

A LIFE FOR A LOVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE time was July, and the roses were out in great profusion in the rectory garden. The garden was large, somewhat untidily kept, but it abounded in all sweet old-fashioned flowers; there was the invariable tennis-court, empty just now, and a sweet sound of children laughing and playing together, in a hay-field near by. The roses were showering their petals all over the grass, and two girls, sisters evidently, were pacing up the broad walk in the centre of the garden arm-in-arm. They were dark-eyed girls, with chestnut, curling hair, rosy lips full of curves and smiles, and round, good-humored faces. They were talking eagerly and excitedly one to the other, not taking the smallest notice of the scene around them—not even replying when some children in the hay-field shouted their names, but coming at last to a full stand-still before the open window of the old-fashioned rectory study. Two men were standing under the deep-mullioned window; one tall, slightly bent, with silvery-white hair, aquiline features, and dark brown eyes like the girls. He was the Rector of Jewsbury-on-the-Wold, and the man he was addressing was his only son, and the brother of the eager bright-looking girls.