Sheba Blake Publishing

ANNA
OF THE FIVE TOWNS

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Anna of the Five Towns

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One

The Kindling of Love

The yard was all silent and empty under the burning afternoon heat, which had made its asphalt springy like turf, when suddenly the children threw themselves out of the great doors at either end of the Sunday-school—boys from the right, girls from the left—in two howling, impetuous streams, that widened, eddied, intermingled and formed backwaters until the whole quadrangle was full of clamour and movement. Many of the scholars carried prize-books bound in vivid tints, and proudly exhibited these volumes to their companions and to the teachers, who, tall, languid, and condescending, soon began to appear amid the restless throng. Near the left-hand door a little girl of twelve years, dressed in a cream coloured frock, with a wide and heavy straw hat, stood quietly kicking her foal-like legs against the wall. She was one of those who had won a prize, and once or twice she took the treasure from under her arm to glance at its frontispiece with a vague smile of satisfaction. For a time her bright eyes were fixed expectantly on the doorway; then they would wander, and she started to count the windows of the various Connexional buildings which on three sides enclosed the yard— chapel, school, lecture-hall, and chapel-keeper's house. Most of the children had

already squeezed through the narrow iron gate into the street beyond, where a steam-car was rumbling and clattering up Duck Bank, attended by its immense shadow. The teachers remained a little behind. Gradually dropping the pedagogic pose, and happy in the virtuous sensation of duty accomplished, they forgot the frets and fatigues of the day, and grew amiably vivacious among themselves. With an instinctive mutual complacency the two sexes mixed again after separation. Greetings and pleasantries were exchanged, and intimate conversations begun; and then, dividing into small familiar groups, the young men and women slowly followed their pupils out of the gate. The chapel-keeper, who always had an injured expression, left the white step of his residence, and, walking with official dignity across the yard, drew down the side-windows of the chapel one after another. As he approached the little solitary girl in his course he gave her a reluctant acid recognition; then he returned to his hearth. Agnes was alone.

'Well, young lady?'

She looked round with a jump, and blushed, smiling and screwing up her little shoulders, when she recognised the two men who were coming towards her from the door of the lecture-hall. The one who had called out was Henry Mynors, morning superintendent of the Sunday-school and conductor of the men's Bible-class held in the lecture-hall on Sunday afternoons. The other was William Price, usually styled Willie Price, secretary of the same Bible-class, and son of Titus Price, the afternoon superintendent.

'I'm sure you don't deserve that prize. Let me see if it isn't too good for you.' Mynors smiled playfully down upon Agnes Tellwright as he idly turned the leaves of the book which she handed to him. 'Now, do you deserve it? Tell me honestly.'

She scrutinised those sparkling and vehement black eyes with the fearless calm of infancy. 'Yes, I do,' she answered in her high, thin voice, having at length decided within herself that Mr. Mynors was joking.

'Then I suppose you must have it,' he admitted, with a fine air of giving way.

As Agnes took the volume from him she thought how perfect a man Mr. Mynors was. His eyes, so kind and sincere, and that mysterious, delicious, inexpressible something which dwelt behind his eyes: these constituted an ideal for her.

Willie Price stood somewhat apart, grinning, and pulling a thin honey-coloured moustache. He was at the uncouth, disjointed age, twenty-one, and nine years younger than Henry Mynors. Despite a continual effort after ease of manner, he was often sheepish and self-conscious, even, as now, when he could discover no reason for such a condition of mind. But Agnes liked him too. His simple, pale blue eyes had a wistfulness which made her feel towards him as she felt towards her doll when she happened to find it lying neglected on the floor.

'Your big sister isn't out of school yet?' Mynors remarked.

Agnes shook her head. 'I've been waiting ever so long,' she said plaintively.

At that moment a grey-haired woman with a benevolent but rather pinched face emerged with much briskness from the girls' door. This was Mrs. Sutton, a distant relative of Mynors'—his mother had been her second cousin. The men raised their hats.

'I've just been down to make sure of some of you slippery folks for the sewing-meeting,' she said, shaking hands with Mynors, and including both him and Willie Price in an embracing maternal smile. She was short-sighted and did not perceive Agnes, who had fallen back.

'Had a good class this afternoon, Henry?' Mrs. Sutton's breathing was short and quick.

'Oh, yes,' he said, 'very good indeed.'

'You're doing a grand work.'

'We had over seventy present,' he added.

