

soul of you, I could as little have rehuken the lad as I could punish the guiltless indecency of a babe—he was that shockingly naïf!”

“He is undoubtedly the just fruit of our own toleration,” repeated the high-church rector.

“And he stands for our knottiest problem,” said the Presbyterian.

“A problem all the knottier, I suspect,” began Whittaker—

“Didn’t I tell you?” interrupted Father Riley. “Oh, the outrageous cynic! Be braced for him, now!”

“I was only going to suggest,” resumed the wicked Unitarian, calmly, “that those people, Linford and his brother—and even that singularly effective Mrs. Linford, with her inferable views about divorce—you know I dare say that they—really you know—that they possess the courage of—”

“Their *convictions!*” concluded little Floud, impatient alike of the speaker’s hesitation and the expected platitude.

“No—I was about to say—the courage—of ours.”

A few looked politely blank at this unseasonable flippancy. Father Riley smiled with rare sweetness and murmured, “So cynical, even for a Unitarian!” as if to himself in playful confidence.

But the amiable Presbyterian, of the cheerful auburn beard and the salient nose, hereupon led them tactfully to safe ground in a discussion of the ethnic Trinities.