

his hitherto stainless name, keenly sensitive to the opinion of his fellow-men, the alternative was as bitter as death.

Greatly to his amazement, Mark Aslin took the shame of the disclosure on himself. After the opening prayer he rose and announced the loss in terms so noble and self-denying, and full of such perfect faith in his friend's integrity, that for the time all were of the same opinion. But other speakers of less clear and generous mind followed, and a very divided opinion was soon visible.

When Jonathan offered to resign his position of trust and honour in the church, a vote was found to be in favour of his resignation. He could scarcely have believed it possible. He did not know that his brothers convicted him, not of being dishonest, but of being self-sufficient; of "managing" without their aid; of being "so officious" in the Sunday-school, prayer-meetings, and chapel services that their own labours and gifts were dwarfed in comparison.

Perhaps Jonathan's own behaviour in the meeting was against him. He was known to be in embarrassed circumstances, yet he would enter into no explanations; he would suggest no probable thief; he gave no invitations to examine the rifled desk; he would not "talk it over" with everybody who stopped him, and people felt that their lawful curiosity was not respected.

Mark's support was of little use. Everybody knew that he was betrothed to Mary Yeadon; it was natural he should defend her brother. Mark's position compelled him to sit through the proceedings; but Jonathan and two or three who clung to him left the meeting early in the day. The first effect of Jonathan's trial was not favourable to him. He was defiant; irritably, almost sullenly, silent. His faith had received a severe shock; he had gone to his Saviour with such strong crying and trust, and left his case in His hands, he thought, "Surely God will send an angel or work a miracle in my affairs before He will see the innocent condemned."

But God had sent no angel, worked no miracle for him. He was also sensible that in no circumstance of his life had his behaviour been so suspicious and unconciliatory. And he did not seem to care—a kind of deaf-and-dumb stupidity possessed him; he went home and shut the door of his room, and felt as if life had suddenly become a simple weight.

Mary half feared Mark might think it prudent to stay with some other friends. She did him a great injustice; Mark was never timid in the way of duty. He refused all other offers, and after the meeting came at once to the house full of trouble. But he was an anointed "son of consolation;" and he left Mary