

## The Village Blacksmith.

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gave all the impression of that substantial comfort which a thrifty tradesman can gather about his home, at least when he is not pent up in the lanes of a large town. And James Forbes was not only thrifty; he had all the success which a heart, untempted by the illusions of city life, need desire. In all the parish of Arderholm he had no rival in trade; and, what is better, he had so much of the old-fashioned workman's pride in honest work, that a rival would not have been welcomed by a single soul in the parish. Even from the outskirts of the surrounding parishes, farmers, who wanted a bit of smith-work particularly well done, brought horses, carts, and all sorts of agricultural implements to the smithy at Arderholm, while almost every day one of Lord Westholme's servants came over from Oakshaw House with something to be repaired. The smith, therefore, was seldom left idle for a minute during the working hours of the day. He always found employment even for one or two apprentices, sons of his neighbours, who learnt their trade at his smithy, and then went off to seek their fortunes in Glasgow or one of the other manufacturing towns of the West.

One evening in midsummer, James Forbes was sauntering about the little garden in front of his