in your heart.”

Julian did not speak.

“You cannot mean,” went on the priest, with pleading voice, “that you are in the same state of mind as you were in Seville?”

“Yes.” He spoke without any suggestion of irritation; but his voice was firm and decided.

“You have lost your faith?”

“I have no faith.”

“And are you happier now than you were in the old Oxford days?”

“No; from that standpoint,” and a far-away look came into Julian’s eyes, “I feel that the better part of me is dead.”

“Ah—h!” This time it was Father Ritzoom who spoke.

Julian, in spite of himself, felt the moment the Jesuit began to speak, that a new atmosphere pervaded the room.

“My son,” he said solemnly . . . “for although I cannot claim that long acquaintance with you which Father Fakenham can . . . I can still speak as a priest of the only true Church. My son,” he repeated, “life is only a mockery without faith, and happiness is only found where our Lord intended it should be found—in His Church. The ways of God are inscrutable, and our puny minds cannot understand them. You, for some time now, have been called to pass through strange experiences. It is not for me to enumerate them. . . . You know what they are. The Evil One has set snares for you, and you have fallen into those snares.”

He went on speaking, all the time keeping his eyes fixed on Julian’s face—great, compelling eyes, which in spite of himself made Julian see as he saw, feel as he felt. What he said, Julian hardly knew. He only remembered the impressions that were made on him. He felt as though he were out in a stormy sea in a frail barque, without chart or rudder, and that this man stood with strong hands outstretched to draw him in to a great Ark of safety. As he listened it seemed to him that he had committed the sin of sins in doubting; that it was not for him to ask questions, to argue, or to appeal to reason. It was for him to enter into the great Ark of truth and abide there in safety. He felt as though a cloud were before his mind, that all his doubts, all his reasonings during the last few months had no more weight than thistledown, and that his supreme duty in life was to sink his own personality in that wondrous Something which the priests called the one Church of the living God.

And he was sorely tempted. He had become weary of the struggle, weary of the eternal asking of questions. For he knew, as he had known after that terrible experience in the old cathedral at Seville, when every form of faith had become a ghastly mockery, and all that he had believed had fallen around him like an edifice whose foundations were shifting sand, that he was not satisfied. The best part of his life was dead. His father’s behest and the words of Joan Killigrew were constantly ringing in his ears—“Test everything, prove everything”—and he, in spite of himself, had been trying to test, trying to prove in vain. The more he had tested the greater had the confusion become.

And now, as this old man, with the weight of more than seventy years upon him, spoke to him in such tones of conviction, and of more than conviction, of certainty, he felt as though there were nothing in life for him but to fling every doubt to the winds and obey his every word.

Nevertheless, deep down in his life he knew this was not right. He knew that the old questions would come again. Ritzoom was neither satisfying his reason nor that something which is greater than reason, and which leaps at the truth by a deep intuition. He was not convincing him. He was hypnotizing him. He was charming him even as a serpent might charm a bird, and if he obeyed him he knew he would find himself in thrall; he would lose his personality in a nebulous something that had no firm foundation in truth.

At length Ritzoom ceased speaking, while Julian sat looking like one overwhelmed.

“You will realize this, my son,” went on the Jesuit. “It is at your peril that you refuse to realize it. God and the Devil are fighting for your soul, as they have fought for the souls of men throughout the ages. Is the Devil to be triumphant? Are your puny reasonings to be placed against the Agony on the Cross, and the pleadings of Saints and Angels? Will you go away into loneliness, into outer darkness, while our great Mother stands with outstretched arms ready to fold you to Her bosom? What are the reasonings of man? What have they amounted to through the long years? The ways of God are above reason, beyond reason; and when man’s reasonings are placed in opposition to the teaching of the Church, they are damnation to the soul.”

Julian felt his opposition breaking down. All those things which he thought had formed an impregnable barrier against his old faith had been swept away as by some unseen power.

Then he felt as though something snapped within him, and he realized that he was sitting in his father’s chair. At that moment he felt again as though the old man was near him, and as if by a strange flash a vision of Andrew Boconnoc stood before his mind’s eyes. He saw him, strong in his integrity, hating lies, hating shams. A man of the world, and yet a man who put conscience above everything. That letter came back to him, too, the letter which the old man had written with his dying hand, beseeching him to test everything, to prove everything. . . .

The scene in Seville Cathedral on Easter Day came back to his mind. He saw the officiating priest standing at the altar wearing his mystic robes,

heard him muttering the words: “*Hoc est corpus meum,*” and again, “*Hic est sanguis meus.*”

“Father Ritzoom,” he said—and he knew that his voice trembled—“may I ask you a question?”

“This is not the time for questions,” replied the Jesuit. “It’s a time for faith.”

Both he and Father Fakenham had seen the impression his words had made on the young man, saw the perspiration standing thick on his forehead, and each knew, as if by instinct, that it was a time of crisis.

“It is a time for faith—and obedience,” repeated the priest in solemn tones. “Of what value are questions compared with your immortal soul?”

“Still, I must persist,” replied Julian.

“Very well,” replied Ritzoom, who had by this time realized something of the dual quality of Julian’s nature, “the Church is always ready to answer her children’s questions; nevertheless remember, my son, that the way of salvation is through faith and obedience.”

“You said just now,” persisted the young man, “that the Mass was the central doctrine of your faith; that all other churches were of no avail because only the Catholic Church could have Christ on her altars.”

“I said that, or something like it,” replied the Jesuit. “In essence it’s true, and true believers feed on the actual body and blood of Christ.”

Julian rose to his feet. “Father Ritzoom,” he said, “you have said that you believe in truth before all things, the truth of God. You are a priest, a priest of what you say is the one true Church of God.”

The Jesuit nodded. He could not quite understand the new tone which had come into Julian’s voice.

“Will you tell me this: Do you believe before God, that *you*, who are sitting there with your glass of whisky by your side—that *you* have the power to turn bread and wine into Christ?”

In spite of himself the Jesuit hesitated before replying. There was something in the tone of the young man’s voice that seemed to demand truth, and nothing but the truth.

“Tell me,” repeated Julian, “do you, before the God you pretend to worship, believe *that*?”

“It is the teaching of the Church,” answered the Jesuit, “therefore I must believe it.” But somehow his tones lacked conviction. There was an uneasy look in his eyes; he felt that his power had gone.

“Then I don’t—*I never shall.*”

He spoke the words quietly, and slowly; but with such sincerity and overwhelming conviction that for a time the others were silent.

“He that believeth shall be saved,” said Ritzoom presently. “He that believeth not shall be damned.”

“Please—*please* don’t!” cried the young man. “If I must be damned for not believing what I *can*’t believe, then I must be damned.”

“Then you are an—an *atheist!*” cried Father Fakenham in tones of horror.

“Yes, if you will. Excuse me, gentlemen, but I do not think we need continue this conversation any longer, and . . . please forgive me if I’m rude; but I want to be alone.” He rang the bell as he spoke, and Parker appeared. “Will you show these gentlemen out, Parker?” he said quietly, and as the old butler looked at his young master’s face he felt as though a great load were removed from him.

“I did not think he would have been so obdurate,” remarked Fakenham when the door was closed behind them. “I thought I had more influence over him.”

Ritzoom laughed almost cynically. “It’s this cursed Protestant upbringing,” he said presently. “This stubborn bulldog Yorkshireism which he got from his father.”

“Do you give up hope?” asked Fakenham.

“What, of getting that old Protestant bigot’s money?—No, I don’t give up hope.”

“The will is very plain. There’s nothing ambiguous about it,” remarked Fakenham after a long silence, during which the two men walked slowly down the drive.

“Perhaps not; but wills are often so much waste-paper.”

“What makes you say that?”

“Because that young puppy won’t change—because”—and the old man laughed almost merrily—“he will never be ‘true to the Protestant religion.’”

What is more, he will never claim that money. He's too conscientious."

"Then how can there be any hope?"

"Isn't there a sealed document?" laughed Ritzoom.

CHAPTER XXIII

BAGSHOTT'S NEWS

Towards the end of September Julian received a letter from Tom Bagshott asking him to pay him a visit. Bagshott, who had been in Scotland shooting during practically the whole of August and September, urged him to come, and Julian, longing to hear news about Joan Killigrew, hurried away almost immediately. It was only an afternoon's motor run from Hawkspoint to Bagshott's house, and he arrived there just in time to dress for dinner.

"I say, St. Francis," Bagshott commenced as soon as they were alone together that night, "of course you know you have been the most-talked-about man in Yorkshire these last few weeks; what's the meaning of it all?"

"The meaning is pretty plain," replied Julian a little bitterly; "at least if it's not plain it's not the fault of the newspapers."

"Yes, they have been discussing you freely; but what's at the back of it all?"

"You know as well as I do. The conditions of my father's will have been published broadcast."

"And you are still an Anglo-Catholic? There are rumours that you have chucked the whole business."

Julian was silent.

"For that matter," went on Bagshott, "it's said in Oxford that you have turned atheist; but I can't believe it."

Still Julian was silent.

"There's quite a flutter in ecclesiastical circles in Oxford," went on Bagshott. "In fact, from all I can hear, there are probabilities that there will be a mighty row."

"Row, what about?"

"Oh, the old-fashioned end of the Church of England is smelling danger."

"In what way?"

“It seems that some of the rules and regulations of the society of which Father Fakenham is the Head have come to light. I don’t know the ins and outs of it, but from what I can hear, this society, although supposed to belong to the Church of England, is Romanist all compact, and that Father Fakenham and many more have secretly taken Romanist Orders.”

Julian did not reply.

“It is also said that those men, together with hosts of others, only outwardly remain in the Church of England that they may the better do the work of the Church of Rome. Some of them pretend to hate the Church of Rome, but they are working night and day to bring the Church of England under the dominion of Rome. You don’t seem surprised.”

“No, I’m not surprised.”

“You knew this?”

Julian was silent.

“Anyhow,” went on Bagshott, “all Oxford is agog with excitement, and all the old Protestantism of the city is being called into life. I hear that a huge demonstration is being arranged around the statue of Ridley and Latimer, and that the question is to be discussed as to whether Oxford, which still commemorates the martyrdom of those old johnnies, shall any longer harbour those secret emissaries of Rome. As you know, I have never been much interested in Church matters, but I sympathize with their standpoint. It’s not cricket for supposed clergymen in the Church of England to do Rome’s work. It’s like a member of the Yorkshire cricket team trying to make runs for Surrey. However, that’s by the way. It seems it was the publication of your father’s will which has brought the thing to a head.”

“How? In what way?” asked Julian eagerly.

“It’s publicly declared,” replied Bagshott, “that the reason why Fakenham and his lot took such interest in you was because they believed you would inherit all your father’s money.”

Julian laughed a little bitterly.

“It is also believed,” went on Bagshott, “that they have not given up hopes of getting it.”

“Not if I have anything to do with it,” Julian could not help saying.

“But will you? Of course I don’t know the facts, but I was told that Father Fakenham and a very renowned Jesuit had been to see you. Is that

true?"

"Who told you?"

"I must not tell; but I have been informed that they were followed from Oxford to your house. Oh yes, you open your eyes in wonder; but a chap can't have two millions of money without being talked about."

"Anyhow, old man, as you may imagine, all this gossip is not very pleasant to me."

"Of course it isn't; but I thought you would like to know. Excuse me, but are those stories true?"

"What stories?"

"That you are an atheist, and all that sort of thing?"

"Why are you so anxious to know?"

"It's not my business, of course, but it's said in Oxford that the Fakenham gang are so mad at your apostasy that they are going to fight, tooth and nail, against your inheriting a penny of your father's money."

"Why should they?" asked Julian. "They won't get a penny of it, anyhow."

"Don't you be too sure, my son. They're as deep as the bottomless pit."

"But how can they?"

"I don't know, but I got it from a man who was at one time of their way of thinking, that their emissaries have been to Somerset House and paid their money to see your father's will. How much truth there is in it I don't know. Look here, have you seen this?" and he handed Julian a small periodical. "You can see how interested people are," he added with a laugh. "Of course it's abominable stuff, but you know how eagerly some people fasten upon that kind of garbage."

Julian saw a column headed: "Things we should like to know?" and immediately after his eyes were ablaze with anger. This was what he read:

"According to the public Press, a Yorkshire millionaire left all his money to his son on certain conditions. Those conditions were as follows:

"That he should be true and faithful to the Protestant religion.

“That he should not give, either directly or indirectly, one penny to Roman-Catholicism or Anglo-Catholicism.

“That he should have no connexion with either of those bodies.

“We are authoritatively informed that the son was at the time of the making of the will a most devoted Anglo-Catholic.

“Since then he has so far fulfilled the conditions of the said will as to renounce Catholicism in every form. Of course the reasons for this are plain. It became a question between faith and money, and of course faith had to go.

“But he went too far. In renouncing the Catholic faith he renounced everything, and became an atheist. How then can he be faithful to the Protestant religion?

“This is what we should like to know. Will this young man, for the sake of over two millions of money, renounce his atheism?

“It is very interesting and has naturally caused much curiosity. Of course we sympathize with him in his desire to inherit all this money, and we shall not be at all surprised if he declares, at the end of the year after his father’s death, that he is a faithful Protestant. But how would it stand in a Court of Law? Can a man who has been repeatedly heard to confess himself an atheist, claim to have fulfilled his father’s conditions? Also, would such a claim be contested?”

Julian threw the paper away from him in anger.

“Yes, it’s scurrilous stuff,” remarked Bagshott, “but you see we have a free Press in this country. I would not have shown it to you only I thought you would like to know how people’s tongues were wagging.”

“Do you know who wrote it?” asked Julian.

“Of course not, but I can give a shrewd guess.”

“I’ll think no more about it,” Julian said at length. “It’s too disgusting to discuss. By the way, how long did you stay in Spain after I left you at Seville?”

“About three weeks,” replied Bagshott. “We went down to Malaga for a few days. From there we visited Cordova and Granada. After that we went

on to the French Riviera. It did my mother a world of good. Don't you think she looks well?"

"And did Mrs. and Miss Killigrew remain with you?"

"Yes, all the time we were in Spain; but . . . did you say anything special to Joan in Seville?"

"Why?"

"It's no business of mine," replied the young man, "and of course I ought not to ask; but she's turned me down completely and for ever. You remember what I told you in Toledo. I thought I had a good chance; but I was wrong. Directly after you left Seville I tried again. . . . I had no luck," he added after an almost painful silence. "Her answer was final, absolute. But *she* was changed."

"In what way?"

"I can hardly tell you. She was a different girl—that's all. Then, seeing you left so suddenly, I wondered if you had said anything to her. I fancied that you had offended her."

"Why?"

"Because she was silent whenever your name was mentioned, and seemed uncomfortable. Then, when we got to Cannes, she practically threw us overboard. In fact I could not understand her at all. She got on frightfully friendly terms with the Duchess of Cornubia and they became almost inseparable. Of course this lady is a great swell, and has one of the biggest names in the country, but I can't think it was because of that. Joan has always hated snobbery. Of course it was very flattering for a young girl to be taken up by such a great personage, and as a consequence all sorts of people were running after her. The Marquis of Gunnislake among others."

"Who is this marquis?" asked Julian after another long silence. "I don't seem to know his name."

"Oh, a young sprig of the aristocracy. Quite a pleasant fellow, but without any brains in particular, and as poor as Job."

"And where is Miss Killigrew now?"

"I don't know; but I fancy she must be at her mother's place in Surrey. In fact I'm almost sure she is, because I heard her tell someone that she had arranged to be home during the first week in October."

Three days later Julian told Parker to pack his bags, as he intended to take an extended motor tour.

“I shall be away a week,” he informed him.

