FATHER AND SON:

A Tale of Country Life.

BY R. B. MOOR.

She summons up her courage then and tells him the story from beginning to end—what she did, and the result, and the price the father is to pay for the outwitting of his son. He listens in complete bewilderment. During the recital a turn in the lane brings them suddenly upon another pair of lovers, the lad's arm about the girl's waist, as Tolver's was about hers only five minutes before. How happy those lover's look! And how knowingly they glance from the constrained and saddened faces of the pair they meet into one another's eyes! A lover's quarrel, they think, and prophesy, from sweet experience, the ending of all such disagreements.

In another moment the turn is passed, and they are alone again amid the fragrant June blossoms and the creeping twilight.

"And are you really going to marry him?" Tolver inquires soberly, when she has finished and there has been a pause between them of perhaps half a minute, perhaps half an hour neither could tell which.

"Tolver, I hate myself for doing it; but if my mother died of hard work and want, I should hate myself still more; and there is no other way of putting an end to it."

"Oh, do not excuse yourself! I shall not say one word to dissuade you. But don't expect me ever to believe in a woman again!"

Eve would not know his voice in those new cold tones but for that natural-sounding outburst at the last. That breaks down the lingering remnant of her self-control. He makes no attempt at comfort; possibly in this first rush of amazement and anger, the sound of her grief is a kind of savage satisfaction to him.

"I knew my father to be an old villain," he says presently, with a subdued violence of voice and manner; "but I wasn't aware that he was an out-and-out swindler and sneak into the bargain!"

"Oh, Tolver!" she begins; but he cuts her short in his new hard way.

"You'll be my step-mother instead of my wife, Eve—that's all the difference! Not so very much, perhaps!"—in bitterest sarcasm.

"Oh, Tolver, I hope you won't come there when—when —"

"You do, do you? Oh, console yourself"—as she bursts into fresh tears; "you won't be troubled with my company. I shall be as far away as the dimensions of this world will allow."

"Tolver, we mustn't drive you from home and country! We've no right to do it; it would be a burning shame!"

"It's a burning shame as it is. Nothing else can make it much worse."

"I know it, dear—I acknowledge it; but what can I do? Mother —"

"If you hadn't been in such a hurry, I might have found a way out of it all. But I had no idea of how poor you really were; I thought your mother was merely delicate, not—not— You never told me what you suffered day by day; you always seemed as blithe as a bird Do you think I should have been content to go on like that, waiting for what might turn up, if I had guessed at one half of what you were quick enough at telling my father?"

"I did try to keep it from you," she assents sorrowfully. "It would pain you, I know, and I could see no remedy for it. I—I feared your trying to—to assist us in some way."

"Your pride again!"

"But when I spoke to your father about the money I had to tell him everything to convince him that we really could not pay it and—and to incline him to mercy. It seemed such a small sum to him."

"Large enough to ruin you, though, and he knew it. But who would have thought how the old fox would double!"

"Don't call him those names, Tolver. He seemed really sorry for us. I think he means to be kind, and he is undertaking a great deal."

"He is fortunate in finding a champion in you! Remember one thing when you are his wife—that in any question or dispute you may as well give in at once and save yourself trouble, for he'll compass your destruction and his own, too, to get his way."

"Have you found him so unkind a father, Tolver?"

"No," he acknowledges, but without any softening in response for her reproachful tone. "I have told you before that he was always good to me, and thought nothing too good for me until I ventured to have an opinion of my own. That is my deadly crime in his eyes."

Eve scorns herself for being the instrument of the old man's revenge upon his son; but her mother, weak from hard work and want—her brother sinking daily nearer to the level of the clowns he mixes with! Two cords drag at her heart strings, each strong, each pulling opposite ways.

"If you had been frank with me, and told me your troubles," Tolver goes on presently in milder tones, "I should have found a remedy before long. I should have looked about me, and very likely have got the management of somebody's farm. People know me about this county and the next; some of them would have given me their work."

"Yes; but, dear, do you think I could thus have sent you into exile from your own home and your own heritage—not knowing then, either, the—the terrible alternative?"

"You call it that, and yet you will marry him?"

"I didn't mean to say that, Tolver, I ought not to have said it. Don't—don't repeat it."

"If you are afraid of its getting to his ears," he returns, fierce again, "you needn't be, as far as I'm concerned. However good or bad my will might be about it, it is impossible that it should reach him through me, as I should scorn to hold any communication with him."

