## "COME LIVE WITH ME, AND BE MY LOVE."

AN ENGLISH PASTORAL.

By ROBERT BUCHANAN,

Author of "God and the Man," "The Shadow of the Sword," &c.

CHAPTER IX.

A THUNDERBOLT.

We were two sisters of one race . . .

She was the fairest in the face.—Tennyson.

Suddenly Catherine's heart gave a great throb; she had recognised the voices: one belonged to Bridget, the other to George Kingsley.

She sat still, scarcely breathing. The sound of the voices ceased, but the figures came on. They paused close to the spot where Catherine was waiting. Their backs were towards her—by stretching out her hand she could almost have touched the hem of Bridget's dress.

They stood close together; Bridget was clinging to George's arm. He was looking down at her—she was looking up at him.

They stood close together; Bridget was clinging to George's arm. He was looking down at her—she was looking up at him.

Presently he spoke.

"It doesn't seem real," he said. "But it is true, Bridget; you love me!"

"Well, yes, I do love you, of course."

"Of course," he said, and he kissed her. Bridget laughed softly.

"There is some-thing the matter!" said Bridget. "Tell me what it is. Tell me why you left the dance and came here

all alone."

But Catherine did not answer; she put her hand to her head like one in pain, and gave a low heart-broken moan. Still wondering and terrified, Bridget again approached her and was again waved back.

"You are in trouble, Catherine, and you must tell me what it is that I may help you!"

"You help me!" said Catherine, bitterly. "You!"

"Yes, dear—who has a better right? Do not turn away from me, Catherine. I want you to be tender to me to night, for I—ah, it seems wicked to say it when you are so sad—I am so happy. Listen, Catherine, I wish to tell you about George. He loves me—he has told me that he loves me!"

Catherine turned her white face towards her sister.

"Why do you tell me what I know already?" she said bitterly.

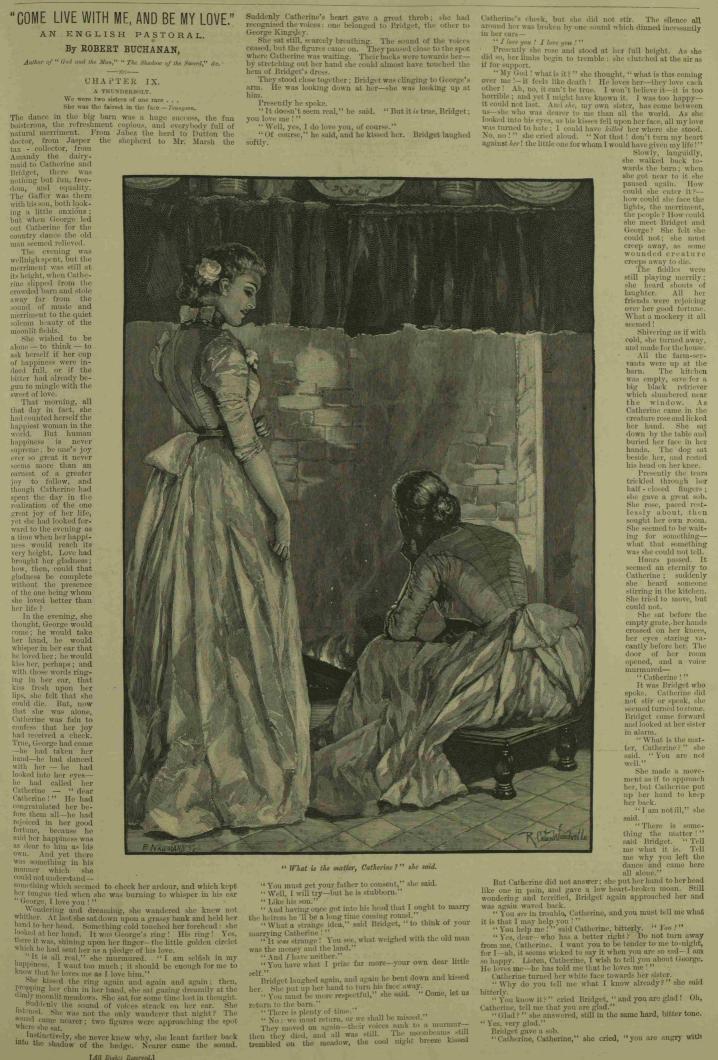
"Why do you tell me what."

"You know it?" cried Bridget, "and you are glad! Oh,
Catherine, tell me that you are glad."

"Glad?" she answered, still in the same hard, bitter tone.
"Yes, very glad."

Bridget gave a sob.

"Catherine, Catherine," she cried, "you are angry with



"What is the matter, Catherine?" she said.

"You must get your father to consent," she said.
"Well, I will try—but he is stubborn."
"Like his son."
"And having once got into his head that I ought to marry the heiress he 'll be a long time coming round."
"What a strange idea," said Bridget, "to think of your marrying Catherine!"
"It was strange! You see, what weighed with the old man was the money and the land."
"And I have neither."
"You have what I prize far more—your own dear little self."

self."
Bridget laughed again, and again he bent down and kissed her. She put up her hand to turn his face away.
"You must be more respectful," she said. "Come, let us return to the barn."

"You must be more respecting, she said." Come, see we return to the barn."

"There is plenty of time."

"No: we must return, or we shall be missed."

They moved on again—their voices sank to a murmur—then they died, and all was still. The monbeams still trembled on the meadow, the cool night breeze kissed

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