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PAINT and Porcelain White, a large stock in store for sale at April 15—49 BURTON & SINCLAIR.

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[illegible] of very superior quality, Old and Young Hyson [illegible] found at April 15—49. CARTER & BRO'S

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[illegible] Two rooms on the second floor of Cadwell's Block [illegible] Apply soon to [illegible] 1854—47. CADWELL & BENNETT.

Select Poetry.

DIRGE FOR LITTLE MARY.

BY MRS. ACTON TINDAL.

Sing and sigh for little Mary,
From the lap of loving care
She hath fled, the laughing fairy,
Glancing through her shining hair,
In a tangled golden ravel,
Floating on the summer air,
Or in fluttering brightness glowing,
Round her waxen cheeks and face.
Or in glittering streamers flowing,
Far behind her in the race,
When those limbs, so fleet and rosy,
Bore her on before the throng,
Tossing high her wild-flower posy,
Ringing forth some rhyming song.
Ah! how still is little Mary,
In her white shroud, wide and long.

Do they fear that she should waken?
For her mother shades the light,
When into that room, forsaken,
Tearfully she steals at night.
Do they fear the wind should chill her?
For they draw the curtains round,
That a voice with pain should thrill her
For their words in whispers sound
And they tread with noiseless footsteps,
As if that were holy ground.

Ah! we followed little Mary
To the utmost bounds of thought,
Vague and grey; out there the fairy
All an angel's brightness caught
And the sheets of moonlight bore her
O'er the dead sea dark before her,
Through the distance none may measure
Height and depth we may not pass,
Till the day shall come when Mary
Smiles, and others cry alas!
Till again our little fairy
Calls to us and bids us pass.

Choice Miscellany.

NOAH COTTON.

THE WIDOW GRIMSHAWE AND HER NEIGHBORS.

On the road to——, a small seaport town on the east coast of England, there stood, in my young days, an old-fashioned, high-gabled, red-brick cottage. The house was divided into two tenements, the doors opening in the centre of the building. A rustic porch shaded the entrance to the left from the scorching rays of the sun and the clouds of dust that during the summer months rose from the public road in front. Some person, whose love of nature had survived amidst the crushing cares of poverty, had twined around the rude trellis-work the deliciously-fragrant branches of the brier-rose, which, during the months of June and July, loaded the air with its sweet breath.

The door to the right, although unmarked by sign or chequerboard, opened into a low hedge-tavern of very ill repute, well known through the country by the name of the "Brig's Foot," which it derived from its near proximity to the bridge that crossed the river. A slow-moving, stream whose brackish waters seemed to have fallen asleep upon their bed of fat, black ooze, while creeping onward to the sea, through a long flat expanse of dreary marshes.

The "Brig's Foot" was kept by the Widow Mason and her son, both persons of notoriously bad character. The old man had been killed a few months before, in a drunken brawl with some smugglers, and his name was held in such ill odor that his ghost was reported to haunt the road that led to C——churchyard, which formed the receptacle, but it would seem not the resting-place of the dead.

None but persons of the very lowest description frequented the tavern. Beggars made it their head quarters; smugglers and poachers their hiding-place, and sailors, on shore for a spree, the scene of their drunken revels. The honest laborer shunned the threshold as a moral pest-house, and the tired traveller, who called there once, seldom repeated the visit. The magistrates, who ought to have put down the place as a public nuisance, winked at it as a necessary evil—the more to be tolerated, as it was half a mile beyond the precincts of the town.

Outwardly the place had some attractive features—it was kept so scrupulously clean. The walls were so white, the floor so neatly sanded, and the pewter pots glittered so cheerily on the polished oak table that served for a bar, that a casual observer might reasonably have expected very comfortable and respectable accommodations from a scene which, though on an humble scale, promised so fair. Even the sleek, well-fed tabby cat purred so peacefully on the door-sill, that she seemed to invite the pedestrian to shelter and repose.

