

The Young Churchman

"Feed my Lambs."

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Grassdale.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW DENOMINATIONS ARE FORMED.

Mr. Sampson Growler performed what he was pleased to call "Divine Service," to a congregation numerous enough, at once to flatter his vanity and encourage his hopes, and he determined to make Grassdale the place of his permanent abode. Hiring an unoccupied store, he converted the upper portion thereof into a *Tabernacle*, and the lower into a *Parsonage House*, and forthwith set to work to organize a *Society*.

The Deacon's attempt to construct a *Platform* in the village was attended with some considerable measure of success, notwithstanding the fact, that the better informed, and more respectable inhabitants (including our friend Charles Beverly,) resolutely opposed themselves to his opinions. As for Charles, he had seen quite enough of the ex patron of the "*oppressed hirelings*," during the night which that personage spent under his roof, to convince him, that neither morally nor canonically was he fitted to act as an ambassador of God—and he regarded his advent as one of the most serious calamities with which the locality had ever been visited. Better, he argued, that the land should lie fallow for a season than that it should be cursed with a crop of pestilential tares!

All things considered, it was not to be wondered at that the *Reverend* adventurer, met with the modicum of encouragement, which he did.

In the first place, the bulk of the people, though members of the United English and Irish Church—and professedly attached to her teaching and discipline, were, compara-

tively speaking, but indifferently grounded in the principles of their faith. Of the distinctive characteristics of their communions they knew absolutely nothing. Such a state of things, though very lamentable, could be easily accounted for.

The parties in question had emigrated to British North America, at a period when the clergy as a body were much less alive to the responsibilities of their sacred office, than, thank God! they are at present. The fox-hunting and the ball-patronizing tribe of ecclesiastics, though diminished in numbers, still existed to a calamitous extent. In addition to this, even the more serious and devoted of the national clergy gave but little attention to the great Scriptural lines of demarcation which separate *Catholicism* from the dreary swamp of *Dissent*. As a matter of course, their people being *unwarmed* of the sin and danger of schism, were *unarmed*—and were prepared to receive without suspicion and without question, as a spiritual guide, the first comer, who carried his *ministerial commission* about with him in the shape of a white cravat—a black suit of clothes—and a stereotype, conventional, modulation of tone!

One of our great English poets remarks:

"'Tis pleasant sure, to see one's self in print,
A book's a book, altho'ugh there's nothing in't!"

Actuated by the same principle—or rather we should say *impulse*, many of the denizens of Grassdale, attended the *exercises* and *expoundings* of Sampson Growler. They did so, because every Lord's Day, he uttered a certain number of words, which he called a *sermon*—and spoke from an elevated box dignified with the name of *pulpit*! Had one of their neighbours, in his ordinary attire, delivered the same sentiments, in the same language on a week day, he would not have