'Eh!' she said, 'I make nothing of numbers, Henry. I meant a good class. Doesn't it say— Where two or three are gathered together…? But I must be getting on. The horse will be restless. I've to go up to Hillport before tea. Mrs. Clayton Vernon is ill.'

Scarcely having stopped in her active course, Mrs. Sutton drew the men along with her down the yard, she and Mynors in rapid talk: Willie Price fell a little to the rear, his big hands half-way into his pockets and his eyes diffidently roving. It appeared as though he could not find courage to take a share in the conversation, yet was anxious to convince himself of his right to do so.

Mynors helped Mrs. Sutton into her carriage, which had been drawn up outside the gate of the school yard. Only two families of the Bursley Wesleyan Methodists kept a carriage, the Suttons and the Clayton Vernons. The latter, boasting lineage and a large house in the aristocratic suburb of Hillport, gave to the society monetary aid and a gracious condescension. But though indubitably above the operation of any unwritten sumptuary law, even the Clayton Vernons ventured only in wet weather to bring their carriage to chapel. Yet Mrs. Sutton, who was a plain woman, might with impunity use her equipage on Sundays. This license granted by Connexional opinion was due to the fact that she so obviously regarded her carriage, not as a carriage, but as a contrivance on four wheels for enabling an infirm creature to move rapidly from place to place. When she got into it she had exactly the air of a doctor on

his rounds. Mrs. Sutton's bodily frame had long ago proved inadequate to the ceaseless demands of a spirit indefatigably altruistic, and her continuance in activity was a notable illustration of the dominion of mind over matter. Her husband, a potter's valuer and commission agent, made money with facility in that lucrative vocation, and his wife's charities were famous, notwithstanding her attempts to hide them. Neither husband nor wife had allowed riches to put a factitious gloss upon their primal simplicity. They were as they were, save that Mr. Sutton had joined the Five Towns Field Club and acquired some of the habits of an archæologist. The influence of wealth on manners was to be observed only in their daughter Beatrice, who, while favouring her mother, dressed at considerable expense, and at intervals gave much time to the arts of music and painting. Agnes watched the carriage drive away, and then turned to look up the stairs within the school doorway. She sighed, scowled, and sighed again, murmured something to herself, and finally began to read her book.

'Not come out yet?' Mynors was at her side once more, alone this time.

'No, not yet,' said Agnes, wearied. 'Yes. Here she is. Anna, what ages you've been!

Anna Tellwright stood motionless for a second in the shadow of the doorway. She was tail, but not unusually so, and sturdily built up. Her figure, though the bust was a little flat, had the lenient curves of absolute maturity. Anna had been a woman since seventeen, and she was now on the eve of her twenty-first birthday. She wore a plain, home-made light frock checked with brown and edged with brown velvet, thin cotton gloves of cream colour, and a broad straw hat like her sister's. Her grave face, owing to the prominence of the cheekbones and the width of the jaw, had a slight angularity; the lips were thin, the brown eyes rather large, the eyebrows level, the nose fine and delicate; the ears could scarcely be seen for the dark brown hair which was

brushed diagonally across the temples, leaving of the forehead only a pale triangle. It seemed a face for the cloister, austere in contour, fervent in expression, the severity of it mollified by that resigned and spiritual melancholy peculiar to women who through the error of destiny have been born into a wrong environment.

As if charmed forward by Mynors' compelling eyes, Anna stepped into the sunlight, at the same time putting up her parasol. 'How calm and stately she is,' he thought, as she gave him her cool hand and murmured a reply to his salutation. But even his aquiline gaze could not surprise the secrets of that concealing breast: this was one of the three great tumultuous moments of her life—she realised for the first time that she was loved.

'You are late this afternoon, Miss Tellwright,' Mynors began, with the easy inflections of a man well accustomed to prominence in the society of women. Little Agnes seized Anna's left arm, silently holding up the prize, and Anna nodded appreciation.

'Yes,' she said as they walked across the yard, 'one of my girls has been doing wrong. She stole a Bible from another girl, so of course I had to mention it to the superintendent. Mr. Price gave her a long lecture, and now she is waiting upstairs till he is ready to go with her to her home and talk to her parents. He says she must be dismissed.'

'Dismissed!'

Anna's look flashed a grateful response to him. By the least possible emphasis he had expressed a complete disagreement with his senior colleague which etiquette forbade him to utter in words.

'I think it's a very great pity,' Anna said firmly. 'I rather like the girl,' she ventured in haste; 'you might speak to Mr. Price about it.'

