

chamber in which I was speaking with him). Third, that another priest could go to St. James' and bring the Most Holy Sacrament to him from there.

At that point Father Bento de Lemoz, who was listening to our talk, came forward and interposed. He would get a little Ritual directly, he said (in very poor English)—that had in it all that was necessary: and he would go himself, not to St. James', for that was too far off, but to Somerset House, and get the Holy Sacrament from the royal chapel there. Mr. Huddleston had nothing to say to that; and in five minutes we had him in his periwig and gown, with the book in his pocket, with the holy oils, and away downstairs, and along the passage beneath, and up again by the little winding stair into the chamber beyond the King's bed. I gave him no time to think of any more objections.

That was a very strange vigil that we held for very near, I should think, twenty minutes or half an hour. We both sat there together without speaking. For the most of the time Mr. Huddleston was reading in his Ritual, and I could see his brow furrowed and his lips moving, as he conned over all that he would have to do and say to His Majesty. He was a man, as he had said, completely unaccustomed to such ministrations, though he was a very good man and a good priest too, in other matters. After a while he laid aside his book, and prayed, I think, for he covered his face with his hands.

A minute or two later I could bear the delay no longer. I rose and went up the three or four steps that led to the King's Bedchamber, and listened. There was a low murmur of voices within; so that it seemed to me that the room was not yet cleared. I put my hand upon the door and pushed it a little; and to my satisfaction it was not latched, but opened an inch or two. But someone was standing immediately on the other side of it. I stepped back, and the door opened again just enough for me to see the face of Mr. Chiffinch. He looked past me quickly to see that the priest was there, I suppose, and then nodded at me two or three times. Then he pushed the door almost to, again.