

he gave it us : and oh ! my Lord was red and white with passion."

"That was not wise, sweetheart," said Lady Maxwell tranquilly, "the priest will have suffered for it afterwards."

"Well, well," grumbled Sir Nicholas, "a man cannot always think, but we showed them that Catholics were not ashamed of their religion—yes, and we got the blessing too."

"Well, but here is supper waiting," said my lady, "and Isabel, too, whom you have not spoken to yet."

Sir Nicholas paid no attention.

"Ah ! but that was not all," he went on, savagely striking his boot again, "at the end of all who should I see but that—that—damned rogue—whom God reward !"—and he turned and spat into the fire—"Topcliffe. There he was, bowing to my Lord and the Commissioners. When I think of that man," he said, "when I think of that man—" and Sir Nicholas' kindly old passionate face grew pale and lowering with fury, and his eyebrows bent themselves forward, and his lower lip pushed itself out, and his hand closed tremblingly on his whip.

His wife laid down her embroidery and came to him.

"There, sweetheart," she said, taking his cap and whip. "Now sit down and have supper, and leave that man to God."

Sir Nicholas grew quiet again ; and after a saying a word or two of apology to Isabel, left the room to wash before he sat down to supper.

"Mistress Isabel does not know who Topcliffe is," said Hubert.

"Hush, my son," said his mother, "your father does not like his name to be spoken."

Presently Sir Nicholas returned, and sat down to supper. Gradually his good nature returned, and he told them what he had seen in Chichester, and the talk he had heard. How it was reported to his lordship the Bishop that the old religion was still the religion of the people's hearts—how, for example, at Lindfield they had all the images and the altar furniture hidden underground, and at Battle, too ; and that the mass could be set up again at a few hours'