“Are you taking Dixon, sir? Or will you drive yourself?” asked Parker.

“I shall drive myself,” was his reply. “I’ll let you know when you may expect me back.”

Beyond this he gave no explanation whatever, and on the morning after his order he was motoring southward. He was acting almost entirely on impulse. He had no reason for going to Surrey at all, except what Tom Bagshott had told him. But he found his heart aching for Joan Killigrew, and although his judgment told him that he was acting foolishly, he could not help trying to see her.

Arriving at Leatherhead he found that Arwennack, the cottage where Mrs. Killigrew lived, was only a mile away from the town, and as it was yet early in the afternoon he resolved to go there at once.

Julian expected a cold greeting from Mrs. Killigrew. During his stay in Spain she had always treated him with a certain amount of restraint, and he had felt somewhat hurt by her apparent dislike. To his surprise, however, she received him with cordiality. She expressed her pleasure at seeing him, and hoped he would enjoy the beauties of Surrey.

“It’s very different from Yorkshire, isn’t it?” she remarked, looking out of the window over her well-kept lawn and to the great trees in a field beyond.

“And more different still from Spain,” he rejoined.

“Yes, Spain is a dreary country. I don’t think I ever want to go there again.”

“You have found one of the most beautiful nooks in Surrey, anyhow.”

“Yes, I was fortunate in getting this old house. It’s very small, as you see, but it is as big as I can afford. Besides, it’s very old, and it reminds me of the old home of our family in Cornwall. Not in its size, of course, but in its appearance. That’s why I re-christened it when I took it. Arwennack was the name of the Killigrews’ house in Falmouth.”

“And does Miss Killigrew like it?” he asked. He was all the time wondering why she did not appear.

“Yes, she loves it,” replied the lady. “Unfortunately, however, she’s away from home just now.”

Julian’s heart sank like lead at this news. All his hopes and anticipations were shattered in a moment. He felt that he had motored to Surrey in vain. Then a sudden determination possessed him.

“Mrs. Killigrew,” he said, “I did a mad thing while we were in Seville. I told your daughter that I loved her. I asked her if she—would wait for me. Perhaps you know,” he added.

But the woman did not reply. Her face became set and stern in a moment.

A long silence followed.

“My daughter has told me nothing,” she said at length, “but . . . were you justified in speaking to her? Forgive me, but I have heard all sorts of rumours.”

“I don’t suppose I was,” replied Julian, “but I could not help myself. Of course,” he added eagerly, “I would never think of marrying until I was in a position to keep a wife.”

“Why do you tell me this?” asked the woman presently.

“Because I thought it your right to know. Besides, I wondered if you could help me.”

“No, I can’t help you,” and she spoke a little bitterly. “I do not understand Joan at all,” she added, and there was a look of intense pain on her face.

This was followed by another long silence.

“I’ll be absolutely frank with you, Mr. Boconnoc,” said Mrs. Killigrew presently. “There was a time when I thought my daughter was getting fond of you, but she has utterly changed. She has changed towards me. Time was when she told me everything, but lately she has told me nothing. Besides, she has made acquaintances that I don’t like. Even at this moment she is away visiting them. I can’t make it out. Why should the Duchess of Cornubia be so anxious to have her, and why am I not invited at the same time? Of course, from a family point of view, the Killigrews are equal to anyone,” and the woman spoke proudly, “but they are not Joan’s sort. She has always been a strong Protestant, while these people are ardent Catholics. I don’t like saying so, but I’m afraid they are getting her into their toils!”

When Julian left Arwennack an hour later he was much mystified and utterly hopeless. As far as he could gather from Mrs. Killigrew's somewhat confused statements, Joan had entirely altered her points of view, and had altogether ceased to make a confidante of her mother. She had constantly sought the society of her new friends, too, friends whom at one time she would have been utterly opposed to. But he learnt nothing definite. Everything was as nebulous as a cloud.

He did not return to Yorkshire at once, but went to London, where he spent some days. The middle of October had come before he saw Hawkspoint again.

"Father Lindley called yesterday," Parker informed him soon after his arrival. "He seemed so anxious to know when you would be here, that I told him. I hope I did right, sir."

"Oh yes, quite right," replied Julian.

"I said I thought you would be here by noon to-day, sir. I should not be surprised if he came up this afternoon. He seemed very anxious to see you."

Julian was somewhat surprised at this. He felt sure that Fakenham would have told this young Ritualistic priest of their last conversation, and that as a consequence Lindley would have shown him no friendship. Neither was he anxious to see Lindley. He imagined that his visit was another move on Ritzoom's and Fakenham's part, and he was anxious to avoid further controversy. He remembered Lindley's almost fanatic Ritualism, and as he did not wish to hurt the young priest's feelings he would gladly have avoided any further meeting with him. Still, when an hour later the young priest was shown into the library he could do no other than receive him cordially.

"I hope I'm not in the way," said the young priest. "I know you have only just got home and must have a heap of things to do; but I wanted to see you right badly. I . . . I want your advice."

"*You . . . want my advice!*" cried Julian in astonishment.

"Yes, I'm in Queer Street."

"You in Queer Street! Is it about money?"

"I suppose everything has to do with money, in a way," replied Lindley, "although, as far as I can see, money has no direct connexion with what is in my mind. I can speak to you in confidence, can't I?"

"Certainly—but I don't understand. However, go on."

The priest gave an anxious look towards the door.

“Not yet,” he whispered, “someone is coming.” There was a furtive look in his eyes, a look suggesting suspicion, apprehension, fear.

A second later a servant entered bringing tea.

“You are sure I can speak plainly, Boconnoc?” asked the priest when they were alone again.

The man was changed, utterly changed, and it was impossible not to notice it.

It was not the Lindley Julian had expected at all, but a different kind of man.

“Look here,” he said at length, “is all I have heard about you true?”

“Depends on what you have heard.”

“Of course there has been no end of discussion about you. No sooner were the terms of your father’s will made known than everyone was full of it. The papers were full of it. It was the subject of gossip everywhere. I knew all about it months ago—Fakenham told me last March. You will remember I admitted as much, when you came to see me.”

“Yes, I remember.”

“I knew Fakenham’s plans, too. He told me. That was why I was so astonished when you suddenly cleared out. It set me wondering. Knowing the grip that Fakenham and Bridgeman and the rest of them had on you, I could not explain it.”

He spoke in sharp, hurried sentences. His eyes were glistening with excitement, his hands trembling so much that he could scarcely hold his tea-cup.

“Look here, Boconnoc,” he went on, “is it true that you have chucked Fakenham and his gang? That you have . . . thrown up the whole thing?”

“Why?” asked Julian. He did not understand the tone in Lindley’s voice.

“That is what I have come to see you about.”

CHAPTER XXIV

LINDLEY'S DILEMMA

“Don’t mistake me,” went on Lindley, “I have not come here to pry out things, neither have I come because of any orders from Fakenham or that lot. Perhaps you think I have, and as a consequence are afraid to talk to me in a friendly way. Will you tell me what’s taken place? I don’t mean about the money part of the business—that’s nothing to do with me. But it’s commonly reported, and generally believed, that you have given up what you used to believe. Is it true?”

“Why do you want to know? I ask this not because I want to make a secret of it, but I don’t want to enter into any controversy. Of course, I know your theological whereabouts, and if you have come to me with the idea of converting me, you have come on a useless errand.”

“Heavens! it’s not that,” and Lindley laughed bitterly. “I am in deep water, Boconnoc. I have been in deep water for months, and I don’t know how to get out.”

“What’s troubling you?”

“Heaps of things. I am vicar of St. Michael’s and I’m supposed to be a faithful priest. I am what they call in this town ‘very advanced’—that I might as well be a Romanist. You know that. The thing that’s troubling me is this. Shall I give it up? Shall I come out of the whole business?”

“Heavens! I don’t understand,” cried Julian in astonishment.

“No, of course you don’t. That’s why I have come to you. I want your help, Boconnoc. I want your advice. If you are where people say you are, you have also been drinking the bitter waters of Marah, and you will understand and sympathize with me. You were preparing for Holy Orders under Fakenham, you belonged to the Romanizing section of our lot, and now. . . . Do you mind telling me about it? I wish you would.”

There was that in his eyes and in the tone of his voice that caused Julian to pity him. He was far from understanding, but he was sure that Lindley was honest in what he was trying to say.

“Why did you chuck it, Boconnoc? It had nothing to do with that will, I’m sure. You’re not that kind of chap; but there must be some tremendous

reason why you kicked Fakenham and all that lot overboard. I wish you'd tell me."

A few minutes later Julian found himself talking with absolute frankness. He described his coming home after his father's death, told about the funeral, the reading of the will, and what followed. He even went so far as to read a part of his father's letter aloud, and described the effect it had upon him, while all the time Lindley listened like one fascinated.

"Then I went to Spain," went on Julian, "and I saw the real effects which Roman-Catholicism had upon a people. As you know, the Romanizing section of the Anglo-Catholics were always urging that nothing could bring about a truer faith and a higher life in this country—in fact, that nothing would save England from atheism and ruin but by being united to the Roman Church. So I went to Spain, the most Catholic country in the world."

"Yes," cried Lindley, as Julian hesitated, "go on! go on!"

And he went on. He forgot everything else in his description of what he saw. He became almost passionate.

"Mind you," he cried, "I believed, or thought I believed, during all this time. I tried to explain things away, tried to tell myself that faith could not be judged by its effects; but all the time the grim logic of facts was pressing itself on me."

At length he described Easter Day in Seville Cathedral, one of the greatest and most historic cathedrals of the world; told how he had knelt and prayed with the others, and how he had tried to lose himself in the sensations of the moment.

"But it was no use," he went on, as he started to his feet and began to pace the room. "When that great fat Spanish priest pretended to perform the miracle of the Mass, I knew he had not done it. I knew it! It was all a gaudy, tawdry show, all a piece of mumbo jumbo!"

"My God!" ejaculated Lindley, when Julian had concluded his recital. "So you chucked the whole thing?"

"No, I chucked nothing; everything left me. That was all. I *could* not believe. There was nothing to believe in. What was the use of pretending to believe when every power of reasoning I possessed rose up in protest?"

Lindley nodded. "And then?" he asked.

"I can't tell you all; it's impossible, but I said I would test further, and prove further. I spent two months more in this wonderful country of faith,

this nation where everything like free thought is crushed—until presently the call of home became too strong to keep away any longer. Then I came back.”

“And where are you now?” asked Lindley.

“Where I was then. It’s all gone; that part of my life is dead.”

“No, no,” cried the other, “it’s not dead. You have longings, haven’t you? You are not contented with the idea that there’s no God who cares, no hope in life.”

“I don’t know. Perhaps you’re right. I suppose no one can help having longings; but what’s the use of it? It’s all gone, and I have ceased to bother. At least, I hope I have.”

“But surely Fakenham and Bridgeman did not give you up without a struggle?”

“Oh no, they came to Spain after me. They argued with me, pleaded with me, threatened me—I don’t know what they didn’t do. They have been at me since I have been home.”

“Who?”

“Why, Fakenham and a man called Ritzoom, a Jesuit, one of the most wonderful men I ever came into contact with.”

He described the interview in all its details. The influence of it was still strong upon him, so strong that he made Lindley see what he had seen, feel what he had felt.

“But you didn’t come here to know about this, Lindley,” said Julian presently, “you seem to be having a bad time yourself. What is it? Surely you have not kicked over the traces, too.”

“I don’t know where I am,” replied Lindley, “and I’m terribly afraid. No one knows what I’m going through, *and I have not dared to tell anyone!* You know the feeling?”

Julian nodded.

“It was this way,” went on Lindley presently. “I was brought up with the idea of being a parson. An old aunt of mine skimped and scraped for years to send me to Oxford. I went through the usual course. I did fairly well there, took my Bachelor’s Degree and then went on to prepare for Orders. You know what Oxford is; know what an undergraduate’s life is. I kept straight; all the same there was a big deposit of doubt in my mind. I would

have liked to have given up the idea of the church altogether, but it would have broken my old aunt's heart. Well, I took Orders and got a curacy in an Evangelical parish—but I soon got sick of it.”

“Why?”

“Oh, you know what those old Evangelical churches are; dry, uninteresting, lifeless. Everything lacked warmth, reality, certainty. I felt that religion had lost power, that it was only a name. A great deal of what we used to urge about Protestantism is true, Boconnoc, it's as dry as dust. It lacks the breath of life. . . . Then I got to know some Catholic priests, and I envied them. They had no doubts—asked no questions. They accepted all that the church taught, and did their work. So much was I influenced by them that I believe I should have joined the Roman Church and become a Roman priest, but for the thought of my old aunt. She was a staunch Protestant and would have died of a broken heart if I had become a Romanist.

“Then, one day, I went into one of our Anglo-Catholic churches where there was nothing to distinguish it from a Roman church. At first I was bewildered. Then I was fascinated. Everything was bright, warm, throbbing with life; at least, it seemed so to me. I went again and again, and the more I went the more I was convinced that Protestantism was a dead letter, that it had no life, no reality. And I wanted reality, I wanted certainty, *for I had no certainty!*”

He uttered the words in a hoarse whisper; evidently he was deeply moved.

“Presently I came across one of Fakenham's men, and through him I got to know others. You can guess the rest. I became assured that all the Roman Church could give me I could get in the Anglican Church, and I became convinced, ardent—at least, I thought so.

“But I was not happy. I was working under a Protestant vicar and in a Protestant parish. I told Fakenham I wanted to leave and get into a more congenial atmosphere; but he would not let me. He told me it was my business to de-Protestantize this parish, to bring in Catholic belief, and accustom the people to Catholic ceremonial and Catholic doctrine. I didn't like it; but you know what Fakenham is, and how he makes you do things in spite of your own will. You see, I had no strong convictions, no very clear ideas, although I tried to assure myself that I had. It was not long before I was an ardent Romanizer. Not that I wanted the Church of England to join

the Church of Rome, so much as I wanted to Catholicize the Church of England. You understand?"

"Yes, I understand," replied Julian. He was thinking of his own experiences.

"You see, the Protestant part of our church never satisfied me. I was an ardent believer in the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, I wanted to feel that I was in the line of succession from Peter down to the present day. That was one thing which kept constantly working in my mind. For another thing I was dissatisfied with what I may term the historicity of the Church of England. You see, there was an awful smash up at the Reformation when we separated from the Roman Church. Then there was another thing. It seemed to me that we had lost authority. I, as a priest, had no right to command. I could not speak with the same assurance and with the same *authority* that I thought those Roman priests could speak. But more than all that—and I think this last is at the root of the whole Anglo-Catholic movement—was the longing for the *power of the priesthood!* I was not content to be merely a minister—I wanted to be a *priest*. I tell you I went through an awful time. On the one hand were men like Bridgeman telling me that we had never broken away from the Church of Rome and were still a part of that Church, and on the other hand were history, reason, common sense.

"Then I did what lots of others have done. I took Orders—elsewhere. You know what I mean; and then I thought I was satisfied. 'Surely,' I said to myself, 'I have got everything now. I have been truly ordained, and no one can question the validity of my Orders. I am in the one true Church, even although by the orders of those in authority I am remaining in the Church of England. I have got all I can get!'

"Then I came here. I found St. Michael's empty, dirty, moribund, neglected. I set to work to bring about a new order of things, and I was successful. As you know, this was an old Protestant town and I determined to Catholicize it. . . . But you know all about that. Soon St. Michael's became crowded. The congregations increased from about a hundred to five hundred. You see, I got talked about, and people got to wonder what I should say and do next. I had the Stations of the Cross set up. I introduced incense, confession, and all the rest of it, and for a time I thought I was satisfied. Then a blow came."

