

Bishop tells us that Lady Cicely can't help being tipsy. Dr. Hudson says Mrs. Masters can't help being cruel; and Marcus—why should we leave him out in the cold?—he, no doubt, is unable to help cheating. They are none of them guilty of faults. They are all the victims of malformations—or maladies, for that is the word which, I think, the Bishop recommends to us."

The Bishop looked at Glanville with an expression of extreme annoyance.

"If you argue like that," said Lady Snowdon, to whom such discussions were familiar, "where will you draw the line?"

"Precisely," said Glanville. "That is the problem—where? Who is the theologian, who is the philosopher that will tell us?"

This sceptical question, however, was hardly out of his mouth when it seemed as though a prophet had been specially raised up to answer it. The Bishop's lips were tightly closed like a vice; but Sir Roderick Harborough, who had been fuming for the last five minutes, now saw his opportunity, and pushing his wine-glasses away from him, spoke under an inspiration so urgent and copious that it hardly allowed his message to arrange itself in logical order. His style, moreover, fiery as it was, was hardly that of an Isaiah.

"Hang it, Rupert," he began, "it's very unbecoming in me, who sit here drinking your champagne—and very fine champagne it is—if I'm not mistaken, it's Pol Roger, of 'eighty—it's very unbecoming in me to tell you you're talking nonsense. But do you mean seriously to say that a man like Marcus—born a gentleman—a cool man, with all his wits about him—I never saw anybody cooler under fire than he was—could no more help cheating at cards than he could help having measles or a cough—for that's what your talk about bumps and maladies comes to? Do you mean to say that we—the Committee of the Turf Club—should have kept the fellow on, in order to have our pockets picked by him, on the