

full of wrath. And when Edith added, with a look of reproachful love, "You see, father, it is partly your fault, because if you had been with me no one would have dared even an insulting glance." Amos was deeply roused.

"My lass," he answered, "I'm sorry I didn't let ivery thing go, and tak' thee to church, as I sud hev done. And thou art right; I'll tak' varry good care neither man nor woman insults thee as long as I hev t' charge in Joe's place. Go thy ways home, and do just as thou hes allays done; and go wheriver ta likes to go, and leave t' rest to me. My word! If they want to talk badly about thee, they'll hev to pay a high figure for it—thet is their husbands will, for I'll tak' it out o' them ivery way. I'll warrant I can mak' both a horse-whip and a lawyer's bill varry unpleasant things."

Then he went off to his mill again, and the man who was wanting time on his yarns, and the hands whose pieces had a flaw in them, had a bad settlement that afternoon with Amos.

That night he was usually silent over his pipe, but Martha let him alone. She knew that sooner or later he would seek her advice. About eight o'clock he sent a note to Perkins, and then he turned to her and said,

"Martha, thou ought to know what mak' of stuff is in women. What does ta think they hev been saying about our Edith?"

"Why then, Amos, I don't hev to guess what they hev been saying. Eliza Yates hes a sister living at Lady Charlton's; and Eliza heard a good bit from her."

"Does ta mind telling me?"

"Why, Amos, there's no good in repeating ill words."

"I'll be bound thou repeated them to Edith?"

"No, I didn't. What does ta tak' me for? Does ta think thou hes a monopoly of all t' sense and kindness there is in this part o' Yorkshire? But if ta wants to know how women talk, I'll tell thee. One said there was no wonder that Edith and thee suited each other so well, two bad-tempered, self-willed tyrants that niver let poor Joe Braithwaite hev a thought o' his own nor a half-penny o' his own to spend.

"They ought to be ashamed o' themselves! Such lies."

"They said, too, that thou hed driven Joe from Bevin, and that Edith had driven him from Bradley."

"As if Joe was such a feather-weight fool as to be driven from pillar to post by an owd father and a young wife—he would deserve it."

"Driven from both places wi' tempers, and black looks, and ordering ways as no man could stand."

"Well then, aught else?"

"Ay, Jeremiah Wade told some one, who told Major Pennington, that he had been in Samuel Yorke's factory, and hed seen Joe in a flannel shirt and blue apron, working in a dye-vat—and his wife living in t' lap o' luxury, as they say—and such and such like."

"Well, then?"