'If he mentions it to me.'

'Yes, I meant that. Mr. Price said—if it had been anything else but a Bible—'

'Um!' he murmured very low, but she caught the significance of his intonation. They did not glance at each other: it was unnecessary. Anna felt that comfortable easement of the spirit which springs from the recognition of another spirit capable of understanding without explanations and of sympathising without a phrase. Under that calm mask a strange and sweet satisfaction thrilled through her as her precious instinct of common sense—rarest of good qualities, and pining always for fellowship— found a companion in his own. She had dreaded the overtures which for a fortnight past she had foreseen were inevitably to come from Mynors: he was a stranger, whom she merely respected. Now in a sudden disclosure she knew him and liked him. The dire apprehension of those formal 'advances' which she had watched other men make to other women faded away. It was at once a release and a reassurance.

They were passing through the gate, Agnes skipping round her sister's skirts, when Willie Price reappeared from the direction of the chapel.

'Forgotten something?' Mynors inquired of him blandly.

'Ye-es,' he stammered, clumsily raising his hat to Anna. She thought of him exactly as Agnes had done. He hesitated for a fraction of time, and then went up the yard towards the lecture-hall.

'Agnes has been showing me her prize,' said Mynors, as the three stood together outside the gate. 'I ask her if she thinks she really deserves it, and she says she does. What do you think, Miss Big Sister?

Anna gave the little girl an affectionate smile of comprehension. 'What is it called, dear?'

'"Janey's Sacrifice or the Spool of Cotton, and other stories for children,"' Agnes read out in a monotone: then she clutched Anna's elbow and aimed a

whisper at her ear.

'Very well, dear,' Anna answered loud, 'but we must be back by a quarter-past four.' And turning to Mynors: 'Agnes wants to go up to the Park to hear the band play.'

'I'm going up there, too,' he said. 'Come along, Agnes, take my arm and show me the way.' Shyly Agnes left her sister's side and put a pink finger into Mynors' hand.

Moor Road, which climbs over the ridge to the mining village of Moorthorne and passes the new Park on its way, was crowded with people going up to criticise and enjoy this latest outcome of municipal enterprise in Bursley: sedate elders of the borough who smiled grimly to see one another on Sunday afternoon in that undignified, idly curious throng; white-skinned potters, and miners with the swarthy pallor of subterranean toil; untidy Sabbath loafers whom neither church nor chapel could entice, and the primly-clad respectable who had not only clothes but a separate deportment for the seventh day; house-wives whose pale faces, as of prisoners free only for a while, showed a naive and timorous pleasure in the unusual diversion; young women made glorious by richly-coloured stuffs and carrying themselves with the defiant independence of good wages earned in warehouse or painting-shop; youths oppressed by stiff new clothes bought at Whitsuntide, in which the bright necktie and the nosegay revealed a thousand secret aspirations; young children running and yelling with the marvellous energy of their years; here and there a small well-dressed group whose studious repudiation of the crowd betrayed a conscious eminence of rank; louts, drunkards, idiots, beggars, waifs, outcasts, and every oddity of the town: all were more or less under the influence of a new excitement, and all with the same face of pleased

expectancy looked towards the spot where, half-way up the hill, a denser mass of sightseers indicated the grand entrance to the Park.

'What stacks of folks!' Agnes exclaimed. 'It's like going to a football match.'

'Do you go to football matches, Agnes?' Mynors asked. The child gave a giggle.

Anna was relieved when these two began to chatter. She had at once, by a firm natural impulse, subdued the agitation which seized her when she found Mynors waiting with such an obvious intention at the school door; she had conversed with him in tones of quiet ease; his attitude had even enabled her in a few moments to establish a pleasant familiarity with him. Nevertheless, as they joined the stream of people in Moor Road, she longed to be at home, in her kitchen, in order to examine herself and the new situation thus created by Mynors. And yet also she was glad that she must remain at his side, but it was a fluttered joy that his presence gave her, too strange for immediate appreciation. As her eye, without directly looking at him, embraced the suave and admirable male creature within its field of vision, she became aware that he was quite inscrutable to her. What were his inmost thoughts, his ideals, the histories of his heart? Surely it was impossible that she should ever know these secrets! He—and she : they were utterly foreign to each other. So the primary dissonances of sex vibrated within her, and her own feelings puzzled her. Still, there was an instant pleasure, delightful, if disturbing and inexplicable. And also there was a sensation of triumph, which, though she tried to scorn it, she could not banish. That a man and a woman should saunter together on that road was nothing; but the circumstance acquired tremendous importance when the man happened to be Henry Mynors and the woman Anna Tellwright. Mynors—handsome, dark, accomplished, exemplary and prosperous—had walked for ten years circumspect and Unscathed amid the glances of a whole

