

but completely closed. Years rolled away before I had an opportunity of speaking with this young woman again, and that opportunity occurred after the death of her sister, and shortly before she left this city for another part of the country.

During these years she had gone from one extreme to another, not rapidly nor thoughtlessly, but with much mental conflict, and gradually. First, in her new-born zeal for the Roman Catholic faith, she was extreme. She was a complete devotee. The priests of a certain leading chapel, and the system of doctrine and worship of their Church, had perfect mastery over her. Her hatred of Protestantism was intense.—Everything was subordinated to her religious duties—she was ready to sacrifice father, mother, sister, brother, yea herself, for her religion. Every one of these relatives, as she had opportunity, she tried to convert to the faith she had espoused, and often did she say she was certain they would all see their error, as she had done herself. She was much made of by the priests, who in her case remitted the payments in money which are always exacted; for at this time she had no money of her own, and none of her friends would give her any for these purposes. She could sing well, and gave her assistance in the choir. Most devotedly, in fact, did she give every gift of service she possessed.

All her friends stood out against her—not persecuting her, certainly, but discouraging her in every other way. Her father, an elder in one of our churches in Scotland, was all but broken-hearted, and, while all were grieved, some were ashamed of her. She at last resolved to enter a convent, and without introduction presented herself at the door of one of these establishments, as it were, friendless and penniless, asking admittance as a sister. On hearing her story and learning about her connections, she was, with much manifestation of affection and charity, admitted—taken in, that is to say, as a novice, and put in training for the honour of sisterhood. I well remember her sister giving me an account of how this step almost crushed her spirit, and how she went herself to the convent to see her, and if possible to persuade her to return to her friends and her home. But no; she had resolved to shut herself out from the world, and lay her life on the altar. 'Now she had found a home, bright and happy; and the question was not whether she was willing to remain in it, but whether she would be permitted to stay.' And yet it was while living in this institution that her steadfastness began to give way, and new light, or rather the old light, visited her soul. The story of her experience here,

were it fully told, which I am not competent to do, would, I am sure, be perused with interest and profit. One thing, however, is clear, that she was too conscientious, and too clear as to her personal responsibility to God, to be a good Romanist anywhere. Gradually the whole system lost its charm; the spell was broken, and she resolved to return to the world, though not as yet to renounce Romanism, or re-espouse the faith of her youth. That, however, followed; and after years of the most sincere, devout, and, I might add, most unquestioning consecration of mind and life to the Roman Catholic Church, she abandoned it as a monster of imposition and hollowness, all the more hateful for 'the veil it threw over her eyes and the tyranny it exercised over her soul.

It was after this conversion that I saw and conversed with her. It is years ago now, but from notes taken by me at the time in rehearsing some parts of our conversation, I am able to vouch for the accuracy of what I now state, and much more, did space permit. My inquiries bore chiefly on two points, viz., 1st, What induced her to go over to the Church of Rome? and 2nd, What led her to leave it?

#### WHY A ROMANIST?

On the first point her answers were clear and explicit. In substance it was this: she felt she must *do something herself* for her own salvation, and in the Church of Rome she saw she had room for the indulgence of that feeling, which she had not in our Church. To yield to this feeling became a sort of necessity to her existence in this world, and much to her obtaining the life eternal. She must have a religion of works; but she did not see then, as she does now, the difference between works of ours in order to forgiveness of sin, and works as the fruit of pardon through Jesus Christ. This was her prime motive. But, subordinate to this, there were other influences that greatly weighed with her. She liked the show—the outward show of the Roman Catholic worship,—the dresses of the priests, the decorations of the altar, the candles, the incense, the ceremony, the glitter, and all that sort of thing. The apparent earnestness of the worshippers, too, impressed and attracted her. She thought she had never seen anything bordering on this among her Protestant friends; and her idea was, that if she could only attain to such earnestness of soul as she beheld in these people, she would be happy. Another thing, too, that much moved her was the kindness shown to her by Roman Catholics—not the priests only, but the people. Persons of good position took notice of her, and showed in many