"In what way?" asked Julian.

"Really through Miss Dinah Gascoigne. She told me plainly that I was a traitor to the Church of England, that I was doing Rome's work under a

disguise. At first I laughed at it, or rather I was proud of it. I prided myself, as some of the old Tractarians used to pride themselves, on being too clever for the Prots; of doing Rome's work under the guise of an Anglican parson. All the same, the sting remained. It pained me, too. I felt myself to be a liar and a hypocrite. I was like a professed Liberal trying to win elections for the Conservatives, or *vice versa*. I was not playing the game. I was pretending what I didn't believe.

"This led me to think deeper. If I were a Romanist at heart, surely I ought to leave the Church of England and go to the Church of Rome. But was I a Romanist? There were lots of things in the Roman system I did not believe in, and if that were so, how could I be a true Catholic?"

"All this time I went on doing Rome's work. Almost every month I introduced some new Roman ceremonial or teaching. I preached on 'The Meaning of Vestments!' Yes, just think of it! Here was my church, situated amidst vice, squalor, drunkenness, harlotry and every form of sin, and I had no better message than that! The meaning of Vestments!—Good God!"

"Then I started re-reading the New Testament. I tried to read it in its entirety, and presently I awoke to the fact that there was not a shadow of foundation in the New Testament for the distinctive doctrines of Rome. Again and again I read the Sixth Article:

"'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.'

"Repeatedly I compared the teachings of Christ, and the teaching of the Apostles with that of the Church of Rome, until I came to the conviction that if the New Testament was true, *the whole superstructure of Rome was a lie*.

"I tell you, man, that New Testament is a wonderful book! it shook my life to the very foundations. But there's something wrong."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Julian.

"What ceremonials had Christ and His Apostles? Fancy Peter and Paul, and Silas, and Barnabas and the rest of them preaching on the meaning of Vestments! Fancy them exhorting the people to the worship of the Virgin, and all the rest of it! Then I went further still."

"Went further still, how? In what way?"

“I realized that while the early church was *alive*, when it was a *living flame of fire*, there was no thought of ceremonial and Ritual. *That ritual, ceremonial and all that sort of thing only crept in when the church was practically dead.* It’s been so ever since, Boconnoc. During the whole history of Christianity it has always been the same. Whenever the church has lost *life*, it has turned to Ritual, to ceremonial; but whenever there has been a great revival of religion, *real religion*, there has been no need for Ritual—it has gone by the board.”

“You are getting out of my depth now,” interposed Julian.

“No, I’m not, it’s the most patent truth in the world. There is no suggestion of Ritual, of ceremonial, and all the paraphernalia of the Roman Church in the New Testament. Those early disciples of Christ preached a great gospel of salvation and that gospel meant a new life. It meant power over sin. It meant that converts became new creatures. It was the same thing in Wesley’s time. There was no thought of Ritual, no thought of ceremonial.”

“I say, Lindley,” laughed Julian, “you’re talking like a Methodist parson.”

“Am I? I wish I were. That is, I wish I had the power of those first Methodist preachers. But I haven’t, and that’s what has been troubling me. Do you know, my friend, I can’t point to a single case in St. Michael’s of real conversion. I have been crowding the church, and I have introduced all kinds of Roman ceremonial into the church, but what’s been the good of it? Who has been the better for it? If religion were alive in this town, vice would be stamped out. Drunkenness would be killed; people who had been living bad lives would be made pure. But it isn’t so. *In spite of all my pretensions, I haven’t any power!* That’s my trouble. The revival of the eighteenth century was a *spiritual* revival. It was the awakening of a great spiritual life, and it meant uplifting the lives of the people. The so-called revival brought about by Newman and Manning and Pusey and the rest of them was simply a revival of ceremonial. The gospel they preached was in essence salvation by millinery, and incense, and priestcraft! Good God, what a fool I was!”

Lindley’s face was as pale as death, and his eyes burnt with an unnatural light. There was no doubt that the man was deeply sincere and deadly in earnest.

“I got to see,” he went on, “that mine was no true ministry at all. It was true I was working hard, working like a slave, in fact; but I lacked the

essential thing. All those outer things I had been troubling about had no deep or vital meaning. They were mere excrescences. They did not matter. As for the priestly business which I had been troubling so much about, what did it amount to? You were quite right in what you said about the mass in Seville. When you bring down the thing to its ultimate truth, what does it mean? It's a mere magicmongering, a mere appeal to the senses."

"Then where are you now?" asked Julian.

"Ah, that's what I wish I could tell you. You remember what our Lord said to His disciples after the Resurrection, 'Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.' And they got it, too. Their baptism was a baptism of power."

He ceased speaking, then, looking out of the window over the park, he said slowly, and there was a sob in his voice, "And I haven't got that power, Boconnoc. That's why my ministry is a mockery."

A long silence fell between them, a silence that was almost awesome.

"What would you advise me to do?" asked Lindley, presently.

"Chuck it," replied Julian, contemptuously. "It's all an idle tale."

"No," cried Lindley, passionately, "it's not all an idle tale. There *is* something in it. The most wonderful thing on earth is in it. It's the great thing the world needs; but—but—I have not got it. That's why I don't know what to do."

"But do you mean to tell me," and Julian's voice was hard and almost scornful, "that you still believe, in spite of all you have told me, that Christianity, as it is taught in the New Testament, is true?"

"Else all history is a lie, else the experiences of millions of the noblest and best people that ever lived is a lie, else God is a lie!" cried Lindley, passionately. "That I am convinced of. What troubles me is that I have not got hold of the real essence of it. That's why I don't know what to do. One thing I have decided about. I am going to do no more Romanizing work. I couldn't. I should be false to everything that's true in the world if I did. But that's negative, and I want something positive. Shall I give up being a clergyman? Shall I leave the parish?"

"Surely there is nothing else you *can* do, believing as you do."

"I have contemplated doing that, but I can't bring myself to it. You see, I believe, although I'm largely in the dark, that the clergyman's calling is the greatest thing in life, and I feel that I can't give it up."

“If you feel like that, why not go to your bishop and state the whole of your case to him?”

“He wouldn’t understand. He’s bitten with this Roman microbe. Boconnoc, I wonder whether I could do this. It may mean trouble, it may mean my expulsion from the parish, but would it not be right to tell the people what I have told you, and then await results?”

“I’m not the man to advise.”

“I could preach the ethics of the New Testament, and I *do* believe the Gospel story even although I’m . . . where I am. And I could urge my people to do what I’m going to do: seek for life and light and power until I get it. The thought has only just come to me, and—and I think it a good one.”

“There would be an awful row,” Julian could not help saying.

“I don’t mind that if it’s honest—and it does seem the honest course to pursue.”

“Good heavens,” said Julian to himself, when late that night Lindley left him, “who would have thought it of old Lindley! And perhaps there are thousands like him, only they haven’t got the pluck to do what he says he’s going to do.”

“How will it all end, I wonder?” thought Lindley as he slowly wended his way homeward. “Of course, as Boconnoc says, there will be an awful row, and I may get kicked out of the parish; but that doesn’t matter. Anyhow, I’ve done with the mere millinery of religion for ever, and I’ve done with tawdry shams and ceremonials.”

CHAPTER XXV

PROTESTANTISM

During the succeeding months Julian became more confirmed in his unbelief than ever. He had further talks with Lindley, but they only strengthened his conviction that Christianity, whatever it had been in the past, had become a played-out force, and it made no appeal to him whatever.

Of course, he still accepted the ethics of the New Testament. He could not help admitting that they were the highest in the world. It might be, too, that the teachings of Jesus had exerted a beneficent influence, especially during those centuries when people were sunk in ignorance; but he utterly discarded the supernatural element. As for the churches, especially for those which pretended sacerdotal authority, and priestly claims, he utterly discarded, despised. Indeed, it was these claims which embittered him so much. If the churches taught only a system of ethics, and cast aside the supernatural element, he would not have been so antagonistic, but, remembering what he had been taught to believe, he grew more and more contemptuous.

Of course, he often thought about the strange will his father had made. Sometimes he grew bitter. It was not fair to bring him up as a rich man's son and then to disinherit him because he could not accept a certain shibboleth. And yet he thought kindly of his father. Indeed, as the months went by, his thoughts became more and more affectionate. What old Andrew Boconnoc had done, he had done out of love for him and because he wanted to save him. And he had saved him, saved him from a mockery, saved him from devoting all the wealth which the old man had amassed to what would be a danger to humanity. If he, Julian, had had his way at the time, he would have given his father's millions to a mediæval system, a system which had always stood for tyranny, oppression, and decadence.

Naturally, he often wondered as to what the sealed document might contain. How would his father's wealth be disposed of? Would it be given to certain charitable institutions, or had the old man other ideas in his mind when he dictated it?

But the thought that troubled him most was that of his hopeless love for Joan Killigrew. For he knew it was hopeless. There was finality both in her words and in her tones when he had seen her last. He often wondered, too,

concerning what her mother had said to him. He had ventured to write to Mrs. Killigrew twice since he had seen her at Leatherhead, and had asked for news of Joan; but nothing had come to him. It appeared that Mrs. Killigrew was still troubled about her daughter, but beyond that fact she left him in entire ignorance.

One thing, however, his conversation with Lindley had decided him to do. Even although, as he had told himself a hundred times, he had given up all interest in religion, he would visit the various churches in the town and judge for himself as to their real value.

He started his visits in November and continued them for some months. He had no idea that there were so many churches in the town. Every denomination was represented. There were General Baptists and Particular Baptists. There were several kinds of Methodists, each with a number of large buildings. There were a number of Scotch people in the town, and they had built a Presbyterian church. The Congregationalists had four large handsome buildings. There were also several churches belonging to the Church of England, besides the Roman Catholics, whose edifice had been placed in the Irish part of the town. Added to these the Swedenborgians, the Christian Scientists and the Spiritualists each had their temple. It came as a revelation to him.

“Good heavens,” he thought to himself, “if the people in Birtwhistle are not good it’s not for want of churches. Every sect is represented, every phase of Christian and non-Christian teaching is advocated, and what does it all amount to? Each of these sects claims that it has the truth and that it is really the true Church, while all the time the Devil is running riot.”

And this was, in a sense, true. Churches there were in abundance. Parsons of all sorts were to be seen on every hand, but they seemed to have but little effect upon the life of the town. Public-houses stood at every corner, and godlessness was blatant. Birtwhistle was no better and no worse than a score of other Lancashire and Yorkshire manufacturing towns. Hosts of agencies existed for the purpose of uplifting the people. On the other hand, evil influences everywhere prevailed. Drunkenness was rampant, gambling was the order of the day. Even in this provincial town there were gambling dens, brothels, and other homes of vice.

“If Christianity were true,” he reflected, “if, as the preachers say, the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation, Birtwhistle would be changed as by magic. The fact is, Christianity is only a fetish, a relic of superstition, a violation of reason.”

But there were many things which puzzled him. Supposing all the churches were closed, would it not be a terrible thing for the town? In spite of everything, they were exerting an influence for good. At least thousands of children were taught the ethics of Christianity, and that was good. Neither could he deny that most of the churches were centres of good influences and that they were a restraint on evil influences; nevertheless, as a whole, they were a failure.

He visited representative churches of all the denominations. He went to what was called the old parish church, where the Reverend Thomas Gascoigne officiated, and he found a quiet, orderly, reverent service. The place was attended by many of the "best people" in the town. Very few poor people went there, and, as far as he could see, the services had not the slightest effect. They sang the hymns and psalms, joined in the responses, listened to a commonsense address from the rector, and went away. He attended the Presbyterian church, where he found great respectability and evident affluence. The place was thinly attended. In a building seating seven or eight hundred not more than one hundred and fifty were present.

He could not help noticing that several of the people nodded significantly as he entered. Evidently great interest was taken in him. When he left at the close of the service, an Elder came up to him with outstretched hand.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Boconnoc," he said. "I hope you liked our minister?"

"You have a very fine church," Julian evaded.

"Yes, and we have got a very scholarly, thoughtful minister," was the reply. "In my opinion, the best preacher in the town. I hope you will come again, Mr. Boconnoc."

When he went to Wesley Chapel he found a great crowd. It was what was called Young People's Day, and more than ordinary interest prevailed. A special preacher had been brought from London, who gave what was called a popular discourse. Julian remembered what Lindley had said about the Methodist revival in the eighteenth century, and paid special attention; but there was nothing to correspond with the scenes which happened in the days of John Wesley and George Whitefield.

He went to the various other kinds of Methodist churches, and in the main found comparatively empty buildings. In most cases only middle-aged and old people attended. Outside, the streets were thronged with crowds of

young men and women; inside there were rows of empty pews, and services without life or power. On more than one occasion he felt tremendously bored.

He saw that a third of the church buildings in the town would have accommodated all the worshippers, and there would then have been room to spare, and yet each church clung to its own sect as though there was some particular virtue in it.

“Ay, Mester Julian,” cried an old weaver, as he entered the vestibule of one of the Methodist churches, “I’m rare glad to see you, but I wish you’d ’a’ come at t’ Sarmons i’sted of to-night.”

“Why?” asked Julian.

“Why, I should have liked you to ’ave seen Hanover full. There won’t be many here to-night.”

“Why?”

“Ay, we don’t get very good congregations i’ these days.”

“How is that?”

“Oh, people go away week-ending and that sort of thing. Besides, young people prefer going for a walk to going to chapel. Religion is not thought of now same as it wur when I wur a boy. Still, I’m reight glad to see yo’.”

“It seems,” thought Julian, when he had nearly made a tour of all the churches, “as though all these places stand for something which *has been*, and not for something which *is*. There must have been a mighty faith which caused the people to put up those buildings. It seems, too, as though there must have been something real in the faith which has kept them alive so long; but as it appears now, they are the corpses of one-time living organisms. Great empty temples of a God who is dead.”

And yet this was not altogether true. Good work was being done, good influence exerted; but that work and those influences seemed to be on the decrease.

Nearly all the Protestant churches were eminently respectable, and a smattering of the employers of the town were to be found in each. They, in the main, sat in the big pews which were comfortably upholstered, while the common people sat in the pews of less importance.

“Dead! dead!” he repeated to himself again and again; but he knew he was not altogether right. Here and there there were suggestions of life and of

power, and many seemed hopeful of better things. Some told him they had for a long time been praying for what they called “a revival.” Nevertheless, the churches as a whole touched only a fragment of the population.

When he went to the Roman Catholic church he found what he did not find in the Protestant churches; a number of poor people were present. Poor, bedraggled women were there with shawls on their heads and clogs on their feet. Some of them were carrying babies. Many working men were there, too. A large proportion of them were unshaven and ragged, some of them looked degraded and dissolute. He wondered as he saw them participating in the service. It was at the nine o’clock Mass which he attended. To him everything was unreal, tawdry. Genuflexions before the altar, the smell of incense, the mumbling of prayers, the singing of the choir-boys, were all so much a performance; but evidently the people did not think so. When the supposed great miracle of the Mass was performed, and when, afterwards, the Host was uplifted amidst the tinkling of bells and the chanting of priests, the people knelt and prayed with evident devotion and sincerity. Dissolute as many of them were, they were at any rate reverent in church.

What did it mean?

Then he reflected that he knew many of these people, that he had known them for years. Some of them had worked for his father, and perhaps were still working in what were called the Boconnoc Mills. They were shiftless and ragged when he was a boy; they were shiftless and ragged still. Their religion seemed to have no effect upon their lives. They went to confession at certain intervals, and got what they called Absolution. Then they went away and continued the same course of life.

