

study is the one remedy for his troubles, whatever they may be. At Lord Loring's suggestion, a consultation of physicians was held on his case the other day.'

'Is he so ill as that!' Penrose exclaimed.

'So it appears,' Father Benwell replied, 'Lord Loring is mysteriously silent about the illness. One result of the consultation I extracted from him, in which you are interested. The doctors protested against his employing himself on the proposed book. He was too obstinate to listen to them. There was but one concession that they could gain from him—he consented to spare himself, in some small degree, by employing an amanuensis. It was left to Lord Loring to find the man. I was consulted by his lordship; I was even invited to undertake the duty myself. Each one in his proper sphere, my son! The person who converts Romaine must be young enough to be his friend and companion. Your part is there, Arthur—you are the future amanuensis. How does the prospect strike you now?'

'I beg your pardon, Father! I fear I am unworthy of the confidence which is placed in me.'

'In what way?'

Penrose answered with unfeigned humility.

'I am afraid I may fail to justify your belief in me,' he said, 'unless I can really feel that I am converting Mr. Romaine for his own soul's sake. However righteous the cause may be, I cannot find in the restitution of the Church property a sufficient motive for persuading him to change his religious faith. There is something so serious in the responsibility which you lay on me, that I shall sink under the burden unless my whole heart is in the work. If I feel attracted towards Mr. Romaine when I first see him; if he wins upon me little by little, until I love him like a brother—then, indeed, I can promise that his conversion shall be the dearest object of my life.

But, if there is not this intimate sympathy between us—forgive me if I say it plainly—I implore you to pass me over, and to commit the task to the hands of another man.'

His voice trembled; his eyes moistened. Father Benwell handled his young friend's rising emotion with the dexterity of a skilled angler humouring the struggles of a lively fish.

'Good Arthur!' he said, 'I see much—too much, dear boy—of self-seeking people. It is as refreshing to me to hear you, as a draught of water to a thirsty man. At the same time, let me suggest that you are innocently raising difficulties where no difficulties exist. I have already mentioned as one of the necessities of the case, that you and Romaine should be friends. How can that be unless there is precisely that sympathy between you which you have so well described? I am a sanguine man; and I believe you will like each other. Wait till you see him.'

As the words passed his lips, the door that led to the picture gallery was opened. Lord Loring entered the library.

He looked quickly round him—apparently in search of some person who might, perhaps, be found in the room. A transient shade of annoyance showed itself in his face, and disappeared again as he bowed to the two Jesuits.

'Don't let me disturb you,' he said, looking at Penrose. 'Is this the gentleman who is to assist Mr. Romaine?'

Father Benwell presented his young friend. 'Arthur Penrose, my lord. I ventured to suggest that he should call here to-day, in case you wished to put any questions to him.'

'Quite needless, after your recommendation,' Lord Loring answered graciously, 'Mr. Penrose could not have come here at a more appropriate time. As it happens, Mr. Romaine has paid us a visit to-day—he is now in the picture gallery.'

The priests looked at each other. Lord Loring left them as he spoke. He walked to the opposite door of the lib-