Martha Mason, the mistress of the domicil, was a bad woman, in the fullest sense of the word—cunning, heard-hearted, and avaricious, without pity, and without remorse—a creature so hardened in the ways of sin, that conscience had long ceased to offer the least resistance to the perpetration of crime. Unfeminine in mind and person, you could scarcely persuade yourself that the course, harsh features, and bristling hair about the upper lip, belonged to a female, had not the tameless tongue, ever active in abuse and malice, asserted its claim to the weaker sex, and rated and scolded through the long day, as none but the tongue of a bad woman can rate and scold. An accident had deprived the hideous old crone of the use of one of her legs, which she dragged after her with the help of a crutch; and though she could not move quickly in consequence of her lameness, she was an excellent hand at quickening the motions of those who had the misfortune to be under her control.

Her son Robert, who went by the familliar appellation of "Bully Bob," was the counterpart of his mother—a lazy, drunken blackguard, who might be seen from morning till night lounging, with his pipe in his mouth, on the well-worn settle at the door, humming some low ribbald song to chase away the lagging hours, till the shades of evening roused him from his sluggish stupor, to mingle with gamblers and thieves in their low debauch. The expression of this young man's face was so bad, and his manners and language so coarse and obscene, that he was an object of dislike and dread to his low associates, who regarded him as a fit subject for the gallows. In the eyes of his mother, Bob Mason was a very fine young man—a desirable mate for any farmer's daughter in the country.

The old Spanish proverb, "Poverty makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows," was never more fully exemplified than in the case of these people and their next door neighbors.

Dorothy Grimshawe was the widow of a fisherman, whose boat foundered in the dreadful storm of the 10th of October, 1824. Like many others, who sailed from the little port high in health and hope, expecting to reap a fine harvest from the shoals of herrings that annually visit that coast, Daniel Grimshawe fell a prey to the spoiler, Death, that stern fisher of men.

The following morning, after the subsidence of the gale, the beach for miles was strewn with pieces of wreck, and the bodies of forty drowned men were cast ashore. Most of these proved to natives of the town, and the bodies were carried to the town-hall, and notice was sent to the wives of the absent fishermen to come and claim their dead.

This awful summons quickly collected a crowd to the spot. Many anxious women and children were there, and Dorothy Grimshawe and her little ones came with the rest.

"Thank the good God! my man is not there," said a poor woman, coming out with her apron to her face. "The Lord save us—'tis a fearsome sight."

"He may be food for the crabs at the bottom of the sea," said a hoarse voice from the crowd. "You are not going to flatter yourself, Nancy, that you are better off than the rest."

"Oh, oh, oh!" shrieked the poor woman, thus deprived by envy of the anchor of hope to which she clung. "I trusted in the mercy of God, I could not look to the bottom of the salt deep."

"Trust to Him yet, Nancy, and all will be well," said an old, weather-beaten tar. "It is He who rules the winds and waves, and brings the storm-tossed ship into a safe harbor."

"But what has He done for these poor men? Were they worse than the rest?" sobbed Nancy.

"It is not for us to bring to light what He has left in darkness," said the old sailor. "He took the three fine lads of mine in one night, and left me childless. But it is not for the like o' me to murmur against Him. I always trusted to His providence, and I found that it gave me strength in the hour of danger."

"Dorothy," he cried, turning to Mrs. Grimshawe, "it is your turn to go in. It's no use crying and hanging back. Mayhap Dan has escaped the storm, an' is spreading a white sheet to the fine, fresh breeze this morning."

"My heart feels as cold as a stone," sobbed Dorothy; "I dare not go forward; I feel—I know that he is there."

"Shall I go for you? I have known Dan from a boy."

"Oh, no, no; I must see with my own eyes," said Dorothy; "nothing else will convince me that he is either saved or lost;" and she hurried into the hall.

Trembling with apprehension, the poor woman entered the melancholy place of death. The bodies were arranged in rows along the floor, and covered decently with coarse, clean sheets. The mournful and mysterious silence which always broods above the dead, was broken by sighs and sobs—wives, mothers, sisters, and little children were collected in heartrending groups around some uncovered and dearly-loved face, whose glassy eyes, staring and motionless, were alike unconscious of their presence and their tears.

