

wished to see, and she, little dreaming of his intentions, gave him her own missal.

The autumn leaves were a glory of crimson and gold when the final day at length arrived for the news to be made known, and the Rector should start forth on his unknown pilgrimage. For the last time he stood in his pulpit, looked at his people, wistfully as they came as of old, little thinking what strange news he was to tell them. It came at last—short, pathetic, brotherly. He had loved them, he said ; his happiest days had been spent with them ; and now he only left them at a call that no man but a coward could resist. It was a trial in which God alone could help him ; the ties and affections, the Church and faith of his youth and manhood must be given up. His very kith and kin would now look on him as one unworthy of their name and race. Hard things would be said ; but he could not blame, where he himself had blamed. Sometimes it seemed as if the cross were too great, but the words of our Lord were emphatic—“ He that loveth father or mother more than Me, the same is not worthy of Me.” The congregation were in tears ; they could not doubt his sincerity, no matter how misguided he might be. His voice trembled as he tried to continue, but it was too much ; the familiar faces that he would probably never see again ; the memory of the kindness he had received here among them, his devoted people, came crowding on him, and with a low, fervent “ God bless you ! ” he turned away and passed out of their lives for ever. The next evening he paid his farewell visit to the old house ; he was to leave early the following morning. A letter from the Delinquent to the late Monsignor, then Father Preston, was his sole introduction and help on his new road of life. He lingered long over the parting with those dear friends, for never again was he to meet them in this world.

He was up and away with the birds next morning. There were few passengers leaving the village by the stage coach, and long and sadly he watched the well-known scenes fade away. The sun was rising behind the woods, now blazing with autumn tints ; below the water sparkled and danced ; a little yacht lay at anchor not far from the shore. The wooded islands, two or three