He knew he felt cynical as these thoughts passed through his mind, but there was, nevertheless, a tremendous element of truth in them. Doubtless there were many good, earnest, sincere people among the Roman Catholics, but, like the rest of the churches, there seemed to be no power to uplift the lives of the people.

“One church is just the same as another,” he reflected, cynically. “It’s all a matter of paying to keep the parson alive.”

He spoke to an old town missionary for whom his father had a great respect, and whom he had always supported liberally.

“Can you tell me, Mr. Blackham, why it is that one never sees people in the Protestant churches and chapels who are ragged and dirty and poor,

while at the Catholic church there are hosts of them? Why don't the Protestant churches attract these people?"

"Ay, Mr. Julian, I don't want to say anything against the Catholics, I have no doubt, too, that old Father O'Brien is a good sincere man; but it's this way. Sometimes the Protestants do get hold of poor, ragged, drunken people. I have known it scores of times, and directly they begin going to a Protestant church or chapel, and especially if they get converted, they get a sense of what you may call pride. They want to live in a better house, they want their children to be better dressed, and to be better dressed themselves. That's why you don't see dirty, ragged people in a Protestant place of worship. Among the Catholics it's different. They go to the Catholic chapel poor, and they remain poor. They go ragged, and they remain ragged."

Julian thought much about this, and he could not help calling to memory a statement which was quoted from an important Roman Catholic Church newspaper, to the effect that while the Catholics were only one in *sixteen* of the population of England, they provided one in *four* of the criminals of the country.

These visits to the various churches of the town had their effect upon the young man. Not that they in any way changed his general attitude of mind. The result of that awful blow in Seville Cathedral, a blow which wrecked his faith and swept away most of his early convictions, was still with him. If he was not an atheist, he was at best an agnostic. The Christian system, as far as he was concerned, was dead. And yet he could not help realizing that there was *something* in the religious life of the town which could not be discarded so easily. It was true that the churches seemed to be losing their grip on the people. It was true, too, that a dead hand seemed to have been laid on the churches. But he could not help feeling that there was some vital force somewhere, something in Christianity which stood for and inspired the best life of the community.

Of course he went to St. Michael's. The town had been agog with excitement on hearing the young priest's confession. Indeed, for a time, it caused quite a stir among the dove-cotes. A report of his sermon appeared in the *Birtwhistle Advertiser*, and was discussed everywhere. He declared that while men of different temperaments and different tastes would have their own ideas concerning the conduct of services, he, personally, no longer attached any importance to the ceremonials which had been so prominent a feature in St. Michael's, and that they would no longer continue. He also declared that he had no longer any belief in what he formerly called Catholic teaching, and that as a clergyman of the Church of England he should only

teach what might be found in the Church of England formularies. But there was a note of sorrow in the address. He admitted that a wave of worldliness, of materialism, of mammonism, had swept over the country, and that the Church of England as it existed at present seemed powerless to overcome it. He stated that he believed that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the only hope of the world, and he asked the people to pray that he, with them, might understand its meaning and its power.

Altogether it was a disappointing address, in spite of the fact that many of the people were glad he had given up his "Popish Practices." Indeed, after a few Sundays the congregations began to fall away, and many would have preferred the ornate ceremonial and the almost fanatical preaching of former days, to the unexciting commonplaces which were now the order of the day at St. Michael's.

"Poor old Lindley," reflected Julian, after he had been to St. Michael's, "he's in a bad way. He has no life, no conviction. It will end in his chucking the whole thing."

Meanwhile, the winter was passing away, and the days were beginning to lengthen. January had gone, February had come, and Julian realized that the time was drawing perilously near when the year of probation which his father's will had given would come to an end. Of course, the terms of the will were common property in the town. The newspapers had seen to that. All sorts of gossip was afloat, and many eager debates had taken place as to what would be the outcome of it all.

"That chap is noan going to chuck away two million of money," asserted a man in the White Swan public-house to his companion, "and it's noan to be expected as he should. He'll be a Protestant right eno'."

"I'm noan so sure," another replied. "He wur at the Catholic chapel last Sunday morning but one, and if he's noan goin' to be a Catholic, why should he go there?"

"Ay, but he's been to all rest on 'em. You ca'ant judge from that. Besides, Catholics do'ant go to any church but Catholic."

"Weel, I know this," declared another, "I'd be of any religion under the sun if there wur all that brass at the end on't. My opinion is that he'll be a big fool if he doesn't stick to what he's got."

"Ay, but mustn't old Andrew 'a' 'ated t' Catholics!" cried another.

"No, he didn't 'ate Catholics at all, he only 'ated t' Catholic system. He said that wur wrong. He said as 'ow it took away people's individuality;

that's what 'ee said, and 'ee wur reight."

This, interlarded with many sanguinary adjectives and unprintable oaths, was a specimen of the gossip that went on in scores of public-houses in the town. The matter was also discussed in many of the mills and in hundreds of houses, while it formed the chief subject of conversation at chapel sewing meetings.

In the main the people had made up their minds that Julian would not be fool enough to sacrifice his father's fortune for the sake of a fad, and that as he had undoubtedly given up the Anglo-Catholics he would find no difficulty in becoming a "faithful Protestant."

But no one knew the truth, although many had tried to find out. Beyond what he had admitted to Lindley, he had spoken to no one in the town about the matter. Mr. Gascoigne had visited him on more than one occasion, but when he broached the subject of the will, Julian became dumb. Mr. Coad also tried to elicit from him what he intended to do, without avail. Whatever he thought he kept it to himself.

As may be imagined, however, he was tremendously wrought on. As the anniversary of his father's death drew nearer and nearer he realized that the end of his old life had come, and that the secret of the sealed document would be made known. For, as we have said, he had determined to make no claim. According to his father's interpretation of the word, he was not a faithful Protestant. He did not believe in Protestantism; he did not believe in any form of religion. As he had repeatedly admitted to himself, that part of his nature was dead. As a consequence he could not mock the truth by interpreting the word Protestant in such a way as to allow himself to inherit his father's fortune. It would be insulting the old man's memory, and while he might be able to find a thousand excuses for doing so, he knew he should never respect himself afterwards.

But he was sorely tempted. He had remained at Hawkspoint during the whole winter, and every week the old place became dearer and dearer. Money as money he cared little for, but he did love his old home. The thought of going away from it for ever was to him a real martyrdom. And yet he must. He could not, he simply *could not* be guilty of a subterfuge, which was practically a lie, in order to fulfil his heart's desire.

At the beginning of February Mr. Coad came to see him.

"Well, Julian," said the solicitor, "the year is nearly up."

"Yes, I know."

“Of course you’re going to be sensible?—Have you anything to say?” he added, as Julian remained silent.

He shook his head.

“But you must say something soon. I shall have to take the necessary steps. Most likely all the old ground will have to be gone over again, and it may mean a tremendous business. You see, if you do not state that you will fulfil the conditions, the sealed document will have to be opened, and then anything may happen.”

“What should happen? It is all very simple; everything will have to be done according to the instructions in that sealed document.”

“It may not be so simple,” protested the lawyer. “There may be hosts of difficulties, possibly a lot of litigation.”

“But you know what the document contains?”

“I don’t. I’m as ignorant as you are, as ignorant as everyone else is. It has been put in a place of safety and will only be opened if you fail to fulfil your father’s conditions.”

“You don’t know!” Julian was astonished at this. He had fully believed that this document was prepared by Mr. Coad.

“I know nothing; that is, I am sure of nothing.”

“*Sure* of nothing?” emphasized Julian.

“Sure of nothing,” repeated the lawyer. “I may have had hints, but nothing more.”

“Then who drew it up?”

“I don’t know. Of course, we all know of its existence. It may be all very simple, or it may be terribly complicated. That’s why I am anxious for you to abide by the conditions. I should hate to see such an estate frittered away in law expenses. Come now, Julian, be sensible. Now that you have given up your Anglo-Catholic nonsense it should be easy. Say ‘yes’ and I’ll get to work.”

“No,” replied Julian.

“What are you going to do, then?”

“I’m going away.”

The lawyer sighed deeply. He was much perturbed.

“But you will be back on March 10th?” he pleaded.

“Yes, I shall be back then.”

The next day he left Hawkspoint.

The reason of his sudden departure was a letter he had received from Mrs. Killigrew.

“I don’t understand Joan at all,” that lady wrote. “She has broken off her friendship with the people I told you about, but beyond that she will tell me nothing. She is at home now.”

CHAPTER XXVI

MARCH 10TH

Joan Killigrew sat in the little drawing-room of Arwennack. Her mother had gone out, and she felt a little lonely. For more than an hour she had been sitting by the fire with a book in her hand, but she had not turned over a single page; evidently her mind was far away.

Suddenly she gave a start. There was a click of the garden gate, and hasty footsteps on the pathway which led up to the house. She heard the sound of a man's voice in the hall, and a vivid colour came to her cheeks; then she put her hand to her side as though in pain.

"A gentleman to see you, miss," said the servant, who held a tray in her hand on which a card lay.

A minute later Julian Boconnoc stood before her. The eyes of the two met and then her face became pale.

During his journey he had planned what he would say to her, but everything fled at the sight of her.

"You see, I have come," he managed to stammer.

"Yes, won't you sit down?" Commonplace words, but there was that in them which set his heart throbbing.

"I left Birtwhistle this morning. You wonder why I have come?"

She was silent. The words she tried to speak would not be uttered.

"Why have you come?" she managed to say, presently.

"I don't know—yes, I do. I came because I heard you were at home, and then I could not help myself."

"How did you hear I was home?"

"That doesn't matter, does it? I did hear, and after that I could not keep away."

There were no words of greeting, no polite formalities. They would have been out of place. The air was too tense with excitement.

"You remember what I told you under the shadow of the old Alcazar?—remember our parting?"

“Yes.”

“I suppose I was mad then. Perhaps I am mad now, but I cannot help myself. Never for an hour since then have you been altogether out of my mind. It is not quite a year ago, but it seems an eternity. Has it been long to you?”

He did not mean to ask this at all, but the words escaped his lips unheedingly.

“Yes,” she replied, “it has been long to me.”

There was a new look in her eyes as she said this, a look which made Julian’s blood tingle and filled him with strange hopes. And yet nothing was clear to him.

“May I tell you what has happened since we parted?” he asked. “Are you interested? Perhaps it’s not worth the telling. All the same, I would like to tell you. Will you hear me?”

She nodded her head, but did not speak.

During his recital she listened eagerly, but made no comment. When he had finished she drew a deep sigh.

“It’s a humdrum tale, isn’t it?” he concluded. “No thrilling episodes, no exciting adventures, and yet, to me, it has been more exciting than the most thrilling adventure of a novelist’s imagination.”

“And what has been the result of it all?” she asked.

“There has been no result,” was his reply. “I am exactly where I was when I spoke to you in Seville. No, that is not true. What I felt then I feel more deeply now. Every day has added to my convictions, every event has strengthened my purposes.”

“What are your convictions? What are your purposes?”

“My one remaining conviction,” he said, “is that I cannot be my father’s heir. I cannot fulfil his conditions, therefore I must be penniless.”

“And—and you will let all that great fortune—go?”

“I must. I cannot do any other. When we parted you told me to follow my father’s advice, to be true to the truth, whatever it might be; to test everything, to prove everything. That’s what I’ve been trying to do. Because of that my old religious beliefs have gone. All those things which I troubled so much about while I was under Father Fakenham’s influence are empty,

meaningless, absurd. As I told you in Seville, it was an awful blow; it shook my life so that everything came tumbling to the ground; because of that I shall be penniless, homeless.”

The girl looked at him steadily, and as she looked her eyes became humid, her lips tremulous. She said nothing, but it was evident that she understood and felt deeply.

“But Miss Killigrew—Joan,” he went on, “the other thing has remained. Remained! It’s a thousand times stronger than it was when I spoke to you in Seville. The love I had for you then seems as nothing to the love I have for you now.”

For a time silence fell between them, and both seemed afraid to look at each other.

“I know I must seem to you like a poltroon, a—a sort of cad to come to you like this. I have nothing to offer you, and yet I would give you everything. In a few weeks I shall be homeless; but, Joan,” and a new light flashed in his eyes and his voice took on a new tone, “give me hope and I can do anything, everything! I’m sure I can. Not that I shall ever give you a great fortune; I am not a money-making sort; but I will give you a home. Perhaps it’s mean of me to speak to you like this; mean to ask you to . . . to wait for me, to . . . to . . .”

“Don’t, *don’t!*” she pleaded; “as though I should care for *that*.”

The look in her eyes caught Julian’s heart on fire. Hope rose exultant. It seemed to him that the impossible had become possible.

“Joan,” he cried, “do you mean that? I say, don’t mock me. You don’t despise me for speaking to you while I am penniless, and without a prospect in the world?”

“Despise!” and there was a ring of gladness in her voice. “I should have despised you if, for the sake of being rich, you had. . . . But I am proud of you now. Don’t you see how proud I am? Look into my eyes and tell me.”

“The only thing I regret giving up,” said Julian, presently, “is my old home. It seems awfully hard that I should have to leave that. You saw it when you were in Yorkshire, didn’t you?”

“Yes, I saw it; it is a lovely old place; but I should be lost in such a great house, Julian. I’m such a little person, you see.”

“No, it’s the homeliest place in the world, and you would love it. But there—— I say, Joan, tell me again—what you told me just now.”

“I’m not going to feed your vanity any more,” was her reply. “Only . . . I have been hoping and longing for you to come. Why didn’t you come sooner?”

“Oh, if I had only known you wanted me; but, you see, your mother . . .”

“Yes, what of my mother?”

“Why have you acted so strangely? She has been very troubled about you. Won’t you tell me what it means?”

Her eyes hardened, the old look of happy laughter passed away. “No,” she replied, “I can’t tell you that.”

“But why can’t you tell me?”

“I can’t tell you that,” she repeated. “Perhaps—some time—— Julian, you’re going to stay a long time, aren’t you?”

“Until the anniversary of my father’s death. I must be back then.”

“Yes,” she said, like one in deep thought, “you must be back then.”

The days passed like a happy dream. He engaged rooms at the little hotel in Leatherhead so as to be near to her, and every day found him at her side. The winter had not yet gone, and the skies were often grey and cloudy, but Julian thought nothing of this. He forgot everything in the blissful present. He took her long rides over the Surrey hills in the little motor-car by which she had stood when he first saw her. Together they visited numerous little towns in Surrey and Sussex, and every day Julian saw new charms in the girl he loved.

She was no longer the scholarly and somewhat haughty young lady he had seen at Toledo, but just a happy child of nature who revelled in the joy of the present. She possessed a witchery of which he had never dreamt, and so great was her power over him, that for days together he almost forgot the troublous year through which he had passed, and the problems which faced him in the future.

And yet he was not altogether content. Something to which he could not give a name was wanting in his life, and in spite of the happiness which her love gave him, dark clouds rose on his horizon. For one thing, he could not understand her. She never fully took him into her confidence. She seemed to possess some secret which he would never be able to share with her. More than once he referred to her friendship with the Duchess of Cornubia, and of her mother’s anxiety concerning her, but she always evaded his questions. Neither would she speak to him about the things which, in spite of

everything, constantly troubled him. Whenever he had tried to speak of their future, and what he should do when he left Hawkspoint, she refused to listen to him.

Mrs. Killigrew's behaviour to him also puzzled him. That lady was uniformly kind and almost affectionate. Motherlike she was constantly planning pleasant surprises for them, and seemed to rejoice in their engagement, and yet she appeared troubled. She, unlike her daughter, often referred to the conditions of his father's will, yet when he would have talked about them, she evaded them as though she were afraid.

