

**THE LANCASHIRE  
WEDDING; OR,  
DARWIN MORALIZED**

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The Lancashire wedding; or, Darwin moralized by Anonymous

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**ANONYMOUS**

**THE LANCASHIRE  
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"Rose Greenfield," he said, "it is idle to regret the unalterable past: but I wish I had spoken my mind to you on that Christmas-tide which you remember fourteen years ago. I wish I had come to your children's party."  
—Page 79.

THE  
LANCASHIRE WEDDING

OR

DARWIN MORALIZED

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Prudent Marriages and Plain Children"

"We'll live together, like two neighbour vines,  
Circling our souls and loves in one another!  
Will spring together, and will bear one fruit;  
One joy shall make us smile, and one grief mourns;  
One age go with us, and one hour of death  
shall close our eyes, and one grave make us happy."

HAUNTOFT AND WRIGHT



LONDON  
HOULSTON AND WRIGHT  
65, PATERNOSTER ROW  
MDCCLXVII.

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BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.

## PREFACE.

THE special purpose of the writer in recording this short history, has been to illustrate the mental and physical evil which results from marriages into unhealthy families. Too little attention has been bestowed upon a subject which affects so deeply the well-being of the community. The consequences alluded to have, in many instances, been brought in sorrowful vividness under the author's own observation, and he has been moved to bear a witness against their cause.



## CONTENTS.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. BARTON-WOLD AND SOME OF ITS PEOPLE .	5
II. ON AFFAIRS MATRIMONIAL . . .	15
III. A COURTSHIP AND A MARRIAGE . .	25
IV. TEN YEARS AFTER MARRIAGE . . .	35
V. MR. WILLIAM UNDERWOOD'S ACADEMY.	47
VI. OTHER SHEAVES IN THE HARVEST . .	58
VII. RETROSPECT AND REASONING . . .	70
VIII. THE HARVEST-FIELD . . . . .	77

## CHAPTER I.

### BARTON-WOLD AND SOME OF ITS PEOPLE.

"With shrugs and wrinkled brow they smile and whisper,  
Talk in dark words of loving fancies."

COLERIDGE.

WHAT was it at which the gossips of Barton-wold were smiling and nodding to each other as they went home from church upon that Christmas morning? Was there some pleasant scandal afoot, a delightful opportunity just opening before them of passing somebody's character under review? or, to impute a better feeling to them, was there something going on which gave them honest pleasure, and which was, as yet, a merry secret, to be only hinted at, or winked over, or spoken of enigmatically? There had been good sound sense in the vicar's sermon that morning; there had been cheerful allusions to the festivities of the season—to family meetings, to general cordiality, and gratitude to Heaven: but I question whether Dr. Leslie's very best and liveliest discourse would have sent his congregation away with such broad smiles upon their faces. Even the old blue-cheeked sexton drew his wrinkles into something genial, and assumed the mysterious and significant look which he treasured up for

christenings and weddings. Yet if one followed the direction of the general glance, and observed to what object or objects these observations tended, there was nothing so very extraordinary after all. Simply the walking together, side by side, of a young man and woman! It has been done any time since the days of Adam and Eve, and will continue to be done as long as "men are amorous and women fair." Surely, if the Barton-wold people were beaming and benignant on this account, they must have been kinder hearted than their fellow-creatures elsewhere, or perhaps the anticipations of a festive cheer might have warmed their hearts to a more than usual charity.

Let us try and make this matter plain. Widow Greenfield had been left a widow some eight or ten years before, with one only child, a daughter, to comfort her in her loneliness. Farmer Greenfield had been esteemed for years previous to his death as a substantial yeoman, well to do; he was never behind in his rent, and was what his neighbours called "free" in his farming. When he died everybody thought that his widow and child would be well provided for, but by some means it turned out otherwise. Whether he had conducted his affairs badly, or whether, as some said, his brother, the executor, had played false, it was the case that Mrs. Greenfield found herself with only a few pounds in ready money, and was driven to seek for some means of procuring a living. By Dr. Leslie's advice she invested her little wealth in the furnishing and stocking of a small general shop, where tobacco, tape, drugs, bacon, stationery,