

At this moment Miss Tibbins made her appearance, looking quite excited.

'Oh Mrs. Brown, I am glad to have found you at home; for I'm in a puzzle, and I can't see my way through it—I suppose because I'm so short-sighted'—observed the worthy spinster, parenthetically falling into the accustomed formula without observing its inapplicability. 'Here is this new clergyman come who I heard was to be a terrible Puseyite, and who was going to turn Mr. Slowton out of house and home, and yet here they are living quite friendly with one another, and he does not seem anything so much out of the way either,' and here Miss Tibbins had to take breath.

'And how do you know that he is not a Puseyite?' asked Mrs. Glumpington.

'That is just what I came to speak to Mrs. Brown about; for do you know, Mrs. Brown,' said Miss Tibbins, turning to that lady, 'as I was coming down the street just now, I saw Mr. Evenley coming out of that little house in the lane where the Jenkins live, who came here last winter from some of the Lower Provinces, and who were so poor.'

'What could he be doing there?' asked Mrs. Brown; 'he has not begun proselyting already, I hope, for that lane is in our parish.'

'Why you see I was anxious to find that out myself,' said Miss Tibbins with a sage and important air, 'and I determined to do so. Well; after I had seen him a good way off, I turned back and went into the lane and called on Mrs. Jenkins, whom I know very well, and who seemed in a strange state between laughing and crying, and she burst out before I had time to say a word, and told me *such* a tale about Mr. Evenley.'

'Dear me,' exclaimed Mrs. Glumpington with open eyes, 'what did she say? do tell us. Was he trying to bribe her into false doctrine?'

'Why she said that she was beside herself with joy for that "Good Parson Evenley"—that's the way she spoke of him—whom she had known so well in the Lower Provinces, and who had been their best friend, had met her little girl in the street, and had recognized her and made her lead him to their cottage, and how he was the same dear kind gentleman he always was, and she cried again with joy, and told me such wonderful stories of his goodness that I am puzzled about it; and can't make it out how

he can be so very good as this poor woman says, and be the terrible person that Mrs. Cryson said the Bishop was going to send here to persecute dear Mr. Slowton.'

'Why there's Mrs. Cryson herself just crossing the street and coming in,' observed Mrs. Glumpington, whose face was turned towards the window.

After the usual greetings, Mrs. Cryson was informed of the latest intelligence as brought by Miss Tibbins, touching Mr. Evenley's reported goodness.

'I don't believe a word of it,' said Mrs. Cryson.

'But why not?' asked Miss Tibbins, looking over her spectacles.

'Because it *can't* be.'

'But Mrs. Jenkins is a very truthful and respectable woman,' said Miss Tibbins, 'and wouldn't say what was not the case.'

'I don't care what she is,' said Mrs. Cryson with more excitement of manner than that pious lady would, under other circumstances, have perhaps exhibited. 'I am sure, from what Mr. Cryson has told me, that he is a thorough going Tractarian; and if he seems as good as your Mrs. Jenkins would make out, then it must be on the principle of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light.'

'But what has Mr. Cryson found out?' asked Mrs. Brown, while Miss Tibbins looked anxiously over her spectacles, and Mrs. Glumpington was all eager attention.

'Why he got into the loft of the storehouse to-day, which they have been fitting up for a church, and he says that it is nothing better than a mass house. They have got a credence table, as they call it, and the communion table raised I can't tell how high from the floor, and there is a cross against the end wall, and Mr. Evenley is said highly to approve of all these arrangements; and when Mr. Cryson exclaimed against them, Mr. Jackson put his hands into the very bottom of his pockets, and asked him where he had been this last twenty years, for that it was that long at least since the Privy Council declared all these things and many more to be the law of the English Church.'

'Oh!' sighed Mrs. Brown.

'Shocking!' exclaimed Mrs. Glumpington.

'But what did he mean?' asked Miss Tibbins.