

**ANTIPODES, OR, THE NEW
EXISTENCE: A TALE
OF REAL LIFE. IN
THREE VOLUMES. VOL. II**

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Antipodes, or, the new existence: a tale of real life. In three volumes. Vol. II by Clergyman

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CLERGYMAN

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OR,

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A TALE OF REAL LIFE. .

BY A CLERGYMAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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ANTIPODES ;
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CHAPTER I.

IT is not to our tale, that I should trouble the reader with details of an Episcopal examination and ordination. We were all advised by the examining chaplain to repair forthwith to our respective curacies, advice which was intended to be imperative ; but whether hortatory or authorative, to me it was wholly unnecessary. Never man was more anxious and precipitate to enter upon the duties of the post, whatever that post might be, and the coach which was to convey me, for coaches were then the vehi-

les, seemed as if it would never come, and when it did, to go on one wheel.

During the journey I had leisure for cogitation. I was tortured with fear, and encouraged by hope. A little self-denial and patience might place me in possession of the living, £400 per annum, and was not that something worth waiting for, yea, and watching for against temptation? Yet I could not but fear, lest there might be any ale-houses in the village or parish; lest I should drink elsewhere, if not there; lest I should be wearied of solitude, and that should tempt me; and lest I should have uncomfortable lodgings, and that too should tempt me. I liked not lodging with the glebe-tenant, who would be a spy, and communicate to my rector what he chose, true or false, but always something bad. I feared too being slovenly, and not respected, and lest I should commit myself, so that I could not reprove, or discourage intemperance in others, and so should neglect a most important duty. These and similar thoughts made me so miserable, that I determined not to think at all, but wait until I should see with my eyes.

At length I came within view of the church of Benwell, not displeased with its appearance, though there was little to interest. The first thing I did was to go into the church-yard, and view the church in detail. It was a Norman building, or at least had been so originally; but modern repairs and architectural ignorance, and want of taste had wofully disfigured it. The square heavy tower rising very little above the body of the church, was the least altered and marred. The belfry windows had circular arches, with a circular column on either side; the main entrance to the church, also, had a rather deep circular arch, with the common zigzag ornament, and the signs of the zodiac. The windows on the south side, exhibiting the taste of very recent ignorance and vulgarity, were more assimilated to those of a village grocer's shop, than any thing else to which I can compare them; they had been repaired too with brick instead of stone. This did not say much for the education and refinement of the élite in the parish, but few farmers receive a very polished education.

I had not been many minutes in the church-

yard, surveying very sagely the sacred edifice, before I was joined by a man and a woman, apparently his wife. She brought a large key, and proceeded to unlock the church door. He told me that he was the glebe-tenant, and that his name was Richard Blackwell. I told him that I was the new curate, and that I supposed I should have to lodge in his house. His reply was that the curate had always done so, and that there was no other house in the parish where lodgings could be obtained for love or money. The interior of the church was in keeping with the exterior, divided into pews now old and crazy, and here and there a pannel was curiously carved; so was the pannel before the reading desk.

“ Well, Richard,” said I, “ we will go and see my lodgings, if you please. I am tired and thirsty, and should like a cup of tea.”

“ Very well, Sir, I will show you the way.”

On the way we met a tall, stalwart sort of a man, rather curved on the shoulders, with huge splay feet. He wore a shabby hat, a coat that had been black, trowsers that reached only to the calf of the ieg, but what had been their

colour, no man could tell unless he had seen them long since, but I think they had been grey, grey worsted stockings, patched shoes without shoe-strings, and a stock meant to be black. No collar or shirt was visible, and I should doubt if he had one on; if he had, it must have been too dirty to be seen, and that might be the reason of his keeping it out of sight. He evidently had not been shaved or washed for a couple of days at least. His forehead was large, prominent and bare, for he fixed his hat somewhat on the back of his head; he had small pig eyes, a little nose, and a mouth pursed into the touch-hole of a pistol. He noticed me, but did not speak. I took him for a vagrant, some begging impostor, and therefore did not give him an encouraging look.

“That, Sir, is Tity Wren.”

“And who is Tity Wren?”

“Oh, Sir, don't you know? He is curate of Parval, about a mile off.”

“How should I know? I never was here before. I thought he looked at me as if he did not like me.”