legion of maids. As for Anna, the peculiarity of her position had always marked her for special attention: ever since her father settled in Bursley, she had felt herself to be the object of an interest in which awe and pity were equally mingled. She guessed that the fact of her going to the Park with Mynors that afternoon would pass swiftly from mouth to mouth like the rumour of a decisive event. She had no friends; her innate reserve had been misinterpreted, and she was not popular among the Wesleyan community. Many people would say, and more would think, that it was her money which was drawing Mynors from the narrow path of his celibate discretion. She could imagine all the innuendoes, the expressive nods, the pursing of lips, the lifting of shoulders and of eyebrows. 'Money 'll do owt': that was the proverb. But she cared not. She had the just and unshakable self-esteem which is fundamental in all strong and righteous natures; and she knew beyond the possibility of doubt that, though Mynors might have no incurable aversion to a fortune, she herself, the spirit and body of her, had been the sole awakener of his desire.

By a common instinct, Mynors and Anna made little Agnes the centre of attraction. Mynors continued to tease her, and Agnes growing courageous, began to retort. She was now walking between them, and the other two smiled to each other at the child's sayings over her head, interchanging thus messages too subtle and delicate for the coarse medium of words.

As they approached the Park the bandstand came into sight over the railway cutting, and they could hear the music of 'The Emperor's Hymn.' The crude, brazen sounds were tempered in their passage through the warm, still air, and fell gently on the ear in soft waves, quickening every heart to unaccustomed emotions. Children leaped forward, and old people unconsciously assumed a lightsome vigour.

The Park rose in terraces from the railway station to a street of small villas almost on the ridge of the hill. From its gilded gates to its smallest geranium-slips it was brand-new, and most of it was red. The keeper's house, the bandstand, the kiosks, the balustrades, the shelters—all these assailed the eye with a uniform redness of brick and tile which nullified the pallid greens of the turf and the frail trees. The immense crowd, in order to circulate, moved along in tight processions, inspecting one after another the various features of which they had read full descriptions in the 'Staffordshire Signal' —waterfall, grotto, lake, swans, boat, seats, faïence, statues— and scanning with interest the names of the donors so clearly inscribed on such objects of art and craft as from divers motives had been presented to the town by its citizens. Mynors, as he maneuvred a way for the two girls through the main avenue up to the topmost terrace, gravely judged each thing upon its merits, approving this, condemning that. In deciding that under all the circumstances the Park made a very creditable appearance he only reflected the best local opinion. The town was proud of its achievement, and it had the right to be; for, though this narrow pleasaunce was in itself unlovely, it symbolised the first faint renascence of the longing for beauty in a district long given up to unredeemed ugliness.

At length, Mynors having encountered many acquaintances, they got past the bandstand and stood on the highest terrace, which was almost deserted. Beneath them, in front, stretched a maze of roofs, dominated by the gold angel of the Town Hall spire. Bursley, the ancient home of the potter, has an antiquity of a thousand years. It lies towards the north end of an extensive valley, which must have been one of the fairest spots in Alfred's England, but which is now defaced by the activities of a quarter of a million of people. Five contiguous towns—Turnhill, Bursley, Hanbridge, Knype, and Longshaw—united by a single winding thoroughfare some eight miles in length, have

inundated the valley like a succession of great lakes. Of these five Bursley is the mother, but Hanbridge is the largest. They are mean and forbidding of aspect —sombre, hard-featured, uncouth; and the vaporous poison of their ovens and chimneys has soiled and shrivelled the surrounding country till there is no village lane within a league but what offers a gaunt and ludicrous travesty of rural charms. Nothing could be more prosaic than the huddled, red-brown streets; nothing more seemingly remote from romance. Yet be it said that romance is even here—the romance which, for those who have an eye to perceive it, ever dwells amid the seats of industrial manufacture, softening the coarseness, transfiguring the squalor, of these mighty alchemic operations. Look down into the valley from this terrace-height where love is kindling, embrace the whole smoke-girt amphitheatre in a glance, and it may be that you will suddenly comprehend the secret and superb significance of the vast Doing which goes forward below. Because they seldom think, the townsmen take shame when indicted for having disfigured half a county in order to live. They have not understood that this disfigurement is merely an episode in the unending warfare of man and nature, and calls for no contrition. Here, indeed, is nature repaid for some of her notorious cruelties. She imperiously bids man sustain and reproduce himself, and this is one of the places where in the very act of obedience he wounds and maltreats her. Out beyond the municipal confines, where the subsidiary industries of coal and iron prosper amid a wreck of verdure, the struggle is grim, appalling, heroic—so ruthless is his havoc of her, so indomitable her ceaseless recuperation. On the one side is a wresting from nature's own bowels of the means to waste her; on the other, an undismayed, enduring fortitude. The grass grows; though it is not green, it grows. In the very heart of the valley, hedged about with furnaces, a farm still stands, and at harvest-time the sooty sheaves are gathered in.

