

"Come, come and tell me something about this book; here are some pictures,—I want to know what they mean."

Maggie, with deepening color, went without hesitation to Mr. Riley's elbow and looked over the book, eagerly seizing one corner, and tossing back her mane, while she said,—

"Oh, I'll tell you what that means. It's a dreadful picture, isn't it? But I can't help looking at it. That old woman in the water's a witch,—they've put her in to find out whether she's a witch or no; and if she swims she's a witch, and if she's drowned—and killed, you know—she's innocent, and not a witch, but only a poor silly old woman. But what good would it do her then, you know, when she was drowned? Only, I suppose, she'd go to heaven, and God would make it up to her. And this dreadful blacksmith with his arms akimbo, laughing,—oh, isn't he ugly?—I'll tell you what he is. He's the Devil *really*" (here Maggie's voice became louder and more emphatic), "and not a right blacksmith; for the Devil takes the shape of wicked men, and walks about and sets people doing wicked things, and he's oftener in the shape of a bad man than any other, because, you know, if people saw he was the Devil, a... he roared at 'em, they'd run away, and he couldn't make 'em do what he pleased."

Mr. Tulliver had listened to this exposition of Maggie's with petrifying wonder.

"Why, what book is it the wench nas got hold on?" he burst out at last.

"The 'History of the Devil,' by Daniel Defoe,—not quite the right book for a little girl," said Mr. Riley. "How came it among your books, Mr. Tulliver?"

Maggie looked hurt and discouraged, while her father said,—

"Why, it's one o' the books I bought at Partridge's sale. They was all bound alike,—it's a good binding, you see,—and I thought they'd be all good books. There's Jeremy Taylor's 'Holy Living and Dying' among 'em. I read in it often of a Sunday" (Mr. Tulliver felt somehow a familiarity with that great writer, because his name was Jeremy); "and there's a lot more of 'em,—sermons mostly, I think,—but they've all got the same covers, and I thought they were all o' one sam-