

ended in silence, when we all looked in trouble at the fire and then went home. As for starting him on the story when he was not in the vein, it was like breasting the brae against a high wind.

When the events happened I was only a lad. I cannot send my mind back to the time when I could pass Haggart without the side-glance nearly all Thrums offered to his reputation, and he is best pictured hunkering at Tillyloss, one of a row of his admirers. After eight o'clock it was the pleasant custom of the weavers to sit in the open against a house or dyke, their knees near their chins and their ears ready for Haggart. Then his face would be contracted in pain as some strange idea bothered him and he searched for its humorous aspect. Perhaps ten minutes afterwards his face would expand, he would slap his knees, and we knew that the struggle was over. It was one of his ways, disliked at the time, yet admired on reflection, not to take us into the secret of his laughter; but he usually ended by looking whimsically in the direction of the burying-ground, when we were perfectly aware of the source of the joke, and those of us nudged each other who were not scared. Un-