

wi' th' little curls tassin', an' th' little legs welly flyin', an' soon as I'veer ho'od see me ho'od strike out. 'Daddy, daddie.' Eh, dear o' me! To think ho'od's layin' in her grave now!"

Jim quickened his pace but not a word said he.

"But it's naught to thee as how 'tis. Thou's a fancy fur summat new. Maggie wur a good lass to thee but ho'od's dead now, an' thou reckons to give th' little 'un a step-mother. Ho'od break her little 'eart—an' th' missus yonder—it 'ull go near to kill her—but thou cares naught. Nay—thou'lt ha' thy Annie Davises as 'ull never do fur th' little wench same as us. Ho'od be showin' 'er 'ere an' there out of the road, an' knockin' 'er about as like as not. But I tell 'ee what it is, lad—thou may ha' thy Annie Davises to thyself—ho'od ha' none of our little un—we keep her."

Jack nodded his head looking determined. His face was red with anger and agitation, the veins in his forehead swollen; and he spoke loudly and disjointedly, for he was breathless, partly with eagerness, partly because he was obliged to walk quickly to keep up with Jim. But in spite of his withering emphasis in alluding to Annie—numbering her name in the plural by way of denoting greater sarcasm and scorn—anyone who knew him would have guessed that for all his lofty air the tears were not very far off.

They were nearly home now, and suddenly Curly's little figure appeared trotting towards them, and her voice was heard uttering ecstatic crows of welcome.

Jim broke into a run, and stretched out his arms.

"Coom, little lass, coom to Daddy."

"Nay," cried Jack, hoarsely, following Jim at a kind of hobbling canter. "Don't see go to him, Curly, come to Daddy Jack. Daddy Jack loves thee. Daddy Jack 'ull do aught i' th' wide world fur 'ee."

"Daddy Jack and Daddy Jim!" cried Curly running from one to the other with little screams of laughter, and thinking it the best fun in the world. But the two men were tremendously in earnest.

"Eh, Curly, hasto ne'er a kias for thy own daddy?" pleaded Jim.

"Nay, coom thy ways to me, little wench," cried Jack, who was fast losing every vestige of self-control. "Coom. Daddy Jim cares naught fur lasses as have no blue e'en an' red cheeks. He's getten a new lass—he wants none o' thee now."

Curly paused, pouted, looked from one to the other of the angry faces,

and finally uttering a loud wail, announced that she wouldn't have no daddy at all, an' sh'd tell her gronny, she would. She went away, whimpering; and Jim turned round with a countenance working with fury.

"Ah, an' thou'd happen like to hit me now?" suggested Jack, noting the clenched fist.

"I would," said Jim. "An' I'd do 't too to any other man. Thou—thou didn't need to say these things to th' little lass."

Then he drew back a little way, and looked at him with a kind of respectful admiration.

"Well Jim," he said, slowly. "Thou cannot say no fairer than that. Nave, thou connot, lad. Theer, gi's thy hand, 'Dom Annie Divis,' says thous, and 'Dom her,' says I, an' nobody can say more. Eh, shake hands, mon. Thou'rt a good lad, Jim, when all's said an' done."

He grasped Jim's hand warmly, and the two faced each other a moment in



M. T. MCKENZIE, EX M.H.R., RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE OLD COUNTRY.

There was a quaver in his voice, but Daddy Jack would not let himself be softened.

"It wur nobbut truth," he said. "It is na truth," shouted Jim, "and thou knows it is na truth. Thou knows as —"

"I know as thee an' Annie Davis—" "Dom Annie Davis," interrupted Daddy Jim, with an indignant sob.

Daddy Jack's countenance cleared, and stepping hastily forward, he clapped Jim heartily on the shoulder.

silence, a big tear rolling down the old man's cheek, and Jim's broad chest heaving.

Presently Curly peeped round the corner.

"Daddy Jack!" she said, advancing slowly, all ready to whimper again at the slightest provocation.

Daddy Jack loosed his grip of her father's hand and clapped his own together.

"Jest in time, little wench! Hurry now—run to Daddy Jim."

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