"Oh, Tolver!"

"Would you wish it, then? Should you think it any advantage for me to go and tell him my mind—to revile him as he deserves to be reviled? It would be a great relief to me; so, if you really advise it——"

"Oh, no, no! But——"

"Then don't keep on reproaching me and maddening me! Who has been wronged he or I? Do you expect me not to feel it?"

She is no match for him in his present mood. He rages on like a young lion, and she has nothing to say. Any attempt at comfort from her would be the bitterest mockery.

"I think we had better say 'Good-bye,' and end this," she says presently. "We shall be in the road directly, and there is nothing else to be said."

"No, there is nothing else to be said," he agrees, with an exterior suddenly cool and hard. Perhaps he thinks she does not care because she speaks so calmly.

They pause before the last turn in the winding lane. It is dark now that is, as nearly dark as it will be through all the short fragrant summer night; each can see the other's face in the dusk.

"Good-bye!" says Tolver curtly.

"Aren't you going to shake hands?" she asks timidly She did hope he would take her in his arms and kiss her once again surely that would be no wrong to the man who has taken her knowing whom she loves, and who has never kissed her yet!—but the look on his face tells her that there is to be no tender parting between them nothing for memory to feed upon but cold distrust and resentment

"If you like," he answers, and takes her hand, but does not press it

"Dear Tolver, you believe that I am doing it for the best, don't you?"

"Certainly I do. Women always know what is best for themselves I quite overlooked that fact when I put my faith in you"

He is gone almost before the bitter words have left his lips back down the lonely lane in the darkness Before her are the white high road and the little cottage on its margin with one solitary light burning in the parlor window—these, and her new dreadful life of self-repression and secret longing and growing loathing.

"How long you have been, child" says her mother, meeting her in the doorway "Was he did he "

But, at the sight of Eve's face, she ceases her questioning and kisses her instead For herself she liked nothing so much, when she was a girl, as to sob all her love troubles into some sympathetic ear, and, in return, to be petted and comforted into quiescence and a sense of importance But Eve is different, and, when she looks as now, the little woman dares not approach her with her commonplace consolation She makes a private grievance of it indeed; but Eve is left in peace.

Chapter V.

The summer days come and go, and the hay is all got in before the threatened thunderstorms come sweeping down upon the fair lands round Nutfield Farmer Gerard comes up to the cottage oftener after the hay is stacked, but never so often as a young lover would do—as Tolver used to do. Perhaps he guesses that he cannot be so welcome They hear no more of Tolver. His father never mentions him, and his name is avoided by common consent.

Eve has not much to say to her new lover, nor he to her, except upon the common topics of every-day life; her mother has frequently to step into the breach and make conversation, at which she shows herself apt enough. She does all in her power to convince her daughter of her good fortune, and Eve does not contradict her. She did not sacrifice herself to make her mother uncomfortable over it; and, if it is additionally cheering to Mrs. Thirkeld to believe that her daughter has lost nothing, but gained much, by the bargain, she may as well go on believing it. The pain would be worse still if she for whom Eve is suffering it were fretting over her.

The farmer brings a present now and then, which he offers with considerable awkwardness, evidently fearing her judgment upon his taste though he need not. Eve is past being pleased or vexed over any small thing. She takes the ornaments with gentle thanks and wears them as a prisoner wears chains. The engagement is generally known; such an event could not have been kept secret in that small place, and the widow and her daughter find people's aces turned upon them with suddenly-altered looks. Everywhere now they meet with smiles and deferences; the small tradespeople are anxious to accommodate them; the doctor takes off his hat on meeting them, when hitherto he has thought a short nod sufficient courtesy towards the poverty-stricken family in the little cottage. All this disgusts Eve, and makes her suspicious of all the world; but it delights her mother, who truly rejoices in her increased importance. But nobody speaks of Tolver, and there is no one she dares to ask for news of him. The Three Beeches is an outlying farm; he might be there, or he might have left for a long time without her knowing, unless by making particular inquiries.

Meanwhile her wardrobe and her mother's are undergoing replenishment at the hands of the village dressmaker. Mrs. Thirkeld would have liked to have the work done in the neighboring town; but Eve would not consent. She would have no display over any part of the business, and she wanted to spare expense as much as possible.

