

He said the lad complained that Ackroyd was a stern master, and that he was tired to death of the long room and the oily wool, and the clang of machinery.

Mark suggested that perhaps in this case there had been a mistake, and that the best plan might be to break the boy's indentures and let him go to sea, or follow some trade more consonant to his tastes. Jonathan was indignant at such advice; "Ben had been asked to do naught his forebears had not done; all the Yeadons had been wool-staplers and manufacturers, decent householders and citizens, and he would rather the lad—whom he loved dearer than his own life—were dead than roaming about the world among Turks, heathens, infidels, and foreigners of all kinds."

Jonathan spoke warmly, but Mark knew that in one respect, at least, he spoke out of a full heart; he did love his younger brother of his with a love almost motherly, for he had taken him from his dying mother's arms when only ten months old, and there was sixteen years' difference in their ages. Not even his only sister Mary was so precious in his eyes. Then the lad was handsome and bold, and had such a will that the elder had always felt holding his own with the younger an exciting strife. Even Ben's faults were such as men readily forgive. He was ambitious, rash, fond of power, indifferent to danger; and Jonathan admired the boy, even while trying to force him into the stereotyped Yeadon pattern. "He's such a bonnie lad, Mark, and he's so clever; but I'm angry to-night at him not heeding what I bid him."

"Patience, friend; we must be very patient with the gifted; it is less easy to manage ten talents than two. You said in class-meeting that you believed prayer availed in all cases; if you do, kneel down with me and ask God to take care of this dear lad of your heart both for this life and the next."

So these two men kneeled down beneath the stars and prayed as men pray when their thoughts of God and heaven and eternity are convictions, and not ideas only.

With an impulse that was strangely prophetic, Mark said, as they rose from their knees, "Brother, if it should take the Lord twenty years to answer this prayer, what about it?"

"His ways, Mark, are not our ways. His will be done."

The next day was a great Sunday in Guiseley, and long remembered. Mary Yeadon's engagement was made known, and she walked with her betrothed and brother to chapel. Jonathan was unusually happy: he rejoiced with Mark and Mary, his Sunday-school was large and well-behaved, and there was an immense congregation, and a great time both at the love-feast and the communion. At its close Mark was silently happy; he was, perhaps, too tired to talk; he sat with closed eyes in his corner of the white,