In spite of all these things, however, he was supremely happy, and although he looked forward with dread to the day when he would have to leave Hawkspoint, he painted such bright pictures of his future with Joan, that poverty had no terrors for him.

"You will be back again soon," she whispered, as together they walked the platform of the Leatherhead station, waiting for the train that should take him to London.

"In a few days at most," was his answer. "Do you know, Joan, the thought of leaving Hawkspoint used to be like pulling my heart out, but I scarcely mind it at all now. I shall come back to you."

"Perhaps . . . perhaps," and there was a far-away look in her eyes. . . . "Oh, wouldn't it be glorious if . . ."

"If what?"

"I don't know. But write me often, tell me everything."

The train came in then, and in spite of curious eyes she kissed him affectionately and uttered words of endearment, while he, happy in her love, yet wondering greatly, made his way towards his old home.

Julian Boconnoc sat in his father's chair in the Hawkspoint library.

It was the 10th March, the anniversary of his father's death, and Julian was waiting anxiously for the coming of visitors.

He had written Mr. Coad from Leatherhead, informing him of his intention of being home on the date mentioned, and asking him to make all necessary arrangements. He had heard nothing from Birtwhistle during his absence in the south. Of what had taken place there he knew nothing and, if the truth must be told, cared little; but now even the blissful days he had

spent with Joan Killigrew somehow passed into the background of his life. He had come to the day when his right to remain at Hawkspoint would cease, when he would have to become a stranger to the house in which he had been born.

Sometimes it was difficult for him to realize it. A year before, when he had come home from Oxford on receipt of the news of his father's death, he had looked upon himself as the natural heir of Andrew Boconnoc's wealth. He knew that the old man hated the plans he had made and the convictions he had formed, but he had never dreamt that he would be disinherited because of them. Those convictions had been growing stronger since the first year of his going to Oxford, and he had returned home full of dreams and fancies concerning the use he would make of the great fortune that was going to be his. He had had no knowledge of what was in his father's mind, never dreamt of the coming crisis.

But the crisis had come, and his life had been shaken to its very depths. He had, as he had told Ben Gascoigne, been intellectually brought to his haunches. He had received a tremendous shock, and that shock had, in spite of himself, made him think furiously.

But he had never imagined the outcome of his thinking, never imagined that what he had fancied eternal would pass from him as a dream; yet so it was. A new Julian Boconnoc had taken the place of the old one, and he was there that day to face anew an unknown future.

On his arrival home from Leatherhead a letter from Mr. Coad had awaited him, informing him somewhat of the course of procedure. The three trustees who had been appointed to be in charge of the estate during the year had been summoned. These three trustees were the Reverend Thomas Gascoigne, rector of Birtwhistle, Sir James Winstey, the chairman of one of the largest banks in the country, and Mr. John Greyburn, one of the best-known of the Yorkshire financial magnates. These men, together with Mr. Coad and Ben Gascoigne, who had been responsible for drafting the will, were the chief persons to be present.

The time appointed was six o'clock in the evening, and at half-past five Julian had made his way to the library.

As we have said, Julian was naturally much excited. He had made up his mind that he would soon be homeless; nevertheless, he was full of wonder. What would the sealed document contain? What had his father written or caused to be written?

Although March had come, and the short days were rapidly passing away, the night was overcast, and by six o'clock the room was quite dark. Old Parker had carefully seen to it that the blinds were drawn and that a huge fire was burning in the grate. The old servant gave his young master a nervous glance as he came in to see that everything was in order.

"Mr. Julian," whispered the old man.

"Yes, Parker, what is it?"

"You—you *will* be sensible, won't you?" He almost sobbed out the words, for he knew as well as Julian what the gathering portended.

But Julian did not reply; something in the old servant's tones kept him from speaking.

"Why, sir," went on Parker, "think, if Hawkspoint passed into the hands of strangers, and you . . . you, my old master's only son, were to leave! Surely, sir . . . Ah, there's someone come," for he, as well as Julian, had caught the sound of wheels on the drive.

A minute later Mr. Coad, together with the rector and his son Ben Gascoigne, entered the room. The former carefully carried a black japanned box.

No sooner had they entered than Julian was calm and self-possessed. At any rate, he was host up to the present, and he must act as such. He spoke quietly to the rector and the lawyer, and shook hands with them as though nothing in particular were on foot. To Ben Gascoigne he was quite like the Julian of olden time.

"Ah, Ben," he cried, "glad to see you, old man. Congratulations on being elected captain of the Birtwhistle football team!"

Before Ben had time to reply, two other men were ushered into the room, and it was easy to see, at the first glance, that they were men of importance. Every look and movement suggested their connexion with wide-reaching affairs. One of them, Sir James Winstey, the chairman of the bank, carried a carefully sealed receptacle.

Strange as it may seem, Julian was more calm and self-contained than any of the others. He saw to it that each was comfortably seated, and then waited for them to proceed.

There was an awkward hiatus, however. All of them seemed anxious to postpone the business on which they had come; and presently, after a forced

and stilted discussion on the weather, the state of trade, and the political situation, there was an awkward silence.

This silence was broken by Julian. "Gentlemen," he said, "I beg of you not to be sensitive about proceeding with the business. We all know why we are met together like this, and I suggest that we get to work at once."

Mr. Coad gave Julian an almost grateful look, and then proceeded to unlock the japanned box.

"I fancy," he said, "that we all feel a little strange. Anyhow, the business we have to do is new in my experience; I never had to deal with such a case before. As you all know, the late Andrew Boconnoc died a year ago to-day. Before his death he made a will leaving the main bulk of his property to his only son, on a certain condition. If this condition was agreed to, that property was to pass to his son without further parley. To provide against the contingency of his son not promising to abide by his condition, a sealed document was prepared, containing his further will in the matter. That document was secret. Personally, I do not know what it contains. All I know is that it was prepared and sealed, and placed in the hands of Sir James Winstey," and he looked at that gentleman as he spoke, as if for confirmation.

"Yes," replied Sir James, "what Mr. Coad has said is true. The sealed document was handed to me a year ago, and it was at once placed in the safe in our strong-room in London. I have it here," and he nodded to the receptacle he had brought with him.

"Of course," went on Mr. Coad, "these gentlemen here were appointed as trustees to act until the year, which is up to-day, had elapsed. I think the proper course will be for me to again read the will."

All, with the exception of Julian, nodded as if in assent. He sat rigid in his chair; his every nerve was tense, his every sense keen.

Mr. Coad read the will, read it slowly and deliberately, while the others listened in silence.

"As you will see," he went on, when he had concluded, "the issue is very simple, very plain. If Mr. Julian Boconnoc agrees to the condition laid down, he is heir to the estate. I think we all agree to that."

All gave their assent.

"Then the question resolves itself into this. Can you, Mr. Julian Boconnoc, promise to abide by the condition which the will so clearly sets

forth?”

Julian shook his head. “No,” he replied quietly. “I do not, cannot abide by it.”

Even although the answer, by more than one, at least, was expected, it caused a curious sensation in the hearts of all present. It seemed to them a tremendous thing that this young man should by a single word make himself practically a pauper.

“You have fully considered this, Mr. Julian?” said Sir James Winstey. “I speak as an old friend of your father’s. You are sure you have no doubt whatever?”

“None whatever. I cannot say that I am faithful to the Protestant religion.”

“Then you are a Roman Catholic?”

“No.” His answer was given without hesitation.

“Then we are to assume that you are an Anglo-Catholic?”

“No.” His voice was still firm and decided; he spoke without a suggestion of doubt.

“Pardon me,” said Sir James, “but I do not understand. If you are neither a Roman Catholic nor an Anglo-Catholic, you must be a Protestant.”

“No,” replied Julian. “This is not the time, neither have I the inclination to discuss theology with you, but according to my father’s will and according to the letter which he left me to read after his death, I was urged to re-consider, to re-study everything. My father besought me to test, to prove, everything. His reasons for doing so are plain to me. He believed that those things which he so abhorred would not stand the light of reason and of investigation. He believed that if by testing and proving I was led to give them up I should naturally become a Protestant. But I have not. I have no faith. I have no religion. They killed it.”

Sir James looked at him eagerly. He was an old Scotsman of the Presbyterian order of mind, and tried to see his way out of what seemed an *impasse*.

“Then—then,” he began.

“I beg your pardon, Sir James,” replied Julian, “I do not wish to discuss this with you. I will only say this. I have found it impossible to believe in

Roman-Catholicism, or in what is scarcely removed from it, Anglo-Catholicism, and when I ceased to believe in that, all faith went.”

“Then you do not believe in either God or Christ?”

“Gentlemen, I would not answer that if I were not obliged; but I do not, because I cannot.”

“Then,” interpolated Mr. Coad, “you make no claim to be your father’s heir?”

“I cannot,” replied Julian; “I cannot say I am faithful to the Protestant religion.”

A long, painful silence followed this. More than one would have liked to ask further questions, but no one spoke. It might seem as though a seal were placed upon all their lips.

Presently Mr. Coad spoke again.

“Then, painful as it is to me, and as it is, I am sure, to all who are here, there is nothing for it but to proceed to open the sealed package.”

Without a word Sir James Winstey proceeded to open the receptacle he had brought. A few seconds later a large important-looking document was revealed.

On it were the words, written in plain characters, “TO BE OPENED A YEAR AFTER MY DEATH.” There was a signature to this, written plainly, but in shaking calligraphy, “ANDREW BOCONNOC.”

Amidst deadly silence Sir James broke the seal and opened the envelope, from which he took another envelope, also carefully sealed. On this envelope, also, some words were written which the old banker scanned.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “it seems that we have come here on a fool’s errand.”

“Why?” all asked eagerly.

“See what is written,” and he handed the envelope to Mr. Coad:

“THIS IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL A
FORTNIGHT AFTER A YEAR FROM MY DEATH.
MEANWHILE IT IS MY DESIRE THAT MY SON
JULIAN SHALL REMAIN AT HAWKSPPOINT AS
BEFORE—ANDREW BOCONNOC.”

Again there was a deadly silence after the lawyer had read the words—a silence which was almost painful. It might seem as though the old Yorkshireman, even on his death-bed, were anxious to perpetrate a joke.

“What can be the meaning of it?” asked Sir James.

“I think,” and it was the rector who spoke, “that it was in his heart to give Julian every possible chance.”

“There’s nothing in that,” replied the lawyer. “I grieve to have to say it, but I must. The will is clear and plain. It is explicitly stated that if, within a year from his death, Julian cannot comply with the condition, there is nothing for it but that the terms of the will must be carried out.”

“Yes, but how?” asked Sir James. “All further instructions are contained in this sealed document, and that must not be opened until two weeks more have elapsed. That,” he added, after a mental calculation, “will bring us to the 24th of March. What could have been in his mind? Well, we must meet again, that’s all.”

During all this time Julian did not speak a word. Like the others he was puzzling as to what had been in his father’s thoughts, and in spite of himself he felt that there was a grim humour in the old man’s act. But in that grim humour he saw his father’s love for himself.

It was then that Mr. Greyburn spoke.

“I knew Andrew Boconnoc well, for thirty years,” he said. “A straight man; an honourable man; a man who would follow out his convictions whatever they were. That’s why he did strange things. He was a humorous man, too, was Andrew, in spite of his strong convictions. The will we have heard is a strange will; but it is the will of a far-seeing man, a very far-seeing man. He always had his own way of doings things, had Andrew. Many and many a time he’s done things which to me were freakish and un-understandable; but they always turned out right. The will gave his son a shaking up. Perhaps this document will give us all a shaking up. Perhaps Andrew meant it to. In his way he dearly loved a joke.”

In spite of himself, Julian felt as though Mr. Greyburn spoke the truth. Was there not a kind of grim humour in getting them together to read the document, and then to put them off for a fortnight? The thought relieved the tension of his mind. The fact, too, that it was the intention of his father that he should remain another fortnight in the old home, removed a burden from his mind, and a strange freedom came into his heart.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “it seems to me we can do no more for the present, therefore may I suggest that we cease thinking about business. Meanwhile, may I have the pleasure of inviting you all to dinner.”

CHAPTER XXVII

LINDLEY'S NEWS

When Julian awoke the following morning he felt strangely light-hearted. It seemed to him as though he had a fresh lease of life. Outside in the park the birds were singing, and although winter still held the country in its grip there were signs of the approaching spring. There was a feeling of new life, of resurrection, in the air. Although nothing was certain, a new hope had sprung up in his heart. Besides, that for which he had been longing for nearly a year had come to pass. The woman he had learnt to love, loved him. Even yet he remembered the warm pressure of her lips and her endearing words. Yes, all was not hopeless.

Of course he wondered what his father meant by the postponement, wondered what thoughts possessed him when doing what he did. Was old Mr. Greyburn right? Was there grim humour in it all? Anyhow, he would not despair.

After a cold bath and hastily dressing himself he rushed to the telephone and called up the post office.

“Telegram,” he announced when the call had been put through.

There was a laugh in his voice as he dictated it.

“Joan Killigrew, Arwennack, Leatherhead. Everything postponed. Writing.”

He gave no signature. Joan would know who had sent it.

He rushed out into the open air and ran across the park as though he were without a care. The fortnight's postponement had given him new hope. Why, he did not know. For of course there could be no alteration of the will as far as he was concerned. The year given him for reflection had passed, and he could not obey its conditions. Therefore he was a pauper. Still he was light-hearted. Joan loved him and, in spite of his poverty, had promised to be his wife.

When he returned to the house he saw that Parker was watching him anxiously.

“I hope all is well, sir,” he ventured to whisper. He had been strongly tempted to listen at the library door the evening before, so anxious was he

about his young master's future, but he had refrained. He had also listened eagerly to the conversation during dinner, but had learnt nothing.

"We have to wait another fortnight," Julian thought it well to inform him.

"But you are not going away, sir?" and his voice trembled.

"Not yet, Parker. And mind, I want nothing talked about."

"Certainly not, sir. Trust me. But I do hope . . . you'll be sensible, sir."

Directly after breakfast he wrote a long letter to Joan, and had scarcely finished it when Lindley was announced.

"Forgive me calling, Boconnoc," he said, "but I wanted to see you. I know it's frightfully bad taste on my part, and I would not have come if I could have helped myself."

"Anything the matter?" asked Julian.

"No, but strange things are happening."

"Had trouble with your bishop?"

"I have had a lengthy correspondence with him, but that is not what I'm thinking about. I say, are you staying on here? I know it's no business of mine, and I don't ask you to tell me a word about what happened yesterday. Of course, I have known all along that the year would be up then, and I have wondered what you were going to do. I say, Julian, have you altered your mind? Have you to leave here at once?"

Julian looked at the young clergyman questioningly; somehow the man's face had changed.

"Have you any special reason for asking?" he said.

"I was wondering if you would come and stay with me if you have no better place to go. As you know, I'm a bachelor and I have plenty of room. I want a talk with you badly," he added, "and I should love to have you."

"It's awfully good of you, Lindley," responded Julian, "but I'm going to stay here another fortnight; what will happen after that I don't know."

Lindley gave a sigh as if of relief.

"I expected to find you packing up or something of that sort," he said. "As you're not . . . you're not busy, are you?"

"No, I've nothing special to do; say all you want to say."

“Strange things are happening in the town—wonderful things. Haven’t you heard?”

“I’ve heard nothing. I only got back at four o’clock yesterday afternoon, and since then my mind has been full of other things.”

“Yes, yes, of course. How long were you away?”

“Nearly a month. What’s been on in the town?”

“That’s what I want to talk to you about. You remember the conversation which took place between us here a month ago? I told you my story—told you of the funk I was in.”

Julian nodded.

“I had nearly given up faith, nearly given up everything; and yet all the time I hoped and believed for better things. For months I have been praying for light, for reality, for power.”