When they are all three invited to Fairfield as a sort of solemn ratification of the bond between them Mrs. Thirkeld hurries the dressmaker, and succeeds in getting home new dresses for herself and her daughter to wear on the auspicious occasion.

Farmer Gerard does not fail to seize the opportunity thus made of impressing upon them the advantages they will enjoy under his roof. It is a fine old house abounding in wide low-ceiled rooms and broad corridors. Old-fashioned comfort is in every nook and corner of it, bachelor's paradise though it has been these ten years.

Tea is laid in the west parlor, where a great window overlooks a flower garden and beyond that broad fields of corn, over which the evening sun slants and in at the open casement and on the tea table, crowded with every country delicacy. Mr. Gerard has two appreciative guests at any rate. Mrs. Thirkeld is keenly observant of everything of the quality of the table linen, the color of the glass, not being too much absorbed in these either to enjoy the rich cream and the prime ham and the great strawberries, while Sam makes such inroads into the good things as to prove his health and heartiness beyond dispute

But she for whom it has all been prepared, if it is as dust and ashes to her, can they who forced it upon her wonder at it? Yet Eve's mother could find it in her heart to be vexed with her for not showing pleasure in her bondage. Not that Eve is sad or even listless in her manner, she puts all that away in public with a determination that costs her dear in private She performs her share of the compact, never failing in gentleness and sweetness, patient when the farmer is most prosy, and never slighting him by word or sign or any failure of attention But she never pretended that the prospect of her marriage with him was welcome to her, and a show of affection was not in the bond The farmer is in a sufficiently satisfied state of mind as he sits at the foot of his table, looking round at his guests, but Mrs. Thirkeld is nervous and fussy, dreading, perhaps, a possibility of the prize slipping through fingers by no means inclined to hold it fast She pours out the tea sitting at the head, opposite to the farmer He first asked Eve to perform that office, but she very gently, though decidedly, declined, and her mother took her place, protesting the while against Eve's refusal. But, once installed, she seemed to enjoy her position

After tea the farmer shows his lady visitors over the principal rooms, leaving Sam to amuse himself with a solitaire board Eve is invited to suggest any alterations she would like; but she confesses herself content with everything. And perhaps the farmer is fain to believe her, comparing the rooms she has come from with these spacious well-furnished ones The widow praises and admires, now and then venturing the slightest possible criticism, just by way of variety, and to show their host that their circumstances have been at least equal to his Then, as they finally emerge from a well filled store room on the ground floor, she makes a clever excuse about "seeing what Sam is after," and disappears into the west parlor, leaving the engaged couple together a most tactful move, and, had the betrothed ones only been of a mind, how convenient and considerate a duenna!

But, as things are, the farmer grows awkward, the ready prosy sentences about the number of years since this happened, or that was bought, slip off his tongue, he begins to hesitate and stammer Eve does not lose her self-possession When young Tolver Gerard first began to hang round the cottage on the hill if she looked out she would meet his glance, and if she set her foot upon the threshold he was at the door in an instant, watching for a look or word of encouragement she was covered with confusion at these *rencontres*, and could scarcely raise her eyes for her fast-coming blushes But all that is past for her, and she can go over the house of her future husband with never a flutter or tremor unless, indeed, her heart may sometimes throb with fear or horror at the fate that is coming fast upon her. If so, however, there is no outward sign, and she holds her golden-brown head erect as she stands with Farmer Gerard at the open door at the other end of the oaken hall, looking at the climbing roses which peep in and nod at her as if in welcome of their new mistress.

The farmer is ill at ease because he has already made up his mind what must be said before his visitors take their leave; and, now the moment has come for it, words fail him. But he has no idea of losing the chance. He coughs and hums, and makes a great show once or twice of beginning to say something. At last he stammers out

"Well, my dear, you may see with half an eye that it's lonely enough for me here, coming home after a hard day's work, with no one to speak to. What do you think about the time? You ought to get settled in here before the autumn damp, if only for your mother's sake."

"When it will suit you," answers Eve, in a low tone.

She is looking very pretty this evening. Her new dress becomes her well; she never appeared to such advantage since they came there as her mother has already assured her; and there is a bright color in her cheeks which, though only hectic and transient, serves to show what a natural glow of health would do for that sweet fragile-looking face. The farmer, having summoned up his courage and broken the ice, is now at leisure to observe all this, which he does with evident appreciation.