The band stopped playing. A whole population was idle in the Park, and it seemed, in the fierce calm of the sunlight, that of all the strenuous weekday vitality of the district only a murmurous hush remained. But everywhere on the horizon, and nearer, furnaces cast their heavy smoke across the borders of the sky: the Doing was never suspended.

'Mr. Mynors,' said Agnes, still holding his hand, when they had been silent a moment, 'when do those furnaces go out?'

'They don't go out,' he answered, 'unless there is a strike. It costs hundreds and hundreds of pounds to light them again.'

'Does it?' she said vaguely. 'Father says it's the smoke that stops my gilliflowers from growing.'

Mynors turned to Anna. 'Your father seems the picture of health. I saw him out this morning at a quarter to seven, as brisk as a boy. What a constitution!'

'Yes,' Anna replied, 'he is always up at six.'

'But you aren't, I suppose?'

'Yes, I too.'

'And me too,' Agnes interjected.

'And how does Bursley compare with Hanbridge?' Mynors continued. Anna paused before replying.

'I like it better,' she said. 'At first—last year— I thought I shouldn't.'

'By the way, your father used to preach in Hanbridge circuit—'

'That was years ago,' she said quickly.

'But why won't he preach here? I dare say you know that we are rather short of local preachers— good ones, that is.'

'I can't say why father doesn't preach now:' Anna flushed as she spoke. 'You had better ask him that.'

'Well, I will do,' he laughed. 'I am coming to see him soon—perhaps one night next week.'

Anna looked at Henry Mynors as he uttered the astonishing words. The Tellwrights had been in Bursley a year, but no visitor had crossed their doorsteps except the minister, once, and such poor defaulters as came, full of excuse and obsequious conciliation, to pay rent overdue.

'Business, I suppose?' she said, and prayed that he might not be intending to make a mere call of ceremony.

'Yes, business,' he answered lightly. 'But you will be in?'

'I am always in,' she said. She wondered what the business could be, and felt relieved to know that his visit would have at least some assigned pretext; but already her heart beat with apprehensive perturbation at the thought of his presence in their household.

'See!' said Agnes, whose eyes were everywhere. 'There's Miss Sutton.'

Both Mynors and Anna looked sharply round. Beatrice Sutton was coming towards them along the terrace. Stylishly clad in a dress of pink muslin, with harmonious hat, gloves, and sunshade, she made an agreeable and rather effective picture, despite her plain, round face and stoutish figure. She had the air of being a leader. Grafted on to the original simple honesty of her eyes there was the unconsciously-acquired arrogance of one who had always been accustomed to deference. Socially, Beatrice had no peer among the young women who were active in the Wesleyan Sunday-school. Beatrice had been used to teach in the afternoon school, but she had recently advanced her labours from the afternoon to the morning in response to a hint that if she did so the force of her influence and example might lessen the chronic dearth of morning teachers.

‘Good afternoon, Miss Tellwright,’ Beatrice said as she came up. ‘So you have come to look at the Park.’

‘Yes,’ said Anna, and then stopped awkwardly. In the tone of each there was an obscure constraint, and something in Mynors’ smile of salute to Beatrice showed that he too shared it.

‘Seen you before,’ Beatrice said to him familiarly, without taking his hand; then she bent down and kissed Agnes.

‘What are you doing here, mademoiselle?’ Mynors asked her.

‘Father’s just down below, near the lake. He caught sight of you, and sent me up to say that you were to be sure to come in to supper to-night. You will, won’t you?’

‘Yes, thanks. I had meant to.’

