

THE CONVENTIONALISTS

than ever, what she would say if she could know of what had passed at Esher, and of her son's awakening. But then she never would know.

We went down as far as the churchyard gate, through the glorious evening sunshine, seeing the great cool woods above us on our left, fringed with scurrying rabbits—where Algy had dreamed, and the village roofs on our right clustering round the little Norman church. It was all very feudal and opulent and important. A child in a Tam-o'-Shanter, carrying a basket of eggs up to the Great House, stopped and ducked to Mrs. Banister's benignant smile.

At the gate of the churchyard we stood a moment or two in silence. Three yards away rose up an immense white marble cross on which I could see the words "Theodore, beloved son of," and then a fringe of pink roses hid the names of his parents. She looked at it gently and quietly; then she sighed to herself as she turned away. I think she was comparing her two elder sons. Yet, after all, she had nothing much to complain of from the Banister standpoint. Harold was all that could be wished.

I understood well enough by now why it was they had taken it so quietly on the whole, and why they were so indulgent to myself. Even if Algy had never become a Catholic he would have been but a poor master of Crowston, whereas now he had almost atoned for his faith by his departure.

Harold himself made a very pleasant impression on me. He was extremely nice-looking and extremely