

at either end, and four smaller tenements linked two by two in the centre.

The tenants of Warwick-terrace were, with one solitary exception, exclusively female. One of the end houses was occupied by a comfortable-looking, very round Miss Blackall, a spinster of fifty, the richest and simplest of the row, with her parrot, who had certainly more words, and nearly as many ideas, as his mistress; her black footman, whose fine livery, white, turned up with scarlet, and glittering silver lace, seemed rather ashamed of his "sober-suited" neighbours; the plush waistcoat and inexpressibles blushing as if in scorn. The other corner was filled by Mrs. Leeson, a kind-hearted bustling dame, the great ends of whose existence were visiting and cards, who had, probably made more morning calls and played a greater number of rubbers than any woman in Belford, and who boasted a tabby cat, and a head maid called Nanny, that formed a proper pendant to the parrot and Cæsar. Of the four centre habitations, one pair was the residence of Miss Savage, who bore the formidable reputation of a sensible woman—an accusation which rested, probably, on no worse foundation than a gruff voice and something of a vinegar aspect,—and of Miss Steele, who, poor thing, underwent a still worse calumny, and was called literary, simply because forty years ago she had made a grand poetical collection, consisting of divers manuscript volumes, written in an upright taper hand, and filled with such choice morceaus as Mrs. Greville's "Ode to Indifference," Miss Seward's "Monody on Major Andre," sundry translations of Metastasio's "Nice," and a considerable collection of enigmas, on which stock, undiminished and unincreased, she still traded; whilst the last brace of houses, linked together like Siamese twins, was divided between two families, the three Miss Lockes,—whom no one ever dreamt of talking of as separate or individual personages—one should as soon have thought of severing the Graces, or the Furies, or the Fates, or any other classical trio, as of knowing them apart; the three Miss Lockes lived in one of these houses, and Mrs. Harwood and her two daughters in the other.

It is with the Harwoods only that we have to do at present.

Mrs. Harwood was the widow of the late and the mother of the present rector of Dighton, a family living purchased by the father of her late husband, who, himself a respectable and affluent yeoman, aspired to a rivalry with his old landlord, the squire of the next parish; and, when he sent his only son to the university, established him in the rectory, married him to the daughter of an archdeacon, and set up a public-house, called the Harwood Arms—somewhat to the profit of the Heralds' Office, who had to discover or invent these illustrious bearings—had accomplished the two objects of his ambition, and died contented.

The son proved a bright pattern of posthumous duty; exactly the sort of rector the good old farmer would have wished to see, did he turn out,—respectable, conscientious, always just, and often kind; but so solemn, so pompous, so swelling in deportment and grandiloquent in speech, that he had not been half a dozen years inducted to the living before he obtained the popular title of bishop of Dighton—a distinction which he seems to have taken in good part, by assuming a costume as nearly episcopal as possible, at all points, and copying, with the nicest accuracy, the shovel hat and buzz wig of the prelate of the diocese, a man of seventy-five. He put his coachman and footboy into the right clerical livery, and adjusted his household and modelled his behaviour according to the strictest notions of the stateliness and decorum proper to a dignitary of the church.

Perhaps he expected that the nickname by which he was so little aggrieved would some day or other be realised; some professional advancement he certainly reckoned upon. But, in spite of his cultivating most assiduously all profitable connexions—of his christening his eldest son "Earl," after a friend of good parliamentary interest, and his younger boy, "King," after another—of his choosing one noble sponsor for his daughter Georgina, and another for his daughter Henrietta—he lived and died with no better preferment than the rectory of Dighton, which had been presented to him by his honest father five-and-forty years before, and to which his son Earl succeeded: the only advantage which his careful courting of patrons and patronage had procured for