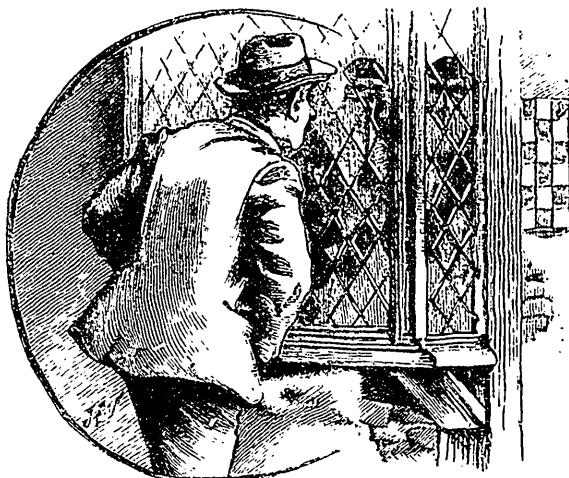


He pondered much as he wended his way towards his lodgings; he felt that there was some strong guiding power which influenced Mr. Denman, but under whose spell he had not himself fallen. He paused outside the window of the little inn at which he always took up his abode when in Bruntale, and listened for a moment to the noise and laughter going on inside; he could distinguish the various voices of his own special cronies, and instead of desiring to join them, and to take his place as leader in the joviality, Timmy felt a shrinking from them which surprised even himself. He walked off somewhat moodily, filling his pipe as he went, and paced round the village green.

"Bother it all!" he exclaimed at length, "pa'son's right, I believe; 'tis the love of God, and that's what he's got, and that's what I wants. There was poor old Mother Brooks; why, she was as poor as poor. I've know'd her lie on that bed of her'n for days wi'out a scrap o' fire, and precious little to eat, and yet she was always bright; and I says to her one day, 'What makes you so bright and peart, mother? You haven't got nothin' as I knows on to look so glad about.' 'Yes, I have, Tim,' she says; 'I've got the love o' God to make me bright, and keep me warm;' and that's what makes pa'son look so glad. I sees it right enough. He does good to others 'cos the love of God puts it into his heart. I used to get up and talk big to 'em 'cos I liked to spout. 'Tain't the right way, Tim Brodie," he continued, "'tain't the right way; I sees it now, and somehow or other I means to alter it: if I'm going to be pa'son's man, I'm going to be like him, too. Let's see how I can fit things in. I must be off to-morrer



"HE PAUSED OUTSIDE THE WINDOW."

and finish up Naresdown way, and then I must go to Skirley. I promised to sweep the chimneys at Lawyer Dale's afore the week was out; but Saturday night I'll come back, and just see what pa'son's got to say for hisself on Sunday."

Timmy carried out his plan, and soon the villagers of Bruntale learned to look for a washed and clean Timmy Brodie to drive into the village on Saturday, and for a still cleaner Timmy to appear at church on Sunday. At first he came in his sweep's clothes, but by degrees his sooty garments vanished, and were replaced by others of a semi-nautical cut, of which, in the depth of his heart, Timmy felt exceedingly proud. Indeed, he had gone to the extent in extravagance to purchase a clothes brush, and every Monday morning the suit was subjected to a severe examination and brushing before it was again tied up in the red cotton handkerchief, which served as his travelling bag. But no thought of clothes or personal appearance interfered with Timmy's attention to the service; and his reverent demeanour was a model to the congregation. His responses were so sonorous, and his singing so hearty, that he began to be looked upon as only second to the organist in matters musical, and the circle round him