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the chapel. And the organ-makers have taken fifty pounds off their price. Now, who do you think has given another fifty? Mr Copinger! He stood up last night, Mr Blackhurst told me this morning, and he said, 'Friends, I've only seventy pounds in the world, but I'll give fifty pounds towards this organ.' There! What do you think of that? Isn't he a grand fellow?"

"He is a grand fellow," said Peake, with emphasis, reflecting that the total income of the minister could not exceed three hundred a year.

"So you see you'll *have* to give your hundred," Mrs Lovatt continued. "You can't do otherwise after that."

There was a pause.

"I won't give it," said Peake. "I've said I won't, and I won't."

He could think of no argument. To repeat that Eardley's bankruptcy would cost him dear seemed trivial. Nevertheless, the absence of any plausible argument served only to steel his resolution.

At that moment the servant opened the door.

"Mr Titus Blackhurst, senior, to see you, sir."

Peake and his wife looked at one another in amazement, and Sneyd laughed quietly.

"He told me he should come up," Mrs Lovatt explained.

"Show him into the breakfast-room, Clara," said Mrs Peake to the servant.

Peake frowned angrily as he crossed the hall, but as he opened the breakfast-room door he contrived to straighten out his face into a semblance of urbanity. Though he could have enjoyed accelerating the passage of his visitor into the street, there were excellent commercial reasons why he should adopt a less strenuous means towards the end which he had determined to gain.

"Glad to see you, Mr Blackhurst," he began, a little awkwardly.