Julian smiled a little contemptuously.

“Oh, *that’s* what you want to talk about, is it?”

“Yes, that’s what I want to talk about. There seems very little else worth talking about.”

“Chuck it, old man,” cried Julian. “Come out from the whole business.”

“I can’t,” replied Lindley. “I have been sorely tempted to do that; but I have not been able to. I’m glad I haven’t.”

“Why?”

“After my talk with you,” he replied after a long silence, “I visited all the other ministers of the town, established and non-established; after all, when you get to the roots of things there’s no essential difference between us. Anyhow, I got to know a lot of men whom I didn’t know before. Good fellows they are, too, and mostly earnest and sincere; but I found that they were nearly all where I was. I told them where I stood, what I felt, and I found we were nearly all in the same box. We lacked a great conviction, we lacked reality, and more than all, we lacked power. As we said months ago, the churches, religion, had precious little influence in the town. It looked like a played-out force, something that was dying fast.”

“Well, what are you driving at?” said Julian a little impatiently. “As you may imagine, I am not much interested in these things. I have no faith in

religion. Father Fakenham and . . . and what came to me at Seville killed all that.”

“And are you satisfied, my friend? Does it give you joy to believe that there’s no God behind everything; no God who loves, or who cares? Does it satisfy you to believe that when we die we die like flies?”

“One has to deal with facts, not with sentiment,” was Julian’s reply.

“Just so. That’s what I’m coming to. As I told you, I could not help believing that this faith, this reality, this power existed, only we have lost it. The Apostles had it, holy men throughout all the ages have had it. John Wesley and the early Methodist preachers had it—but we have lost it.”

“Had what?”

“The baptism of power,” replied the young clergyman solemnly. “Anyhow, a dozen or more of us have been meeting at my house for prayer. We have been meeting for months, and we have been praying for certainty, for reality, for power.”

“Well, what has been the result?”

“Just before Christmas we agreed that we ought to have a united mission in the town.”

“Oh, don’t,” pleaded Julian. “One has heard so much about these things; *please* don’t!”

“Wait a minute,” pleaded Lindley. “All this time we went on praying—praying for guidance, praying for a knowledge of what to do—and at length a mission was arranged for in the Industrial Hall, and things have turned out in a most remarkable way. Macintosh, that’s the Presbyterian man here, got a letter about Christmas from an old man in Scotland asking him if he could arrange for him to come and speak to the people in Birtwhistle. He told Macintosh that he knew nothing about Birtwhistle, that in fact it was only a name to him, but that he had a strong desire to come here, and he believed it was the will of God that he should come. None of us, not even Macintosh, had ever heard of this old man.”

Julian smiled contemptuously. “I suppose he’s a converted prize-fighter or something of that sort,” he sneered.

“No, nothing of the sort. He’s an old man—and as chance would have it he is called George Macdonald—who up to a few years ago was a successful merchant in a Scottish town. He retired from business a comparatively rich man and then made up his mind to give his life to working for God. Money

doesn't come into the question at all. He has more than enough. Well, he came to Birtwhistle at the beginning of February, just a month ago, and wonderful things have happened. You have been away and as a consequence have heard nothing of them; but I suppose it's been wonderful, simply wonderful!"

"And you have been to this mission, of course?"

"No, I haven't. You have heard about our bishop . . . an extreme Ritualist, one who hates Dissent and all that sort of thing. It seems that someone told him a garbled story about what was to take place here, and when I wrote to him about it, he practically told me to keep away. That's why I have not been; but I have had constant news—in fact, it began in my own house. You remember McCollough, my general factotum?"

Julian laughed. Of course he remembered McCollough. McCollough was a well-known character in the town and everyone had laughed when Lindley engaged him as a servant. He was known as a thief, a drunkard, a liar, a clever blackguard.

"I engaged him," Lindley explained, "because I determined to reform him. I believed that if I could get him to attend our services and bring him under the influence of the Church I could make a new man of him; and so, in spite of advice on all hands, I took him into my house. I had an awful time with him, and more than once I was almost obliged to turn him adrift, but I had a feeling that if there was any power in Christianity at all, and if there was any reality in Anglo-Catholicism, which at that time I believed in, I should be able to save him. But it was all in vain. He went from bad to worse until I was obliged to sack him. Then just before Christmas my new servant left me, after which he came and pleaded with me again; so I took him back."

Lindley was silent for a time, and then went on: "On the first night of the mission McCollough asked for permission to go to the Industrial Hall. He told me, laughingly, that the reason he wanted to go was because the missionary was called George Macdonald. It seems that years ago he had read one of George Macdonald's, the novelist's, books, and this made him anxious to hear his namesake. Of course I consented. When, about ten o'clock, he returned he told me he was converted. I could not help being sceptical, because McCollough, added to his other notorious qualities, had professed to be an atheist. However, I spoke kindly to him and told him I hoped he would become a changed man."

"Well?" queried Julian as Lindley paused.

“He *is* a changed man,” replied the young clergyman earnestly. “He’s a *new* man. He has not touched a drop of drink since. Oh! you may laugh, but *something* has got hold of him, and for a month he has been not only sober but a saint.”

“A month,” repeated Julian with a sneer. “McCollough a saint!—that’s a bit too much!”

“Oh yes, I know! You sneer, but what has happened to him has happened to hundreds of others. Do you know there have been dozens of cases during this last month where people who had been guilty of cheatery and fraud have stood up in an open meeting and confessed their sins; yes, and made restitution. Perhaps you heard of that famous trial between a man called Brayshaw and another manufacturer by the name of Dixon?”

“Yes, I remember something about it; it was in all the papers.”

“Of course. Dixon accused Brayshaw of defrauding him out of several hundred pounds. Brayshaw denied the charge and they went to law about it. Owing to some technical difficulty Dixon failed to prove his case, and Brayshaw won the trial. As you remember, it was the talk of the town years ago. But do you know that last night Brayshaw stood up in the Industrial Hall and openly confessed what he had done, and said that if Dixon would come to his office this morning he would give him a cheque for the amount; and what is more, he *has* given him the cheque.”

“How do you know?” asked Julian.

“Because I saw Dixon this morning, and he told me.”

“But . . . but that’s nonsense!” protested Julian, only half-believing.

“It’s not nonsense. Why, there have been hundreds of cases during these last weeks of changed lives. Atheists have been led to believe, husbands and wives who have been for years separated, have been brought together again. As I tell you, it’s been the talk of the town. Why, the whole place is changed. Public-houses are comparatively empty and prayer meetings are being held almost everywhere. The ministers of the town tell me that their congregations are doubled and trebled. They speak of it as a kind of Pentecost.”

In spite of himself Julian could not help being impressed. Lindley’s narrative, which I have here recorded in fragmentary form, was, to say the least of it, astounding. Still he was sceptical.

“It seems strange that you should have kept away from it all,” he remarked presently.

“I know I’ve been a coward,” replied Lindley. “It’s what I have been hoping for, longing for, praying for, for months, and yet I kept away; that’s partly why I’ve come to you this morning.”

“How? What have I to do with it?”

“Let’s go together, Julian.”

“What! I go to a revival meeting at the Industrial Hall. No, thank you.”

“But why not? It can do us no harm.”

“No, thank you. I’ve given up all that sort of thing. You know why.”

Lindley stayed at Hawkspoint for some time and pleaded with Julian to go with him to the Industrial Hall that night. In this, however, he was unsuccessful. For one thing he said he believed it was all a matter of hocus-pocus, and for another his mind was too full of other things to care about what he looked upon as a mere chimera.

Three days later he received a letter from Joan Killigrew. Evidently she was interested in his report of the meeting of the trustees, and was much intrigued at what was written on the sealed envelope. The letter delighted his heart. It was all that an ardent young lover could desire. And yet it was not the endearing parts of the letter which influenced him most.

“Julian, my dear,” she said in the concluding paragraph, “I have a feeling that all is going to be well. How, I do not know? I shall have much to tell you when we meet again, something that will surprise you. It may anger you. But do not fear. Last night, as I knelt by my bedside praying for you, a great conviction came to me. I cannot put it into words. It was too wonderful. But something told me that all would be well. You do not believe in God. I do, and I am sure God spoke to me. You may be poor, you may be driven away from your home, but God has not forsaken you. Write to me often, beloved, but do not come to see me again until the sealed document is opened.”

The first time Julian went into the town he found that Lindley had told him less than the truth when he said that Birtwhistle was greatly moved. On every hand he saw groups of men and women talking about what they called a “wonderful visitation.” It seemed to him that the people were hushed and solemnized, and yet there was a light in many eyes which he had never seen before. There was still gay laughter and homely jests, but the atmosphere

everywhere was different. For the first time since he had known it, Birtwhistle seemed to care more for the singing of hymns than for ribald songs, more for religion than for the news of the latest horse race.

As he passed along the streets he met people he had known from childhood who greeted him with, as he thought, new tones in their voices. More than one came and spoke to him.

“Ay, Mester Julian, things have happened at Hanover since you wur there. It’s noan like the same place.”

It was Jonah Beswick, the old man who had spoken to him when he went to one of the Methodist chapels.

“How is that, Jonah?” he asked. He was still in a sceptical mood.

“I can noan put it into words, Mester Julian, but when I go t’ t’ chapel now I feel something like Moses must have felt when he ’eerd God saying, ‘Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.’ Aye, it’s been wonderful!”

A minute later he met old Aaron Seccombe, a well-known atheist in the town. Aaron had been for a long time a leader of the Secular Society, and had more than once stood in Birtwhistle Market Place challenging God, if there were a God, to strike him dead. Many had declared that Aaron ought to be imprisoned for blasphemy.

Aaron stopped as he saw Julian, and made his way towards him.

“Young Mester,” he said in his broad dialect, “ ’appen you have ’eerd on me? I’m Aaron Seccombe.”

“Yes, I have heard of you.”

“Noan to my good, I reckon?”

“Not much, I’m afraid.”

“I wur a drunkard, Mester, an evil liver, an atheist, and I have summat to say to you. It’s been said i’ this town that yo’ve given up religion, given up believing in God. Is that true?”

“I’d rather not discuss it,” replied Julian.

“Mester,” said Aaron solemnly, “I have been a fool, and worse nor a fool. There *is* a God. I *know* it; and the knowledge has made a new man of me. Good afternoon, young Mester.”

Yes, it was very strange. Something was happening, but what it was he could not tell.

Presently he found his way to the rectory. He had not seen Mr. Gascoigne since they had met at Hawkspoint a few nights before, and he wanted to chat with him about what had taken place there. He found the rector in his study, but not a word was mentioned about the sealed document.

“Have you been to the Industrial Hall, Julian?” asked the rector.

Julian shook his head.

“I wish you would go.”

“No, thank you.”

“Something wonderful is happening in Birtwhistle, Julian. I have just been reading the first chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. History is repeating itself, my boy.”

“Would you mind if we don’t discuss that, rector,” and he spoke a little bitterly. “Of course I have heard of what has taken place in the town; but it doesn’t appeal to me. I have had enough of unhealthy excitement these last few years, and I have seen the hollowness of the whole business. The Roman Catholics plan their visits to Lourdes, and other so-called holy places, where they talk about their visitations and wonderful cures. The Anglo-Catholics are even now planning pilgrimages to what they call holy places, while you Protestants are all agog with your mission. But it’s only a different version of the same tune to me. It’s all a mockery, sir.”

“This isn’t a mockery, Julian. I wish you would go and see for yourself.”

But Julian laughed bitterly and declined.

“Don’t think, my lad,” urged the rector, “that because you have known falsehood there is no truth. There is eternal truth somewhere. It’s for us to find it.”

After dinner that night Julian retired alone to the library at Hawkspoint, and sat in his father’s chair. In spite of everything his visit to the town had influenced him, and then, as he again read Joan Killigrew’s letter the impression deepened.

“What does she mean, I wonder?” he asked himself. “What is this wonderful something which she hints at?”

He went to the safe and took out the letter which his father had written him more than a year before. He knew every word of it, but he wanted to read it again.

“Test everything, prove everything,” the old man had urged him. Well, he had tested, he had proved, with the result that he had cast off the faith in which he had believed as though it were an old glove. This gospel of priestcraft, of miracle-mongering . . . what was it worth? Bread and wine turned into the actual body and blood of the Son of God! It was monstrous! It was blasphemous! The hollowness, the evil of it, had come to him as he stood there in the old Seville Cathedral, and he was done with it for ever. Christianity, religion in all its many forms, was only a figment of man’s ignorance and superstition.

He sat for a long time thinking. His walk had made him a little tired, and the warmth of the room was making him somnolent. Little by little the articles of furniture by which he was surrounded became less and less real; he knew he was falling asleep.

Did he fall asleep? And was what came to him a dream? He asked himself this question many a time afterwards, but could find no answer to it. He only knew that as he sat, he thought both his father and mother came to him and stood by his side. His mother was young and beautiful as he had seen her in the pictures of her which his father had so carefully cherished. In her eyes was a look of ineffable tenderness. On her lips was a smile of infinite happiness. Near her stood his father, the tall, stalwart, vigorous old man he knew and remembered so well. Neither of them spoke, but he knew he would never forget the look on their faces. Yes, there was humour, a grim humour in old Andrew Boconnoc’s eyes. He saw them twinkle as though he were enjoying a joke. But there was more than that. There was a great tenderness, a great love expressed in them.

It was all very strange, and yet not strange. Everything was natural and just as it ought to be. Both of them looked at him steadily and seemed to be trying to say something. What, he could not tell, but he was sure they loved him, loved him with a wondrous love. Presently they seemed to be fading out of his sight, but before they were quite gone he thought they spoke.

“Look upward, my boy—look upward!” they said, and they were gone.

Yes, it was only a dream, a dream which was the outcome of sitting in his father’s chair, of reading his letter, and of reading Joan Killigrew’s letter, as well as his experiences that afternoon.

But it was all very wonderful.

The next day he was as sceptical as ever, nevertheless curiosity possessed him. He thought he would like to go to the mission. As Lindley had said, it could do him no harm, and he had nothing particular on hand.

The feeling grew on him, grew so strong that at length it became an almost overwhelming desire.

He went to the telephone and called up Lindley.

“I have altered my mind about going to that mission, Lindley,” he said. “If you are not engaged to-night, I would be glad if you would come up here to an early meal and we will go together.”

“Impossible to-night, Boconnoc,” was Lindley’s reply. “Also to-morrow night, but the night after I would love to go. Shall we settle it for then?”

“Agreed,” he replied. All the same, he was disappointed at having to wait.

He had scarcely hung up the receiver when Parker brought him a telegram. It was from young Harding, the American he had met in Spain.

“Just arrived in Liverpool,” he read. “Am coming to your place this evening in the hope of finding you.”

“That’s good!” Julian exclaimed.

CHAPTER XXVIII

PENTECOST

There is no need to describe the meeting of the two young men, or to tell at length of what they said to each other. Harding informed him that it had been his full intention to come to England soon after their parting in Switzerland, but just as he was on the point of coming he had received a cable from home urging him to return immediately. Now, having been ordered to England on business, he had determined to visit Julian first thing.

Harding was vastly interested in hearing of Julian's experiences, but his interest in his financial whereabouts was as nothing compared with the excitement he manifested when told of what was going on in the town.

"Julian," said Harding, "I'm not sceptical like you. I pay little or no attention to the millinery of religion. All this talk about the infallibility of the Pope, about priestcraft, Apostolical Succession, Vestments, Worship of the Virgin, Confession, Absolution by man, Purgatory, and Masses, is so much hot-air to me. *Those things are only the tricks of men to take the place of religion, when real religion has died out.* But, mind you, real religion is the greatest thing in the world, and if ever there was a country that needed it, it's America. We have largely lost the true God, and we have created a god of our own, and that god is called the Almighty Dollar. As a consequence we are becoming a nation of materialists. 'Having a good time' is the great thing which millions of Americans are striving after, and as a consequence the nation as a whole is degenerating. I'd like to go to this mission, Julian."