Anna knew that they were related, and also that Mynors was constantly at the Suttons’ house, but the close intimacy between these two came nevertheless like a shock to her. She could not conquer a certain resentment of it, however absurd such a feeling might seem to her intelligence. And this attitude extended not only to the intimacy, but to Beatrice’s handsome clothes and facile urbanity, which by contrast emphasised her own poor little frock and tongue-tied manner. The mere existence of Beatrice so near to Mynors was like an affront to her. Yet at heart, and even while admiring this shining daughter of success, she was conscious within herself of a fundamental superiority. The soul of her condescended to the soul of the other one.

They began to discuss the Park.

‘Papa says it will send up the value of that land over there enormously,’ said Beatrice, pointing with her ribboned sunshade to some building plots which lay to the north, high up the hill. ‘Mr. Tellwright owns most of that, doesn’t he?’ she added to Anna.

‘I dare say he does,’ said Anna. It was torture to her to refer to her father’s possessions.

Of course it will be covered with streets in a few months. Will he build himself, or will he sell it?

‘I haven’t the least idea,’ Anna answered, with an effort after gaiety of tone, and then turned aside to look at the crowd. There, close against the bandstand, stood her father, a short, stout, ruddy, middle-aged man in a shabby brown suit. He recognised her, stared fixedly, and nodded with his grotesque and ambiguous grin. Then he sidled off towards the entrance of the Park. None of the others had seen him. ‘Agnes dear,’ she said abruptly, ‘we must go now, or we shall be late for tea.’

As the two women said good-bye their eyes met, and in the brief second of that encounter each tried to wring from the other the true answer to a question which lay unuttered in her heart. Then, having bidden adieu to Mynors, whose parting glance sang its own song to her, Anna took Agnes by the hand and left him and Beatrice together.

Two

The Miser's Daughter

Anna sat in the bay-window of the front parlour, her accustomed place on Sunday evenings in summer, and watched Mr. Tellwright and Agnes disappear down the slope of Trafalgar Road on their way to chapel. Trafalgar Road is the long thoroughfare which, under many aliases, runs through the Five Towns from end to end, uniting them as a river might unite them. Ephraim Tellwright could remember the time when this part of it was a country lane, flanked by meadows and market gardens. Now it was a street of houses up to and beyond Bleakridge, where the Tellwrights lived; on the other side of the hill the houses came only in patches until the far-stretching borders of Hanbridge were reached Within the municipal limits Bleakridge was the pleasantest quarter of Bursley—Hillport, abode of the highest fashion, had its own government and authority—and to reside 'at the top of Trafalgar Road' was still the final ambition of many citizens, though the natural growth of the town had robbed Bleakridge of some of that exclusive distinction which it once possessed. Trafalgar Road, in its journey to Bleakridge from the centre of the town, underwent certain changes of character. First came a succession of manufactories and small shops; then, at the beginning of the rise, a quarter of a

mile of superior cottages; and lastly, on the brow, occurred the houses of the comfortable-detached, semi-detached, and in terraces, with rentals from 25l. to 60l. a year. The Tellwrights lived in Manor Terrace (the name being a last reminder of the great farmstead which formerly occupied the western hill side): their house, of light yellow brick, was two-storied, with a long narrow garden behind, and the rent 30l. Exactly opposite was an antique red mansion, standing back in its own ground—home of the Mynors family for two generations, but now a school, the Mynors family being extinct in the district save for one member. Somewhat higher up, still on the opposite side to Manor Terrace, came an imposing row of four new houses, said to be the best planned and best built in the town, each erected separately and occupied by its owner. The nearest of these four was Councillor Sutton's, valued at 601. a year. Lower down, below Manor Terrace and on the same side, lived the Wesleyan superintendent minister, the vicar of St. Luke's Church, an alderman, and a doctor.

It was nearly six o'clock. The sun shone, but gentlier; and the earth lay cooling in the mild, pensive effulgence of a summer evening. Even the onrush of the steam-car, as it swept with a gay load of passengers to Hanbridge, seemed to be chastened; the bell of the Roman Catholic chapel sounded like the bell of some village church heard in the distance; the quick but sober tramp of the chapel-goers fell peacefully on the ear. The sense of calm increased, and, steeped in this meditative calm, Anna from the open window gazed idly down the perspective of the road, which ended a mile away in the dim concave forms of ovens suffused in a pale mist. A book from the Free Library lay on her lap; she could not read it. She was conscious of nothing save the quiet enchantment of reverie. Her mind, stimulated by the emotions of the afternoon, broke the fetters of habitual self-discipline, and ranged