

ording to theological bias, with the Squire or with the Colonel, and former acquaintances, as they met on the road on a Sunday morning, hardly bowed to each other. It was worse than a contested election.

In this, however, the Rector of Eastbury had no immediate concern, except in so far as that the Colonel was his friend and church-warden, an active parish worker, and chief lay-member of those various "Guilds" which the extreme clergy know so well how to make use of. The Vicar of Meadowbrook naturally sympathized with his crony, the Squire; but, strenuously as he disapproved of his fellow-minister's views, he was too good a Christian to quarrel with him openly, most of all, in regard to a matter "purely secular" as he chose to consider it.

But the perversions just now referred to, and the "odium theologicum" effectually aroused by the Squire's bigotry, had certainly made havoc of the paradise of "comprehensiveness" which had existed hitherto. If the curate of Eastbury had "gone over to Rome," so the Meadowbrook party argued, the Rector was sure to do likewise. If not, he ought to. On the other hand, if the Protestants were going to import controversy into social relations, the two places, Eastbury and Meadowbrook, would no longer be fit to live in. And, as a natural consequence, the views of the respective parties became more pronounced and aggressive than ever. It needed, in fact, only some such trifle to show how unreal was the truce which, up to that time, had existed between them; to convert their views into principles, to be maintained and defended at all costs.

For a while, nevertheless, the Rector

of Eastbury remained where he was, and showed no apparent symptoms of "going over to Rome." He was, in fact, perfectly satisfied with his present position. "The "church of his baptism" was making good her claim to Catholicity in the eyes of all men; Protestantism was a waning power, the evil effects of the mis-called reformation of the spiritually dead eighteenth century were beginning to pass away; the Catholic party had only to be brave, patient, united and resolute, and the re-union of Christendom would be brought to pass sooner than any could dare to hope, in spite of foes without and foes within. What was there, he was wont to say, that any Catholic could desire which his own church would not grant him? Every doctrine and practice which had the support of Catholic consent might be found in her fold, why seek in an alien communion that which their Mother gave them so ungrudgingly? And yet—there was Meadowbrook, only two miles away, and many souls given into his charge went to learn "false doctrine" at the lips of his "brother-priest."

His "brother-priest"; he knew that he could not, truthfully, call him anything else, and, day by day, the full meaning of the term recurred to him. Worst of all, it recurred to him at the most solemn moment of his daily Mass, with its awful significance. He strove to put it from him, as a temptation of the evil one, but, the more he realized the validity of his own priesthood—concerning which he had no doubt at all—the more vividly did the consequences thereon depending present themselves to his mind and soul. A priest; with power to consecrate: nothing could alter that. Views had no effect on that ineffable prerogative: