

"I have done nothing!" replied George.

"How is it, then, that my iron and steel were always bad? that the screws and rivets that came up from your workshop were always faulty? Why was it that all the men about you, whether in forge or workshop, sneered at me when I passed? Why, if you have not done me any harm, have you avoided me all these long months?"

"Because," said George, boldly, "I could not bear to be with you, and see you deceived by an artful woman, who in vain tried to cajole me into marrying her, and then took up with you."

"It is false!" cried Spencer, angrily.

"Well, think it so; perhaps I have said too much. But one thing is true—I cannot bear to see you so sad. One look at your face brought back all our old times of friendship to my mind, and I could not help running to ask you what ails you?"

Spencer was not in a humour to be friendly with any one just now. George's persevering kindness, and desire to renew their friendship, met with nothing but stern and rude repulses; and at length George threw his arm round his old companion's shoulder, and, with a voice "full of tears," entreated him just to say one kind word at parting, and promised to plague him to be friends no more.

Spencer, really touched, walked on for some little way, without rudely throwing off the arm of George, but in silence. At last he put out his hand. "I forgive you, George," said he. "Even if you have not injured me, you have hurt me much by your coldness—but I forgive you."

With a renewed suspicion of his wife's truthfulness, Spencer reached his home, gloomy and sullen.

"Ellen," said he, "I am accused of theft. I am as innocent as the poor babe that will soon be born to want and misery. I have reason to think that you have deceived