Mrs Grimshawe recoiled with a sudden backward step—"What if Dan is here?" She pressed her hands tightly upon he breast—the stifled cry of agony and fear that burst from her lips, nearly choked her; she clutched at the bare walls for support, and panted and gasped for breath.

A little hump-backed child, after casting upon her mother a look of unutterable pity, slowly advanced to the first shrouded figure, and, kneeling down, reverentially lifted the sheet, and gazed long and sadly upon the object peneath. "Father," murmured the child; no other word escaped her quivering lips. She meekly laid her head upon the dead seaman's breast, and kissed his cold lips and brow with devoted affection. Then, rising from her knees, she went to her pale, weeping, distressed mother, and, taking her gently by the hand, led her up to the object of her search.

The winds and waves are sad disfigurers; but Mrs Grimshawe instantly recognized, in the distorted features, so marred in their conflict with the elements, the husband of her youth, the father of her orphan children; and with a loud shriek, she fell upon the bosom of the dead. Rough, pitiful hands lifted her up, and unclasped the rigid fingers that tightened about his neck, and bore the widow tenderly back to her desolate home.

Weeks went by, and the fisherman slept in his peaceful grave. His little children had ceased to weep and ask for their father, before Dorothy Grimshawe awoke to a consciousness of her terrible loss and altered fortunes. Shortly after her restoration to reason, a further trial awaited her: she became the victim of palsy; in the meridian of life she found her physical strength prostrate, and her body a useless, broken machine, no longer responsive to the guidance, or obedient to the will of its possessor. An active mind, shut up in a dead body—an imprisoned bird, vainly beating itself against the walls of its cage. Human nature could scarcely furnish a more melancholy spectacle; speech, sight and hearing, were still hers, but the means of locomotion were lost to her for ever.

The full extent of her calamity did not strike her at first. Hope whispered that the loss of the use of her lower limbs was only temporary, brought on by the anguish of her mind—that time and the doctor's medicines would restore her to health and usefulness.

Alas, poor Dorothy! How long did you cling to these vain hopes! How reluctantly did you at last admit that your case was hopeles—that death could alone release you from a state of helpless suffering! Then came terrible thoughts of the workhouse for yourself and your children; and the drop was ever upon your cheek—the sigh rising constantly to your lips. Be patient, poor, afflicted one: God has smitten, but not forsaken you. Pity still lives in the human heart, and help is nearer than you think.

In her early life Dorothy had lived for several years nursery-maid in a clergyman's family. One of the children, entrusted to her care, had loved her very sincerely; he was now a wealthy merchant in the town. When Mr. Rollins heard of her distress, he hastened to comfort and console her. He gave her part of the red-brick cottage, rent free, for the rest of her life; sent her two youngest daugeters to school, and settled a small annuity upon her, which, though inadequate to the wants of one so perfectly dependent, greatly ameliorated the woes of her condition.—Dorothy had resided several years in the cottage, before the Masons came to live under the same roof. They soon showed what manner of people they were, and annoyed the poor widow with their rude and riotous mode of life. But complaints were useless. Mr. Rollins was travelling with his bride on the continent; and his steward, who had accepted the Masons for tenants, laughed at Dorothy's objections to their character and occupation, bluntly telling her "that beggars could not be choosers—that she had a comfortable, warm roof over her head, without having to work hard for it like her neighbors." She acknowledged the truth of the remark, and endeavored to submit to her fate with patience and resignation.

THE SISTERS.

