

tomed to saying affectionate words, not ashamed to confess how sadly they had undervalued their past, how eagerly they looked forward to their future. Joe was as anxious for his letters as the most eager lover, and though Samuel Yorke had been quite right in saying that Joe would be too tired to want anything but his bed, he nevertheless found writing to his wife as refreshing as sleep.

After a while, Edith began to read portions of Joe's letters, describing his life and work, to Amos as he smoked his pipe by the parlour fire, or strolled with her in the garden after dinner. They were certainly very fine letters, and both the wife and father grew to wonderfully respect the writer. Edith always praised them extravagantly; Amos said very little, but as he stroked his chin complacently he congratulated himself upon having such a remarkably clever son.

One day, Joe had been sent to Liverpool to buy cotton. He had gone frequently with his godfather, but this time he had been trusted to use his own judgment. The result had been very satisfactory; and Joe's letter described so vividly the cotton exchange, with its crowd of eager merchants and cautious buyers, that Edith could not wait for her usual visit. She ordered her carriage and went at once to Bevin Hall.

Amos was much impressed by the letter, for he knew, if Yorke trusted Joe to buy cotton, he had great reliance on his abilities, and the witty, pithy descriptions of life and character interested him very much. When Edith had left, he remained a long time silent, occasionally lifting his eyes to Martha, who was busy hemming some of the fine damask just bought. Finally, he took his pipe from his mouth, and said:

"Martha, we hev been a bit in t' dark about Joe. He seems to be a varry unusual young man."

"Speak for thyself, Amos. I allays said Joe was a varry unusual young man. If he sud go to Parliament and sit at t' Queen's right hand, I sud not feel a bit of surprise at it."

"Joe tak's after me a good deal. I used to hev just such ideas about men and things as he hes."

"Thee!"

"To be sure I hed. But I niver hed any education, and I couldn't write them down on paper, and I niver hed any one to talk to."

"Tell the truth Amos. Thou wert far too busy making money to either write or talk; and if such thoughts iver did come into thy head, thou sent them packing to the tune of £. s. d. I'll warrant thou did."

"I say Joe takes after me, Martha."

"Joe takes after his mother. He's got all t' talents he hes from her."

"I say Joke takes after me."

"When he settles down to money-making, he will take after thee; not until then, Amos."