"Well, you see," he says, "there'll be harvest coming on soon now; it had better be before or after that—I sha'n't have a minute to spare once we begin the reaping. I don't want to hurry you, my dear; still, where's the use of putting it off?"

He speaks very kindly, and certainly he shows great consideration for her. Eve is influenced by this in her final decision, though other causes contribute towards it: and, since it is to be, it may as well be soon, to put an end to brooding and dreading, and, above all to save Tolver the slow agony of anticipation. These considerations, added to the farmers half-wistful tones of doubt as he suggested an early wedding day, and a sudden sense of desperation now that she is brought to the point, weigh down the scale.

"It may as well be so, then," she agrees "Before the harvest, that is,"

"Say, towards the end of next month. To-day is the twenty-ninth; we'll give you till the twenty-second of next month to get all ready in What do you say to that, my dear?"

"It will suit me, if it will suit you," she replies, bravely.

"That's a good girl, and I hope you'll never repent of it; you sha'n't as far as it rests with me!"

"You are very kind," she says with real gratitude. He is like many men—having a bad side and a good side, the latter generally uppermost. But Eve and her family saw so much of the bad side a little while ago that it came upon them as an agreeable surprise to discover that he had any good side at all.

"I shall always be kind to you and yours," he answers, and gives her a resounding smack upon her cheek, which she bears better than she thought to be able to bear any caress from him. But his manner is so bluff and fatherly, it is not as if a lover had kissed her, though he protests that he fell in love with her on that day when he came upon her in the road as he sat on his big horse.

"Shall it be a quiet wedding?" he pursues. "Or would you like ——"

"Oh, yes, as quiet as possible!" she breaks in

"All right at our church here? And you'll like a little trip afterwards, won't you? I shall be able to get away for a few days just then"

While she is hesitating whether to say "yes" or "no" to this proposal, entailing their spending a week or more entirely dependent on each other's society, which she feels instinctively will not be congenial to either, he goes on

"I've been thinking that a change would do your mother good—a breath of sea air. Suppose we were all to go together the boy as well, to be company for her if you and I find a third person in the way"—with a determined attempt at joking. "We should none of us be the worse, and the more the merrier, you know, as the saying goes"

Eve is so relieved at this proposal and gratified at the generosity of it that she is almost overwhelmed for a moment

"You are good!" she tells him gratefully "It is just what I have been longing for for mother every summer that has passed, but never thought of her having it It will do her a world of good Change and ease, and something fresh to see and talk about, seem to be life to her"

They return to the parlor then, Farmer Gerard tucking her hand under his ample arm, and they go in and walk up to Mrs. Thirkeld and announce the decision they have arrived at. At least, he does the talking, Eve has enough to do to preserve her hardly gained self-control when her mother falls upon her neck with a rain of tears and kisses, of which it is not at all certain that Mr Gerard does not receive an involuntary share, but, if so, he seems in no wise vexed So it is all settled.

Chapter VI.

"Eve, some one must go down to Miss Sarjent's this evening and tell her that that Surah trimming won't do She must wait until we go into town and get a better match. Will you go, or shall I send Sam with a note?"

"Oh, I'll go, mother! I shall enjoy the walk this beautiful evening"

Eve looks up wearily from her needlework as she speaks. There is a pile of work on the table, more is scattered over the chairs and the little hard horse-hair sofa; her mother is at the sewing-machine, and cuttings and fragments litter the floor. Mrs Thirkeld is in her glory, getting ready for her daughter's wedding; but Eve is weary of it all, and each completed garment seems to bring the time nearer to her when the fateful words will be said, and she will be bound irrevocably to a new hateful life.

"I'd rather you went," her mother assents "Sam is tired this evening, and a little out of sorts, I think; he says his head aches so. And then you can explain things to her, and see how she is getting on with the muslin as well. And, Eve, don't go by the mill. They have got scarlet-fever there; Mrs. Rice told me this morning."

"Which of them has it?"

"Only one, I believe; the second girl. And there's another case in the village besides. Can't you manage not to go through it?"

"I'll go by the fields, mother; it will be a nice cool walk."

Eve is not afraid of the fever, but she thinks it worth while to keep her mother's fears at rest if she can. She takes her hat and sets out in the glow of the sinking sun, and goes half way down the hill to the stile leading into the fields. She would have preferred that way in any case, because the air is sweet between the ripening fields of oats and rye; also, and chiefly, because it is lonely, and she shuns the faces of her kind more and more as daily her trouble grows nearer and larger.

