

ference to send him here. He's been used to pit lads, an' thinks m'happen he can do summat for 'em."

That night, when the works closed, Sam and Ben again fell into each other's company. As they passed down King Street, Sam said, "It wor jus' here I wor thrashing Todd when she touched me."

"An' that's preacher's house, an' yonder he comes himsel', an' I'd say fur sure that the lile lass with him is the verra yan ya mean, Sam."

"Ay, ay, en's her;" and before the men could say more Ben had greeted his new pastor.

The preacher was a man in the prime of life, and quite a match physically for Sam Naylor. Indeed, a dim doubt as to how a fight would have terminated in case the father instead of the daughter had chosen "to potter in his affairs" crossed Sam's mind. Perhaps if he had known at that time that the Rev. John Burslam had once wielded a heavier hammer than his own, he might have had still graver doubts as to his ability to thrash him.

He was annoyed at Ben stopping to speak to him; but the preacher had said, "Good evening, Mr. Naylor," and offered his hand; and the courtesy had so far pleased Sam that he felt constrained to accept it. Besides, little Mary Burslam had also said, "Good evening, Mr. Naylor," and the charm of her voice and eyes he could no more resist than could his dog, which had instantly bowed his great head to the touch of her small fingers.

Several pitmen passed, and looked curiously or insolently at the trio, but this circumstance only made Sam more pleasant with the preacher. He noted well every offender, and he mentally promised each of them "such a topper of a lesson as he'd need nobbut yance."

So, for reasons easily understood, the meeting was rather a prolonged one. The preacher had discovered Sam's influence in the village, and longed to win so valuable a coadjutor. Ben Boocock was proud of his minister and proud of his friend, and proud also of the sensation that the two talking together were making in the village; and Sam was defiantly passive in the hands of Ben, "acause he wor bound to talk wi' auther Methody or divil wi'out axing cat or Christian about it."

Then the preacher had shaken hands with him, and called him "Mr. Naylor," and though Sam had said, "Nay, nay, I'se plain Sam al'ays," he had secretly been very much pleased with the compliment. He was, indeed, too busy with his own peculiar position in the eyes of the men passing to understand very clearly what was being said about "a night school" and a "temperance."