It came to pass, therefore, that on the night but one following Harding's coming, Lindley came up to an early dinner, and afterwards the three young men made their way to the Industrial Hall. They got there half an hour before the time announced, but even then the place was already full, and it was with difficulty that they squeezed their way into seats at the back part of the hall.

Some three thousand people were present, but there was no noise. No organ was played, and there was no singing. The vast concourse of people did not manifest any excitement. They sat subdued, expectant. Apparently more than half of them were praying. Occasionally there was a sound as of a stifled sob, otherwise the great hall was in silence.

Julian was not much impressed. Naturally he was interested to see such a vast concourse of people drawn together without any apparent reason; but that was all. Both Lindley and Harding, however, watched with wondering eyes.

Precisely at half-past seven an old man came quietly on to the platform. Tall, stalwart, upright, and broad of shoulder, he was a striking-looking figure; indeed, as many had remarked concerning him, he might be George Macdonald the novelist come to life again. He wore a long patriarchal beard, while his grey hair was allowed to grow longer than was ordinary. Julian, who years before had read and enjoyed George Macdonald's novels, and whose photograph was in the Hawkspoint library, was particularly struck by the likeness between the two.

"Shall we pray, friends?" said the old man, whose voice, although but little heightened, reached every corner of the building.

Immediately three thousand heads were bowed in silence.

He did not appear, in the ordinary sense of the word, to be praying. He was simply talking with God. All over the great assemblage, people were conscious that God was the greatest reality in his life, and that God was listening to him. There was only one thing that was remarkable in what he uttered in his prayer.

"Lord," he said, "I have been told by a man in this town that his son's heart is set to do evil, that his purpose is to commit a great wrong, to take away a young girl from her home to-night and to ruin her life. If it be Thy will, may his purpose come to naught and may he be brought here that he may be born of Thy Spirit." From the great audience rose a murmured "Amen."

Immediately afterwards he opened a hymn-book and gave out a well-known hymn:

"Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high."

Julian had always been susceptible to singing and, as three thousand voices joined in the well-known tune associated with this hymn, he could not help being influenced.

"There is power, a strange power," he reflected. "Yet, after all, it can be easily explained. It's only the influence of three thousand people met

together with a dominant thought in their minds.”

Lindley, however, was looking towards the old preacher with a wonderful light in his eyes, and his lips were quivering. Harding made no sign whatever.

Presently the old clergyman began to preach. No, I am wrong there. He did not try to preach. He simply read two passages of Scripture and began to talk about them. One passage was from St. John’s Gospel:

“Jesus answered and said unto them: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. . . . The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

The other passage was from the Acts of the Apostles:

“And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power, but ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.”

As I have said, his address could not be called preaching at all. Many a theological student in his first year at college would have declared his exegesis to be utterly faulty, would have said that the construction of the discourse was altogether wrong, that as a sermon it was a failure. He was no orator either. There were no purple passages, no flashes of eloquence, no peroration. It was simply the simple talk of a man who was conscious of God’s presence, and who, as a consequence, uttered words of deep wisdom. In one sense the whole service did not seem like a religious service at all. But *something* which no one could explain, some power which no one could define, was there.

People of all classes were in the hall. Many Roman Catholics, even in spite of the commands of their priests, had come. High Church people were there, who delighted in ceremonial and ornate services. But no one felt the need of these things. There was no priest standing at an altar. No one wanted one. There was no incense, no gaudy ritual. It would have been out of place. But God was there.

Once the old man stopped in his address.

“My friends,” he said, “Christ is fulfilling His promise here, and now. ‘Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.’ That power is being realized, the Holy Spirit of God is here.”

Uttered under some circumstances, this might have seemed like blasphemy, but now it was the natural corollary of what had taken place.

“And now,” said the old Scotchman, when he had finished his address, “let us all kneel down and pray again. Pray that those who have lived in darkness may see the great light. Pray that those whose minds and hearts have been encased by unbelief may know the great truth of God. Pray that the lives which have been paralysed may throb with life. Pray that we may all be born again of the Spirit.”

Julian will never forget that hour. Nothing seemed to happen, yet everything happened. Explain it he could not. It was too wonderful for explanation. Neither had he any desire to explain. All he knew was that the ceremonies of death were broken away from his being, that he felt a new life. It was something beyond argument, beyond philosophy. He knew that hitherto God had not entered his life. Now He had. But he did not try to analyse. He did not try to understand. Doubt had no place in his being. He was born again. How long he knelt with the others he did not know. It did not matter. The great consciousness that God had revealed Himself, the absolute certainty that Christ was no theological myth around which the dogmas of centuries had been circling, but a great Living, Personal Presence, was overwhelming. Yes, He *was* nearer to him than breathing, closer than hands or feet.

Then he was startled, as all that vast concourse of people were startled.

“My son is here!” he heard someone cry aloud.

Immediately afterwards a young man came on to the platform. He was well-dressed, and evidently belonged to the educated, well-to-do class. He was greatly excited. His hands were clenched, his face was pale as death, his eyes shone like fire. He looked as if he would speak, and three thousand people waited in silence.

“Speak, my son,” said the old Scotchman.

“Why should I speak?” he said hoarsely. “I’m here because I can’t help myself. To-night I was on my way to commit a great sin. I had persuaded a simple girl to live with me in sin. Regardless of her happiness, regardless of her ruin, I had made up my mind to satisfy my own desires. I had nearly reached the place where we had arranged to meet, when something stopped me. I heard a voice: ‘You must go no further. This thing is sin, damnable sin, and you must not commit it.’ I can’t tell what happened then, except that I

prayed this young girl's forgiveness, and then I felt that I must come here, and I have come. That's all . . . except that I want to be a new man."

"Will you walk up to Hawkpoint with us, Lindley?" asked Julian an hour later, as with Harding he stood in the street outside the Industrial Hall.

"Yes," replied Lindley, "I'll be glad to."

Not a word did the three young men speak while they walked to Hawkpoint. Each had much to say, and yet not one of them could say anything. During their journey they passed by many groups who were discussing what took place that night, discussing the wonder of everything, and how it was affecting the town; but not one of them spoke. It might seem as though the Spirit of silence had sealed their lips.

When they reached the house Julian led the way into the library. He had constantly used this room in preference to any other. Perhaps it was the associations of the past which led him to it so often. When each had drawn his chair before the fire they looked at each other expectantly.

"Holy Mike!" ejaculated Harding.

Under other circumstances they would have laughed at such an expletive, but to-night there seemed nothing wrong about it. Harding had used the Americanism to express his great wonder, and that was all.

"Julian," said Lindley quietly, and there was a mighty conviction in his every tone, "I shall be able to preach now. *I have found reality.*"

Julian uttered no word. The wonder of the night was still upon him.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," quoted Lindley. "There's nothing more to be said about it, my friend. It is beyond the explanation of man."

"Thank God, it is."

"Then you believe in God?"

"I don't know that I *believe* in anything. I'm not able to formulate my thoughts. Everything is too wonderful. I am like the young man in the New Testament, 'One thing I *know*, whereas I was blind, now I see.'"

"And the wonderful thing is," went on Lindley, "that the human element comes so little into it. Macdonald is no preacher. There has been little or no advertising. Practically all the ordinary machinery has been dispensed with,

and yet we have seen—what we have seen. But that’s not all. This—whatever it is—is not confined to the meetings at the hall. It’s *everywhere!* There’s a new atmosphere in the town. People’s thoughts, conceptions, ideals, have been uplifted. Besides, except in the case of the Roman Catholics, it’s broken down every particle of sacerdotal distinction. You know how it was in the old days. The Episcopalian parson held himself to be of a somewhat better class than the Presbyterian, and the Presbyterian slightly looked down upon the Congregationalist, and the Congregationalist regarded himself as more intellectual than the Methodist, and certainly of a higher type of mentality than the Baptist; and so on, and so on. Then, in spite of everything, there was a tremendous line of cleavage between the Established Church and the Free Churches. *That’s all gone!* There has been no argument about it, no discussion, it has simply meant that these paltry distinctions have disappeared. As you know, I and hosts of others were troubled about Orders. The Episcopalians had doubts about the validity of Nonconformists’ Orders. *It’s all gone!* It’s as though a June sun burst upon an icebound earth. The revival inside the churches has been far more remarkable than the revival outside. Do you know what happened at the Town Hall to-day?”

Julian shook his head.

“The Town Council held its meeting. But, before proceeding with its ordinary business, the Mayor, who is a Unitarian, suggested that all the members of the Council should spend a few minutes in prayer. Think of it! They *did, too!* And the result of it was that the great business of the morning was not merely road-making and new tram-lines, but how the poor could be helped and how work could be found for the unemployed. It’s like no other revival I ever heard of.”

“Great Moses!” burst out Harding, “we want this kind of thing in the States.”

“I pray God it may sweep all over *this* country,” said Lindley fervently.

“If my father had only lived to see it!” said Julian with a quivering sigh.

“Ay, if he had!” assented Lindley. “He was fearful of the spell of Romanism. He hated the materialism which Romanism always means. He feared the intellectual bondage which lies at the heart of it; and he was right. But he went the wrong way to kill it.”

“How?” asked Julian.

“He thought that the way to kill Romanism was by denouncing its errors, its falsehood—by fighting it, by opposing it in every fashion.”

“But wasn’t he right?”

“Only partly. Rome has a great deal of truth in it, but the truth has been choked by lies, *and it’s only by the birth of a new life that the lies die*. The reason why Ritualism—Anglo-Catholicism—has grown in the Church of England has been because we have lost spiritual life. If a movement such as we have here were felt all over the country, Ritualism and all that kind of thing would disappear like the mists of a June morning. Give people reality, and the unreality ceases to have meaning.”

Another long silence fell between them; each man seemed overwhelmed by his own thoughts.

“I had realized something for weeks,” went on Lindley presently; “I felt it everywhere, and yet the full light had not dawned upon me. I was like the man in the Scriptures, I was not far from the Kingdom of God. But to-night it came. *Thank God, it came!*”

“Say, Julian, it seems a kind of pity, doesn’t it, that this great thing did not come to you before? If it had, you would have been able to say that you could fulfil the conditions of your father’s will—that you were a faithful Protestant.”

“Faithful Protestant,” repeated Julian. “I don’t know whether I am a Protestant or not. That doesn’t seem to matter. I’m afraid I could not subscribe to many of the creeds which men have invented. It doesn’t seem to me to be a question of creeds. I don’t know whether I could be a member of any church, for that matter. This is bigger than all churches. It’s as big as the love of God.”

“That’s the beauty of it,” cried Lindley. “It’s a great *spiritual* movement, and all the barriers of man are falling down before it. Oh, I wish it were Sunday to-morrow!”

“Why?”

“I want to preach, man! I want to tell the world what has come to me. In spite of what I told you months ago, I have often had a sort of sneaking desire for the trappings of Rome; but now all that kind of thing is as nothing, simply nothing. They make no more difference than the kind of buttons that a man may wear on his coat. ‘Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty!’ Man alive”—and he gave a great laugh as he continued—“what

would it mean to the world if the Pope and all the other church dignitaries, Protestant as well as Catholic, were really converted!"

It was three o'clock in the morning before the young men separated.

They had gone together out into the open air, and Julian and Harding were walking bareheaded down the drive.

Lindley seemed the most excited of the three. He had been talking of the plans he had in his mind; of what he meant to do in order to spread the great movement which had begun in Birtwhistle.

"It's the great thing needed! The—great—thing! The country is given over to materialism. Everyone seems to be trying to play a game of grab. Employers are fighting against workmen, trades' unions are fighting against employers. On every hand the Devil seems to be stirring up strife. Meanwhile there is unemployment, bitterness, devilry. There is a spirit of unrest everywhere. Godlessness marches triumphant. And the churches seem powerless. As a consequence they are resorting to all sorts of artificial means. In the Church of England thousands of fellows, because they lack the real thing, have resorted to sacerdotalism, vestments, priestcraft, and all sorts of unnatural trappings, while Nonconformists have put their trust in big preachers. But if we all had the real thing! If we were all baptized with power! Think of it, my dear chap, think of it!"

"And why not?" interposed Harding.

"Yes, why not? Why, fancy, there are seventeen thousand clergymen in the Church of England—there used to be twenty-two thousand, but there has been a big slump through lack of candidates. I suppose there are fourteen thousand ministers in the Free Churches, and perhaps twice as many lay preachers. Supposing we had all entered into this great revival! Do you remember those lines of Blake, Julian?"

"What lines?"

"Those called 'Jerusalem'—

'I will not cease from mental strife,
Nor shall the sword sleep in my hand,
Till I have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.'

"Suppose—suppose——"

"My God!" cried Julian fervently.

Julian was very silent as he and Harding walked back to the house. Lindley had told them what he meant to do in the future; while the young American, with characteristic fervour, had declared what was his purpose when he returned to the States; but Julian said nothing. He remembered how, the year before, his dream had been to employ all the wealth he hoped to inherit from his father, in bringing back Romanism to England. *That had all gone now.* He had no longer any hopes or prospects of being a rich man; but he determined that he would devote all the powers he possessed to spreading the Kingdom of God, which he knew was the one hope of the world.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE SEALED DOCUMENT

The evening of the 24th March had come, and again several men had gathered in the library at Hawkspoint. Mr. Gascoigne had arrived early, and was quickly followed by Ben, who had accompanied Mr. Coad. Sir James Winstey had also travelled from London to be present, while Mr. John Greyburn had come from a distant part of Yorkshire as had been arranged. Cyrus P. Harding was also there—Julian had asked him as a special favour to be present; while another man, whom Julian had never seen before, put in an appearance.

“I expected you a fortnight ago, Barraclough,” Mr. Coad declared when shaking hands with him.

“I’m not the one to waste time,” replied Mr. Barraclough, who was a well-known solicitor in Sheffield.

“What do you mean by that? You have always done the legal work for the Sheffield part of the estate.”

“Ay,” replied the lawyer, “I know that; but I didn’t think it worth while to come. You see,” he added, “I was present when the sealed document was drawn up, and I knew all about it.”

“You knew all about it!” cried Sir James Winstey.

“Ay, I knew all about it.”

“But why didn’t you tell me?” asked Mr. Coad.

“Because I’m one who believes in holding his tongue,” replied the old Yorkshireman. “There has been too much blabbing about this will already. Well, are we ready, gentlemen? I want to catch the late train back to Sheffield.”

Again a spirit of excitement was in the air; each wondered what the sealed document contained.

“I take it,” said Mr. Coad presently, “that there’s no need for me to read the will again?”

“Not the slightest,” replied Sir James Winstey, to which both Mr. Greyburn and Mr. Barraclough nodded their assent.

“You have the document, Sir James?”

“Yes,” replied the Baronet. “I took it back to London with me, and safely locked it up. Here it is.”

All eyes were eagerly turned towards the envelope, on which were written the words: “THIS IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL A FORTNIGHT AFTER A YEAR FROM MY DEATH. MEANWHILE IT IS MY DESIRE THAT MY SON JULIAN SHALL REMAIN AT HAWKSPPOINT AS BEFORE.—ANDREW BOCONNOC.”

“I wrote that,” said Mr. Barraclough, who gave a low chuckle as he spoke.

“At the late Andrew Boconnoc’s dictation?” asked Sir James.

“Aye, at his dictation.” And again he laughed.