Miss Sarjent lives at the farther end of the village. She keeps Eve quite half an hour, showing her this and consulting her about that, though Eve is willing to leave it all to her and take things as they come. She hears from her that Tryphie Hill is worse to-day, and that the town clerk's little girl died in the night; but there are no fresh cases of fever so far, and it is hoped that it will stop there.

The sun has set when Eve at last steps outside the door again, but she will not forego her homeward walk through the fields, safe enough at all times in this quiet neighborhood. She will not have many more such lonely hours, and to be alone is the only comfort that remains to her. She makes a slight *detour* to go back a little and get into the lane down which she walked with Tolver on that night of their farewell, which seems so long ago, though it is really scarcely four weeks since. She will never go there after she is married if she can help it; she will go now for the last time. Soon she stands just at the point where they met that happy pair of lovers, who thought they had quarrelled and were going to make it up directly. Oh, those happy lovers! Can it be that in that dim far-away past she was once just as happy as they?

She has not taken a dozen steps when she espies the figure of a man lying upon the ground and half concealed in the long grass growing rank in the neglected by-way. Rather alarmed, her first impulse is to pass on as quickly and as quietly as possible. It is lying on its face, but directly she is near she knows the coat, the sunburned shapely hand flung out and clenched, the very cut of the short brown hair

"Tolver!" she ejaculates, in amazement and alarm.

He starts up, staring as if he saw a ghost; and perhaps he thinks he does.

"What brought you here?" he demands.

"I was coming home from the village, and chose this way. I — Oh, I thought I should never see you again, Tolver!"

He does not speak for a while, but leans on his elbow, gazing fixedly into her face.

"It really is you," he says at length. "I couldn't believe it at first."

"Why not?"

"Don't you know how altered you are?"

"Am I? You are the first person to tell me so, Tolver."

"They must see it I wonder they have the heart to go on with it!"

"What was the matter, Tolver? What were you doing out here?"

"What was the matter," he repeats. "When are you to be married?"

"In on the twenty-second of this month," she tells him falteringly

"I know, I had just heard it. I came here because there was no mortal face I could bear to meet after that, and here I meet with the one—"

"Dear Tolver, shall I go on? Would that be best?"

"I am still 'dear' to you, am I?" he queries, with a miserable pretence of jesting

"You must always be dear to me, Tolver. Will it be wrong?"

"Wrong? Well, I shouldn't care to stand in the shoes of the other man—that's all!"

"But how am I to make myself feel no more for you than for any other person?"

"That's where the sin and wickedness of it come in You can't, yet you ought to feel what you feel for me only toward your husband"

"Tolver, don't make me more miserable than I am already; though indeed, I hardly think you can, either"

For answer he takes her hand and holds it close and tenderly between both his own They are sitting side by side on the grass, regardless of the dew that is falling The light is fading fast, and her mother will be anxious, and, if Mr Gerard comes up to the cottage, they will worry each other about her continued absence, and worry her, too, when she appears. But she does not think of this, nor of anything but that she is once more and for the last time alone with her young love, and that he does not scorn her now as he did before

"Must it be, Eve?" he whispers presently. "It isn't too late now."

"Oh, Tolver, don't! Do you think I haven't said that to myself times enough? Do you think I would do it if I could help myself?"

"Oh, Eve, it is such an abominable thing! I can't believe that such a thing will be allowed to happen."

"Worse things than that—things that the world would call worse have happened without any special interposition of Providence to prevent them," says Eve bitterly. Her old trust and faith have quite deserted her of late, though the farmer did declare that her marriage to him was the answer to her prayers.

"Does he kiss you, Eve? Does he hold you in his arms as I used to do?"

"Oh, no!" She is thankful to be able to assuage his eager miserable jealousy in any degree. "He kissed me once, on my cheek, when—when it was all settled, and twice since—that's all!"

"He must be an old fool not to make better use of his opportunities!" declares Tolver, with a gloomy half-satisfaction.

"I'm very glad he dosen't!"

"You shudder at the idea; and yet you are going to marry him!"

There is another miserable pause. He has not released her hand, nor has she attempted to release it, though his touch and clasp make everything else seem more intolerable than ever.

