

and pear trees, and with the added dignity of a lean-to pigsty, at the other end of the Mill fields. Mrs. Moggs, Luke's wife, was a decidedly agreeable acquaintance. She exhibited her hospitality in bread and treacle, and possessed various works of art. Maggie actually forgot that she had any special cause of sadness this morning, as she stood on a chair to look at a remarkable series of pictures representing the Prodigal Son in the costume of Sir Charles Grandison, except that, as might have been expected from his defective moral character, he had not, like that accomplished hero, the taste and strength of mind to dispense with a wig. But the indefinable weight the dead rabbits had left on her mind caused her to feel more than usual pity for the career of this weak young man, particularly when she looked at the picture where he leaned against a tree with a flaccid appearance, his knee-breeches unbuttoned and his wig awry, while the swine, apparently of some foreign breed, seemed to insult him by their good spirits over their feast of husks.

"I'm very glad his father took him back again, aren't you, Luke?" she said. "For he was very sorry, you know, and wouldn't do wrong again."

"Eh, Miss," said Luke, "he'd be no great shakes, I doubt, let's feyther do what he would for him."

That was a painful thought to Maggie, and she wished much that the subsequent history of the young man had not been left a blank.

CHAPTER V.

TOM COMES HOME.

TOM was to arrive early in the afternoon, and there was another fluttering heart besides Maggie's when it was late enough for the sound of the gig-wheels to be expected; for if Mrs. Tulliver had a strong feeling, it was fondness for her boy. At last the sound came,—that quick light bowling of the gig-wheels,—and in spite of the wind, which was blowing the clouds about, and was not likely to respect Mrs. Tulliver's curls and cap-strings, she came outside the door, and even