“You seem merry.”

“I was only thinking. My old friend Andrew Boconnoc was always doing unexpected things. Hadn’t you better open it, Sir James?”

“Is it your will, gentlemen?”

There was a general nod of assent from all except Julian and Harding. Harding’s interest was, of course, because of the affection which had come to him for his friend; whereas Julian had become too much engrossed in what was going on to make any sign whatever. Of course he was tremendously excited. He felt that the whole of his worldly future depended on the revelations of the next few minutes.

Sir James Winstey broke the seal amidst dead silence. All watched him eagerly except Mr. Barraclough, who lay back in his chair with a grim smile upon his lips.

No one seemed to breathe while Sir James pulled out and unfolded the contents of the envelope.

“It’s not long, anyhow,” ejaculated Sir James excitedly.

“Read it aloud,” cried Mr. Coad eagerly, who watched the banker while he silently perused the document.

Sir James seemed to enjoy the tensy of feeling which prevailed. Before obeying Mr. Coad’s request he perused the document to the last word. Then, deliberately wiping his glasses, he turned to Mr. Barraclough.

“You drew this up?”

“Aye—in a way.”

“Then it will not be news to you?”

“No.” And again the old solicitor chuckled like one enjoying himself.

“This is the document,” said Sir James, again replacing his glasses: “February 18th, 19—. I have just made my will, and have left the main bulk of my property to my only son, Julian, on certain conditions. Those conditions are that he shall be faithful to the Protestant religion, and that not one penny of my money shall go to Roman-Catholicism or to what I regard as worse, that bastard thing called Anglo-Catholicism. I have done this for a purpose. My son Julian is bitten by the microbe of Romanism, and I want to save him from ruining his life, and from devoting any part of my estate to the extension of what I believe to be an evil system. I have also stipulated that the will shall not take effect until one year after my death, and that if at the end of the year he still persists in holding fast to his present beliefs my property shall be disposed of as shall be herein declared, and which shall not be read until the year is completed.

“‘This, then, is my decision. I have decided to withdraw the conditions I have made in my will. So great is my faith in my son’s commonsense, and in his affection for the memory of his mother as well as for myself, that I cannot believe he will close his eyes to the truth. I cannot conceive that the son of Andrew and Joan Boconnoc can remain enslaved by the chains of Rome. All the same, if he does remain a Romanist, believing all the time that he will be a pauper by so doing, it will show that he is at least sincere and conscientious, and because I believe that sincerity and faithfulness to conviction are among the greatest things on earth, he will still be my heir whatever may be his beliefs.’”

Sir James paused here and looked around. All were listening in intense wonderment and excitement, with the exception of Mr. Barraclough. He was still sitting back in his chair with a smile upon his lips.

“Is that all?” asked Mr. Coad.

“No, that is not all.

“‘I further desire that my son Julian shall seek the acquaintance of Miss Joan Killigrew, daughter of Mrs. Mary Killigrew, of Arwennack, near Leatherhead, Surrey, and I would urge him, if his affections are not already settled elsewhere, to seek to make her his wife. She is a sweet, good girl, and I am sure would make him happy. If, however, this does not come to pass, I would urge him to give her half of what he may find himself the

possessor of. I do not lay this upon him as a command, neither will he be in any way legally compelled to do it, but it is my desire. Mrs. Mary Killigrew was for years the loving friend of my dear wife, and I know that no purer or better woman lives in this world.’

“The document concludes as follows:—

“ ‘I have done all this, as I have before stated, because I love my son like my own life. I desire beyond all words to save him from the dangers which beset him, and I pray God, who gave His Son Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, to lead him into truth and happiness.’ ”

Julian listened like one in a dream. He had scarcely dared to breathe during the whole of the reading, and when at length Sir James concluded, he only drew a deep quivering breath.

Then for the first time old John Greyburn spoke.

“I knew nothing of this,” he said; “but I knew my old friend Andrew Boconnoc. A more far-sighted man never lived. Aye, and he did love a joke too!”

“So then,” and Mr. Coad spoke in excited tones, “you are your father’s heir after all, Julian! You possess everything! Allow me to be the first to congratulate you. This makes all the difference. Even although, as you said a fortnight ago, you do not believe in God or in any form of religion, you . . .”

“But I *do* believe in God,” replied Julian. “Since a fortnight ago everything has changed—*everything!*”

“But you are not a Roman Catholic?”

“No—not that, thank God,” replied the young man fervently.

“Then—then——”

“Will you be silent for a little while?” said the young man. “This is so unexpected, so utterly wonderful, that I can’t think clearly. I can’t quite grasp it.”

“Grasp it! It’s easy enough to grasp,” laughed the lawyer. “You are one of the richest men in England, Julian. Everything is in order. I have seen to that, and you can now——”

Julian held up his hand. “No,” he replied. “This is not my money. It’s only left me on trust, a great trust.”

“A trust! For whom?”

“For God,” replied Julian.

“I always said that Andrew Boconnoc was the most far-seeing man I ever knew,” said Mr. Greyburn again. “He did strange things, but he was generally in the right.”

“Still, I do not understand this—about Miss Killigrew,” asserted Mr. Coad. “Did he ever speak to you about her, Julian?”

“Never,” replied Julian, and for the first time during the evening he laughed.

“Did you know of her existence?”

“No.”

Again there was a silence, broken at length by Sir James Winstey.

“It’s a strange request,” he remarked as he again read the document. “Half his fortune. Why——” He looked at Julian and saw that his eyes were shining.

“It’s all right, gentlemen,” and he laughed again, “I have seen Miss Joan Killigrew. She has promised to be my wife!”

All were so astonished that there was another silence.

“I first saw her outside the park wall,” went on Julian. “It was only a day or two after my father’s funeral. I met her by chance, or what seemed chance, and I spoke to her.”

“And did you know her name? Forgive me for asking, but—it all seems so wonderful.”

“No, I did not know her name.”

“And she did not tell you who she was?”

“No. But I found out that she was going to Spain—to Toledo; so I went there too. It was there I first learnt her name.”

“And of course you knew nothing of this?”

“Nothing. How could I? We became engaged about a month ago,” he added.

“What a remarkable coincidence!”

“It was more than a coincidence.”

“I know that Mr. Andrew Boconnoc went to visit someone south a few months before he died,” remarked Mr. Coad like one trying to recall something. “He told me he had been to visit a friend of his wife. Now I come to think of it, I saw two ladies at the funeral whom I did not know. They were with the Ashtons of Moor Park. I remember meeting Mr. Ashton next day, and he told me that two ladies from near London, who had known Andrew Boconnoc, had come to the funeral. He told me their name, too, but I had forgotten it until now. Yes, Killigrew, that was the name. I remember him saying that it was one of the oldest Cornish names. Isn’t it wonderful that it should have turned out like this?”

“Andrew Boconnoc was the most far-seeing man I ever knew,” declared Mr. Greyburn again. “Aye, he did strange things; but he was nearly always right.”

“Did you know Miss Killigrew?” asked Mr. Coad, turning to Mr. Barraclough.

“Nay,” replied the lawyer, “I did not know her, but I’ve heard Andrew Boconnoc speak of her as the finest lass he had ever met. I believe at one time he had it in his mind to give everything to her if Mr. Julian insisted on his Romanist falderals. He said as much to me in my office.”

“Was anyone with you at the time?” asked Sir James Winstey. He might have had some special reason for asking.

“Nay, I don’t think so, but I’m not sure. I had a clerk at the time that I had to sack for listening at doors.”

“And did this old clerk know anything of what was contained in the sealed document?”

“Nay, he knew nothing of that. I wrote it down myself at Andrew’s dictation and I got it signed and witnessed.”

“Aye, but Andrew was a far-seeing man,” old Mr. Greyburn repeated again. “I always said so, and I shall always stand by it.”

“Yes,” assented Mr. Gascoigne, who spoke almost for the first time, “as matters have turned out he seemed not only to have left his son a great fortune but also a wife. I suppose you’ll be off to Surrey at once, Julian?”

“First thing to-morrow morning,” laughed the young man.

“Nay, you’ll do nowt o’ t’sort,” cried Mr. Barraclough, lapsing for the first time into broad Yorkshire.

“No, indeed you won’t,” assented Mr. Coad. “Everything has been held in abeyance until to-day, and now there are thousands of things you’ll have to attend to. A man doesn’t come into a great fortune like yours without having to work hard. As a consequence you’ll be up to the neck in business for the next month.”

“That he will,” insisted Mr. Barraclough. “There will be no time for courting, or love-making, or anything of that sort for many a long week.”

“I’ll see that there shall be,” laughed Julian.

My work is nearly done now. Those who have had interest enough to follow the course of Julian’s life since the day of his father’s funeral, will scarcely need to be told that early on the following morning he made his way with all speed to Arwennack.

“The most wonderful things in the world have happened!” he almost shouted; after which he told them what had taken place, while the two women listened in eager wonder.

I need only give in barest outline what they told him.

Old Andrew Boconnoc had more or less kept up his friendship with Mrs. Killigrew ever since his wife’s death, and had more than once paid her visits. It was while she was at her cottage in the West Country that he had seen her last, and it was then he had learnt to know and to love Joan.

“I would desire nothing better than that my boy and she should love each other,” he said to Mrs. Killigrew, and then he shook his head sadly.

“That is out of our hands,” replied the mother.

“Yes, it is out of our hands,” repeated Andrew. Then he added slowly, “I shall not live long, Mrs. Killigrew, and I am going to make a new will. I am going to remember Joan in that will. She is the dearest girl I ever knew, and—I shall remember her.”

He told her nothing of his fears about Julian, and nothing of his intention beyond what I have related.

“If ever you meet my boy, I hope you will be kind to him, Joan,” he had said to the girl when they parted.

When Andrew died both went to the funeral, but neither of them knew what had been done. It was because of what Andrew had said to her that the

two went to Spain, and no one was more surprised than Mrs. Killigrew when they met at Toledo.

“I knew those men would never give up their plans about you,” Joan told Julian, “and I was afraid for you.”

“Afraid! For me?”

“Yes. You see, you told me your story in Seville. I was terribly disappointed in you at first. I wanted to like you because of what your father had said—and I couldn’t. You remember what I told you?”

“About my being an Anglo-Catholic?”

“Yes, I felt it was traitorous, disloyal—almost contemptible. Then when I got to know you better I liked you.”

“Only *liked* me?”

“I was not sure. When you told me what had come to you at Seville—and when you said you had given up everything—that you had become an atheist, I was afraid.”

“I don’t understand.”

“I was afraid you were weak, shallow, easily moved one way and another. Afraid that when those men got hold of you again they would make you do what they wanted. That was why——”

“You said what you did—why you turned me down?” laughed Julian.

“I think so. I was not sure of you, and yet—I wanted to tell you what you wanted to hear. I loved you then, but I was not sure of you.”

“And then?” asked Julian.

“While we were at Cannes the Duchess of Cornubia made up to me. I could not understand it. Why should great people seek to be friendly with such an insignificant person as I? Then all the papers published the terms of your father’s will, and I saw that the Duchess and others were tremendously interested. I determined to find out why, for I found out that they were ardent Romanists, and I remembered my conviction that those priests would try to get hold of you again.”

She was silent for a few seconds, and then went on:

“Presently I got to know that these people believed I was to be your father’s heiress if you failed to fulfil his conditions. What reason they had

for this I did not know, but it set me wondering. I determined to know, for I wanted to help you.”

“I’m afraid I don’t follow you,” said Julian, astonished.

“I asked myself why they should be so terribly anxious for me to become a Catholic. Then I remembered what your father had told my mother. He said he meant to remember me in his will. But he hadn’t. Therefore, if he remembered me, it must be in the sealed document. Do you see now?”

“I think I see,” he replied after a long silence.

“Julian,” said the girl, “no doubt they were anxious for me to become a Catholic for my soul’s sake. But they were all the more anxious because they believed I was going to be one of the richest girls in England.”

“Are you sure of that?” asked Julian.

“I took trouble to be sure,” replied the girl. “I wanted to be able to give you proofs if those priests got hold of you again. That was why I told mother nothing. I believe that at one time mother was terribly anxious about me. I was like your father, I wanted to save you. For by this time I was *sure* I loved you.”

“Thank God, I don’t need to be saved in *that* way,” said Julian fervently.

“No.” And there was a look almost of awe in the girl’s eyes. “Oh, Julian, *that* is wonderful!”

“And you’ve no fear for me now?” he asked presently.

“No, I’ve no fear now,” replied Joan, and there was that in her eyes that satisfied him.

“We are going to be married at once,” Julian announced to Mrs. Killigrew later in the evening.

“But, my dear boy——”

“Yes, I know all the objections you want to raise. But, you see, I can’t live without Joan any longer. Added to that, it is imperative that I get back to Hawkspoint immediately. We don’t want a big wedding, do we, Joan? And we want to get home.”

“But it can’t be until three weeks are over. The law demands that.”

“There are such things as special licences, mother,” protested Joan; “and the house is quite ready, isn’t it Julian?”

To this Julian’s answer was eminently satisfactory.

“But where will you be married?” asked Mrs. Killigrew.

“That’s all settled, mother. I’ve already telephoned to Cyrus P. Harding, who is staying at Hawkspoint, and he has promised to see Mr. Gascoigne and Mr. Gray, who was a friend of my father, and they will marry us at Birtwhistle Parish Church. This is Joan’s wish. And we are going to spend our honeymoon at home. Aren’t we, Joan?”

“But it’s—impossible! How can you manage it?”

At length Mrs. Killigrew’s objections were all met, and three days later they motored to King’s Cross and caught the early train to Birtwhistle.

“It doesn’t seem a bit like a wedding,” objected Mrs. Killigrew as they neared the town. “Why, you haven’t even a wedding dress. What will people say?”

“I neither know nor care. We are the happiest people in England, aren’t we, Joan?”

“Won’t I lead you a life!” was her laughing response.

By some means or another the news of the wedding had leaked out and the church was crowded.

“God bless thee, lad,” shouted a rough old Yorkshireman, as after the ceremony was over the two walked down the aisle of the old sanctuary, “aye, and God bless thee, too, lass. Thou’rt rare and bonny, thou art for sure!”

“Welcome home, sir!” old Parker greeted him as the car swept up to the door. “And you too, miss!—I beg your pardon—madam.”

“It’s all right, Parker,” laughed Julian. “It is all right!”

“Say, Julian, have I done everything right?” asked Harding later in the day.

“Topping, Cyrus P. Nothing could be improved on. I’m sorry to have given you so much trouble.”

“Trouble! I was never so happy in my life. And Julian—you’ve been a bit of a hustler; but I’m going to beat you.”

“How, Cyrus P.?”

“It’s a secret yet; but when I got your ’phone message, three evenings ago, I went straight down to the rectory. The rector didn’t happen to be in—but Dinah was.”

“Dinah! You don’t mean to say——”

“Hush! not another word. But matters are progressing favourably—*very* favourably, considering the shortness of the time.”

“And have you spoken to the rector?”

“I’ve done more than that. I’ve cabled to my old dad—it was a long cable and cost me several pounds. I told him of the absolute necessity, seeing I’m going to get married, of starting a branch of the Flying Dutchman motor-car business right here in Birtwhistle.”

“And with what result?” asked the happy but astonished Julian.

“I guess he was considerably surprised,” replied Harding, “but he has great faith in my judgment, and has consented. So now I’m on the look-out for a house. Aren’t I a hustler?”

Made and Printed in Great Britain by
The Greycaine Book Manufacturing Company Limited,
Watford.
50.329

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

[The end of *Andrew Boconnoc's Will—The Story of a Crisis* by Joseph Hocking]