"He is very kind," she says, half imploringly by-and-by. "I think he really feels kindly towards us, and not only —— Do you know that mother is to go to the sea-side, and Sam as well, when—— No one could have expected it of him; but he proposed it himself, to do mother good." She details the plan for the wedding-journey, and he listens, smiling sardonically.

"Fancy you and me on our wedding-journey!" is his comment. "We should want your mother and Sam, shouldn't we?"

But that suggestion is so loaded with sweetness and bitterness that it reduces them to silence again.

"I must go." Eve starts up as she says this after a time, suddenly remembering the lateness of the hour. "Let us say 'Good-bye' and go."

"I must come with you to the end of the lane, now it is getting so dark."

So side by side they walk once more down the dim, scented vista. The hawthorn is withered now, but the dog-roses shine on either hand and fill the lane with their delicate fragrance.

"I—I thought perhaps you had gone away, never hearing anything of you," Eve ventures presently.

"No, I have kept down at the Three Beeches. But I shall not be there much longer. I shall stay for your wedding, Eve; and then I shall go as far as ever I can away from you."

"If you must go away, I would rather you went a day before than a day after that," she tells him soberly.

"Oh, you needn't be afraid; I sha'n't interfere! I don't suppose I shall see it at all But since he could cheat me like that, I have no faith in him, and I'm going to stay here to keep a watch over him, to see that it is all square and that you are not cheated as well as I."

"You ought not to have such suspicions of your father," she tells him rather warmly. "I don't believe he is capable of anything underhand."

"What do you call his behavior to me, then?"

"That was not underhand; it was hard, cruel—over-reaching, if you like to call it so—but as open as the day. He placed an alternative before me, to accept or reject, and I accepted it."

"You put the blame on yourself, Eve!"

"The blame—if blame there is—was mine in accepting his offer I am going to believe the best that is possible of your father, Tolver."

"Because he is my father?"

"Chiefly," she acknowledges, with a downward glance.

"Well, I sha'n't forget you said that, Eve"

They have reached the top of the lane, and stand with clasped hands, looking into each other's face.

"What a wretched thing life is!" he breaks out impetuously.

"Perhaps its troubles are to keep us from being too fond of it," she returns.

"I could believe that of troubles that could not be averted. But those that we bring upon our own heads—can we expect to be helped out of them?"

"I don't expect to be helped out of this," says Eve, a little obstinately, because her lip is trembling at the sight of her young lover's haggard noble face

"Eve my darling, think now, before it is too late!"

"No, I won't think—I daren't think! What could I say to my mother, and what could we do? We have given up the work, and spent part of our money—it's of no use talking!"

"Good bye, then, my love, since you will have it so But remember, if between now and the twenty second there is any change, any misgiving on your part, a line to me will bring me to your side directly. I will help you through it all. I'll stand by you whatever they say or do"

"Thank you, Tolver. But don't build any hope on the possibility of such a thing I shall not change my mind, it is too late in the day."

"Well, good-bye"—"Good-bye."

Their hearts are too full for any endearments now that the last moment has come Short hard spoken words are the only safe ones; their hands unclasp; they turn away from one another. The cottage stands opposite, gray in the summer dusk, no light shining from its window to-night. They go a few steps apart, and then each turns, to find the other gazing back.

"Good-bye," he murmurs again.

"Good bye," she returns; and then she crosses the road and goes in.

Mr Gerard is with her mother in the kitchen, looking over an old tourist's guide book that he has unearthed and brought with him, and deciding on the best place in which to spend the honeymoon. The widow's pretty childish face is so radiant as she looks up to greet her daughter and scold her cheerfully for staying out so long that a stranger might take her for the bride-elect rather than the white-faced girl with great black rings round beautiful mournful eyes.

There is one thought that comes to Eve oftener every day now—the thought that it cannot last long. She knows she is losing life and strength, that the spirit died out of her the day they went to Fairfield and the wedding-day was fixed; but she cannot grieve, since Tolver cannot be more alone in the world than she has left him now. As long as she lives they must be separated; but, once her poor suffering body laid beneath the green churchyard sod, he will be free to think of her once more, and to look forward to their meeting never to part again. She means to win a promise from the farmer to let her mother stay on at Fairfield in case anything happens to herself, and to start Sam in farming as he proposed, letting him gradually pay back his expenses as he gets on; and then she will be at peace concerning her family, who have cost her so much.

(To be continued.)