

ciently disconcerting. Yet, in another part of his mind, he felt strangely serene and happy, for he was sure now of winning his bet of one shilling with Randolph Sneyd. In the first place, the failure of Eardleys would annihilate the organ scheme, and in the second place no one would have the audacity to ask him for a subscription of a hundred pounds when it was known that he would be a heavy sufferer in the Eardley bankruptcy.

Later in the day he happened to meet one of the Eardleys, and at once launched into a stream of that hot invective of which he was a master. And all the while he was conscious of a certain hypocrisy in his attitude of violence; he could not dismiss the notion that the Eardleys had put him under an obligation by failing precisely at this juncture.

IV

ON the Saturday evening only Sneyd and Mrs Lovatt came up to Hillport, Enoch Lovatt being away from home. Therefore there were no cards; they talked of the Eardley affair.

"You'll have to manage with the old organ now," was one of the first things that Peake said to Mrs Lovatt, after he had recited his own woe. He smiled grimly as he said it.

"I don't see why," Sneyd remarked. It was not true; he saw perfectly; but he enjoyed the rousing of Jim Peake into a warm altercation.

"Not at all," said Mrs Lovatt, proudly. "We shall have the organ, I'm sure. There was an urgency committee meeting last night. Titus Blackhurst has most generously given another hundred; he said it would be a shame if the bankruptcy of professed Methodists was allowed to prejudice the interests of