

"You are very open," answered the minister, "and I esteem your candour, although I greatly lament your calling."

"Robbery, sir, is not my business; but I am out of work, my family is starving; I am driven to this necessity. Before I see my children starve, I would take the lives of ten such as you are, if by so doing I could procure bread."

"I cannot see your face," said the pastor, "but I should take you for a man of good education, and with a humane heart."

"Well, well," said the man, impatiently, "you need not think to gain time by a conversation. You know my business," he continued, approaching the good man.

"I pledge you my word, as a Christian, that I will neither raise an alarm nor keep back anything from you which is in the house. Be so good as to sit down."

The robber sat down again.

"Now be candid," said the minister; "is this only an excuse, or is your family really on the point of starvation?"

"My family, sir, is in the state which I have described to you: my wife is ill, and my children drive me wild with their cries for bread."

The minister, convinced of the truth of the man's statement, said,—

"I have a hundred dollars, paid me yesterday, for my salary, as I suppose you have heard; I have also some silver-plated articles which were given to my wife for a wedding present. If you spare the plate, I will give you the hundred dollars, and twenty more which I have laid by to surprise my wife on the anniversary of our wedding-day."

"Well, do so, but be quick about it, for I must go."

"Just come here," said the pastor; "I must show you a picture."