

aid, "I see now."
he; he said, slowly and
tle lad o' mine an'—his

med, "I never knew
ed man, Tim."

ed upon his hand again.
y at the grass with the

beant, Mester," he an-
strained fashion. "I
at God-a'-moighty 'ud

l," I fattered; "you
poor girl never was
ite."

aw says," slowly: "I
an' so did the poor
the matter, Mester;

hand went up to his
and hid it, but I did
o much of strange grief
that I felt words would

s not my dogged, inex-
as sitting before me in
the baby's grave; it
then history of some
kept secret in his
s a history very few
I would not ques-
sided he meant to ex-
t that if he was willing
t was best that he
time for it, and so I let

waited very long he
lf, as I had thought

six years ago I comn
or less, welly about
chap then, Mester,
s, but I had more
pen I wur better
ke I wur loighter-
s to do wi' it.

e more than a week
ng woman to moind
me, an' this young
modest takes my
ke th' rest o' the
an' slattern i' her
et loike and nowt
er I says to mysen,
trouble; an' some-
er afterward I says
'at's seed trouble.'
d a soft loike brown
i' her voice—her
I sometimes thowt
en i' her dress. If

she'd been born a lady she'd ha' been one o'
th' foine soart, an' as she'd been born a fac-
tory-lass she wur one o' th' foine soart still.
So I took to watchin' her an' tryin' to mak'
friends wi' her, but I never had much luck
wi' her till one neet I was goin' home through
th' snow, and I seed her afore fighten' th'
drift wi' nowt but a thin shawl over her
head; so I goes up behind her an' I says to
her, steady and respectful, so as she wouldna
be feart, I says—

"Lass, let me see thee home. It's bad
weather fur thee to be out in by thyself.
Tak' my coat an' wrop thee up in it, an' tak'
hold o' my arm an' let me help thee along."

"She looks up right straightforrad i' my
face wi' her brown eyes, an' I tell yo', Mester,
I wur glad I wur a houcat man 'stead o' a
rascal, fur them quiet eyes 'ud ha' fun my
out afore I'd ha done sayin' my say
meant harm.

"Thank yo' kindly Mester Hibblethwaite,"
she says, "but dunnot tak' off th' coat fur
me; I'm doin' pretty nicely. It is Mester
Hibblethwaite, beant it?"

"Aye, lass, I answers, 'it's him. Mought
I ax yo're name."

"Aye, to be sure," said she. "My
name's Rosanna—'Sanna Brent th' folk at th'
mill allus ca's me. I work at th' loom i' th'
next room to thine. I've seed thee often an'
often."

"So we walks home to her lodgings,
an' on th' way we talks together friendly
an' quiet loike, an' th' more we talks
th' more I sees she's had trouble,
an' by an' by—bein' on'y common workin'
folk, we're straightforrad to each other in our
plain way—it comes out what her trouble
has been.

"Yo' p'raps wouldn't think I've been a
married woman, Mester," she says; "but I
ha', an' I wedded and rued. I married a
sojer when I wur a giddy young wench, four
years ago, an' it wur th' worst thing as ever
I did i' aw my days. He wur one o' yo're
handsome, fastish chaps, an' he tired o' me
as men o' his stripe allus do tire o' poor
lasses, an' then he ill-treated me. He wen-
to th' Crimea after we'n been wed a year, an'
left me to shift fur mysen. An' I heard six
month after he wur dead. He'd never writ
back to me nor sent me no help, but I could-
na think he wur dead till th' letter come.
He wur killed th' first month he wur out
fightin' th' Rooshians. Poor fellow!
Poor Phil! Th' Lord ha mercy on
him!"

"That wur how I found out about her
trouble, an' somehow it seemed to draw me
to her, an' make me feel kindly to'ards her;
'twur so pitiful to hear her talk about th'
rascal, so sorrowful an' gentle, and not gi'

him a real hard word for a' he'd done. But
that's allus th' way wi' women folk—th'
more yo' harrys them, th' more they'll pity
yo' an' pray for yo'. Why she wurna more
than twenty-two then, an' she must
ha' been nowt but a slip o' a lass when they
wur weel.

"How's ever, Rosanna Brent an' me got to
be good friends, an' we walked home
together o' nights, an' talked about our
bits o' wage and our bits o' debt,
an' th' way that wench 'ud keep me
up i' spirits when I wur a bit down-hearted
about owt, wur just a wonder. She wur so
quiet an' steady, an' when she said owt she
meant it, an' she never said too much or too
little. Her brown eyes allus minded me o'
my mother, though th' old woman deed
when I were nobbut a little chap, but I
never seed 'Sanna Brent smile th'out thinkin'
o' how my mother looked when I wur kneel-
in' down sayin' my prayers after her. An'
bein' as th' lass wur so dear to me, I made up
my mind to ax her to be summat dearer. So
once goin' home wi' her, I takes hold o' her
hand an' lifts it up an' kisses it gentle—as
gentle an' wi' summat th' same feelin' as I'd
kiss the Good Book.

"'Sanna,' I says, 'bein' as yo've had so
much trouble wi' yo're first chance, would
yo' be afraid to try a second? Could
yo' trust a mon again? Such a mon as me,
'Sanna?'

"I wouldna be feart to trust thee, Tim,"
she answers back soft an' gentle after a man-
ner. "I wouldna be feart to trust thee any
time."

"I kisses her hand again, gentler still.

"God bless thee, lass," I says. "Does
that mean yes?"

"She crept up closer to me i' her sweet,
quiet way.

"Aye, lad," she answers. "It means yes,
an' I'll bide by it."

"An' tha shalt never rue it lass," said I,
'Tha's given thy life to me, and I'll gie
mine to thee, sure and true.'

"So we wur axed i' the church the next
Sunday, an' a month for then we wur wed,
and if ever God's sun shone on a happy mon,
it shone on one that day, when we come out
o' church together—me and Rosanna—and
went to our bit of a home to begin life again.
I couldna tell thee, Mester—their beant no
words to tell how happy and peaceful we
lived fur two year after that. My lass never
altered her sweet ways, and I just loved her
to make up fur what had gone by. I thanked
God-a'-moighty fur his blessing every day
and every day I prayed to be made worthy of
it. And here's just where I'd like to ask a
question, Mester, about summat that's wor-
retted me a good deal. I dunnot want to