

them he had perhaps scarcely the right to make such a request ; but as having fought by Will's side, and been with him at the last, he trusted not to be refused.

"My dear sir," says the old gentleman—a venerable figure, with his long white hair and his threadbare cassock—"we must for ever be your debtors for what you have already done. I have been putting aside a certain sum each year, since my dear boy fell, for the purpose you name—but the lay-rector takes the great tithes—and I have been obliged to expend a considerable sum on a chimney which was blown down two years ago next Michaelmas ; and I have often feared I should not live to see my dear son's name recorded on those sacred walls within which I baptized him."

The Vicar said this with an old-fashioned dignity, which no mere report of his words can convey.

"I shall consider, sir," says Fred respectfully, "that I am permitted to show this mark of regard to my poor friend, and I thank you very kindly for the honour you do me. If you will be so good as to let me know any views you may have had, as to the way you would like it done, we will set about it at once."

Many were the discussions which followed. The Vicar was easy enough to satisfy as to the form of the tablet—indeed, it was Susan who finally decided that point, and the tablet was made from her drawing. But the Vicar took so much pains with the epitaph, that Fred despaired of the masons ever getting to work. He prepared at least a score, and it took all Susan's eloquence to persuade him not to insist on selecting a Latin one, in which there were undoubtedly many beautiful sentiments very chastely expressed.

"But, then, what's the good of it, if not a soul in the village can read a word of it?" urges Susan. "Dear father, do let it be in English—'twill perhaps inspire some of the village boys to serve their country."

"I believe on my conscience it might, daughter!" exclaims the Vicar, much struck with this suggestion ; "I will—yes, I will sacrifice what was after all perhaps a useless display of scholarship. (I had the prize for Latin verse when I was at Brasenose, Major Digby.) It shall be in English! This dear girl, Major Digby, has an astonishing good sense ; her mother and I frequently remark that you may see in her an old head on young shoulders. Bless me, where can I have put that rough draft? Ah, here it is! Now, Major Digby, if you will