

The meeting, which had promised to be a failure, ending in smoke, proved a decisive event. The new school of Nonconformity separated itself from the old, for it was clear that the men who agreed with Firmalden could have little in common with those who had represented English Dissent during the last fifty years. That a number of young, resolute, scholarly, ambitious men were, not in England only but in France and in America, of Firmalden's mood was a fact which their elders feared to own, and the officials of every type and class refused to believe. When, at the conclusion of the address, the minority applauded loudly, it was taken as a challenge to the malcontents. These burst forth into hisses, groans, and noisy cries of "Silence!" But, during the uproar and confusion, two camps were formed which, twenty years later, helped to change the whole spirit of English denominational religion, the whole character of the English Parliament, and all the sentiments of the labouring class.

Lessard forced his way to the vestry, where he found Firmalden with Sophy, surrounded by a number of clergy. Sophy at the sight of Lessard felt as she always felt when she saw him—as though her heart were being rolled up as a leaf by some pitiless hand. She managed to avoid his glance; she escaped from the room, and, leaving a message for her brother, went home alone.

Lessard had observed Sophy's sudden pallor and her flight. He could not be sure that she had seen