

yet; he's a—a—I'm sure I don't know how to describe him; he's a—a regular *brick!*"

"A *brick!*" exclaimed Mrs. Slowton, looking shocked. "Why, Mr. Slowton, I do hope that you are not going to take to vulgar and almost profane slang, unbecoming the lips of any truly pious person. I'm surprised at you! I don't think you are improved by associating with that rude Mr. Jackson."

"Well, well, my dear! perhaps it was wrong, but the expression is emphatic, and at the moment I was at a loss for any adequate word to convey my notion of the new Bishop's excellence. I assure you he is one of a thousand."

"I am sorely afraid though," whined Mrs. Slowton, "that there is little chance of his being *evangelical*, since Mr. Crampton thinks so highly of him."

"I don't know what he is," replied Mr. Slowton, with more decision than was his wont in conjugal colloquies; "except that he is a Christian and a gentleman, and evidently thinks that his clergy are so too, and treats them accordingly; he made me feel quite at home with him in five minutes, and I think I never had a pleasanter visit in all my life."

"Visit?" said Mrs. Slowton; "why you mean a *call*. I suppose the five minutes you speak of was almost all you saw of him."

"Nothing of the sort, my good wife; nothing of the sort," chuckled Mr. Slowton. "I was his guest all the time I was in town, as well as several others of the clergy."

"His guest!" exclaimed Mrs. Slowton with surprise; "do you mean to say that you took your carpet bag with you and slept at his house?"

"Even so," rejoined Mr. Slowton, smiling at the expression of his wife's face. "I was hardly seated when he insisted upon knowing the whereabouts of my luggage and sent off for it, and on my demurring to the idea of taking up my quarters with him, he put on an odd look of surprise, and asked me if, when he came to Clackington, I intended that he should go to an inn: Of course I protested against any such idea, and then he smiled and said he did not in the least doubt my hospitality, but that he did not intend to allow me to have all that valuable quality to myself, with much more to the same effect, and the end of the matter was, that in a

few minutes I found myself duly installed in one of 'the prophet's chambers'—"

"Very polite, certainly," observed Mrs. Slowton; "but I should have thought a bishop had something else to do than gossip all day with any stray clergyman who happened to call upon him."

"Not so fast, good wife—not so fast;" and Mr. Slowton gave her, in the excess of his good humour, a gentle pat on the back, to which she rejoined with a shrug and rather a sharp "Don't be foolish, Mr. Slowton; but pray go on."

"Well!" continued that gentleman, rather taken aback, "after we had had a long talk about Clackington, about which he asked numberless questions, he said, in the pleasantest way, 'I dare say that as you don't very often come to town, that you may have other people to see and other things to do than to talk all day with me; but at any rate, if you have not, you know of course that I have, and therefore I shall have to bid you good morning until we meet at dinner. In the mean time, of course, you will make yourself at home.' Then he mentioned the hours of meals and prayers and so forth; told me to go out and come in when I pleased, that there were papers and books and magazines all over the house; that if I wished to be fine I could go into the drawing-room (which by the way did not strike me as being very *fine*), or, if I wished to be quiet, there would be fire in my own room. 'In fact,' he concluded, with a smile, 'we shall take no notice of you whatever, only bargaining for the pleasure of seeing you when we meet at table, or when the business of the day is over.' Now, Mrs. Slowton, did you ever hear of anything like that? Isn't that a bishop for you?"

"No, I never did," replied Mrs. Slowton; "and really I must say that it is all very unnatural, such excessive kindness and civility to persons who are almost or altogether strangers. I'm sadly afraid that there is some deep design under it all. I have no doubt that he has heard of you as one who preaches the Gospel, which so few of the clergy do in these days, and he wishes, by extreme and marked attention, to influence your principles and blind your judgment. I'd venture almost anything that it is all a Puseyite plot to turn you away from the simplicity of the Gospel!"

"Tut, tut!" exclaimed Mr. Slowton, much