

The Pastor Begins

would cost him no little sacrifice to put away his books, or, at least, to give up the solitude and leisure which made them especially valuable to him. He also loved his little flock and regretted to part with them, whatever else might be in store for him. By nature sensitive, retiring, a lover of the good and beautiful in art, he dreaded the responsibilities of the ministry, together with the noise and bustle, of a large city. Hence, when the formal offer of the pastorate of St. Paul's came to him, he requested his superiors to let him retain his cure in Rockdale, where he was contented and thought himself useful to a degree in proportion with his talents. But the Archbishop knew the pastor better than the pastor knew himself, and insisted that he comply with his wishes. And Father Sinclair, known to but few people outside his immediate circle, was promptly installed in the vacant parish, much to the surprise of older candidates and their friends.

Ten years had elapsed since then, and during the decade the pastor of St. Paul's had distinguished himself as an organizer who could sustain and carry to completion any work he had seen fit to undertake.

"You are more punctual than I, ladies. I hope I have not kept you waiting, although even that can scarcely have been a hardship in Mrs. Melgrove's cosy parlor this bleak afternoon," said Father Sinclair, genially, as he took his seat at the vacant