

pleasant place, smoky, grimy, and unhealthy, and the people, as far as I have met them, may be substantial enough, but they are dreadfully tiresome and uninteresting. I don't mean you, Tom,' she adds, seeing him glare down upon her in angry astonishment.

'I am much obliged, I am sure, that you make an exception in my favour, but I cannot take credit myself at the expense of my mother and Louise.'

'Oh! I like Louise.'

'And not my mother, I infer?'

'No.'

Mary had not intended to tell him this point-blank, but he had taken such a line with her for not liking Limeton that she felt indignant, and not inclined to mince the facts at all. The result was what may have been expected: Tom stalked on in solemn silence, while she, full of resentment, held her little head very much in the air.

When they arrived at the house, Louise saw, notwithstanding Mary's unusual animation, that something had gone wrong between them, but chose the wise part of silence. Mrs. Cowell saw nothing but that her son was not much in love, as she feared he would be, with Mary. She had not found the latter as tractable as she had hoped in the way of imitating Louise, and had discovered that she had not that admiration of frugality and thrift that befitted the future wife of her son; therefore she was contented to see that son's cool politeness to Mary, which she took as a proof that he was not likely to be led away by her caprices.

The next morning Tom joined Mary in the garden, and said:

'Under the impression that you would like Limeton, I had written about a place here I wanted to buy, but from what you said last night I conclude that any plan of that sort is useless.'

'Quite useless,' said Mary decidedly; 'and I really