

A CONFERENCE SKETCH.

BY EVELYN ETHERIDGE.

I.

"So you are going to entertain some of the ministers during Conference, I hear."

"Yes, are you?"

"No. We shall not be in town at the time, and, to tell the truth, I am not altogether sorry."

"Why, pray?"

"Oh, I wouldn't know how to entertain them. One would have to be so awfully proper, you know, and neither laugh nor have any fun all the time they were in the house. I almost pity you the infliction."

"Thanks, Marion dear; but I think you had better save your sympathy till you find a more deserving object. I assure you, I don't feel the least need for it. I am sure most of the ministers I have known have been very pleasant company indeed."

"Perhaps they are, on closer acquaintance; but they always look so solemn on Sundays and at funerals—which, I confess, are almost the only times that I have seen them—that I am rather in awe of the entire class."

"Well, you certainly would not expect them to be very hilarious on such occasions. Besides, we are to be not forgetful to entertain strangers."

"Oh, perhaps, you expect to entertain an angel, unawares, if it be not a solecism to say so; but then you know, as the French proverb has it, 'It is always the unexpected that is sure to happen.'"

"Well, no; these black-robed gentlemen are not very much like the traditional angels represented by the painters; but I am sure they are often angels of mercy to the sick and suffering, for all that."

"You are so prepossessed in their favour, that one of them will be inducing you to accompany him as a missionary to Muskoka or the Rocky Mountains, or some other outlandish place."