Mrs Grimshawe's eldest daughter, Mary, the poor hunchback before alluded to, was a great comfort to her afflicted parent. She seldom left her bed-side, and was ever at hand to administer to her wants. Mary was a neat and rapid plain sewer; and she contributed greatly to her mother's support, by the dexterity with which she plied her needle. Her deformity, which was rendered doubly conspicious by her diminutive stature, was not the only disadvantage under which Mary Grimshawe labored. She was afflicted with such an impediment in her speech, that it was only the members of her own family that could at all understand the meaning of the uncouth sounds in which she tried to communicate her ideas. So sensible was she of this terrible defect, and the ridicule it drew upon her from thoughtless and unfeeling people, that she seldom spoke to strangers, and was considered by many as both deaf and dumb.

Poor Mary! she was one of the meekest of God's creatures—a most holy martyr to patience and filial love. What a warm heart—what depth of tenderness and affection dwelt in the cramped confines of that little mishapen body!—Virtue in her was like a bright star seen steadily shining through the heavy clouds of a dark night. The traveler, cheered by its beams, forgot the blackness and gloom of the surrounding atmosphere.

How distinctly I can recall that plain, earnest face, after the long lapse of years! the dark, sallow cheeks; the deep, sunken, pitiful, pleading eyes; those intelligent, deep-set, iron-grey eyes, that served her for a tongue, and were far more eloquent than speech, as they gleamed from beneath her strongly-marked, jet-black eyebrows; the thin lips that seldom unclosed to give utterance to what was passing in her mind, and that never smiled, yet held such a treasure of pearls within. Nature had so completely separated her from her kind, that mirth would have appeared out of place. She was plain in form and feature, but the beauty of the soul enshrined in that humble, mishapen tenement, shed over her personal deformities a spiritual and holy light.

From the time of her father's death, Mary had worked steadily at her needle to support herself and the rest of the family. The constant assiduity with which she plied her task, greatly increased the projection of her shoulder, and brought on an occasional spitting of blood, which resulted from a low, hacking cough. The parish doctor, who attended her bed-ridden mother, and who felt interested in her good, dutiful child, assured her that she must give up her sedentary employment, or death would quickly terminate her labor.

"But how, then," asked Mary, "can I contribute to the support of the family? My mother's helpless condition requires my constant exertions. If I cease to work, she must starve."

The good doctor suggested respectable service as a more remunerative and healthier occupation.

"Alas!" said Mary, "to go into service is impossible. Who will hire a domestic who is in delicate health, is deformed, and to strangers unintelligible? You, sir, have known me from a child. You understand my broken words You never hurry me, so that I can make you comprehend the meaning of my jargon. But who else would have the patience to listen to my uncouth sounds?"

The doctor sighed, and said that she was right, that going out would only expose her to constant mortification and redicule; and he felt very sorry that his own means were so limited, and his family so large, that he could only afford to keep one servant, and that an active, stirring, healthy woman, able to execute, without much bodily fatigue, her multitudinous daily tasks.—He left the cottage with regret; and Mary, for the first time, felt the bitter curse of hopeless poverty, and a sense of her own weakness and helplessness fell heavily on her soul.

In this emergency, Mrs. Mason offered her a trifling weekly stipend, to attend during the day upon the customers, and to assist her in washing glass and crockery and keeping the house in order. She knew her to be honest and faithful, and she was too homely to awaken any interest in the heart of her worthless, dissipated son.

Mary hesitated a long time before she accepted the offer of her repulsive neighbor; but her mother's increasing infirmities, and the severe illness of her youngest sister Charlotte, left her no choice. Day after day you might see the patient hunchback performing the menial drudgeries of the little inn, silent and self-possessed—an image of patient endurance, in a house of violence and crime. It was to her care that the house owed its appearance of neatness and outward respectability. It was her active, industrious spirit that arranged and ordered its well-kept household stuff, that made the walls so cheery, the grate so gay with flowers, that kept the glittering array of pewter so bright. It was her taste that had arranged the branches of the wild rose to twine so gracefully over the rustic porch that shaded her sick mother's dwelling, who, forbidden by the nature of her disease to walk abroad, might yet see from her pillow the fragrant boughs of the brier bud and blossom, while she inhaled their fragrance in every breeze that stirred the white cotton curtains that shaded her narrow casement.

Mary's native sense of propriety was constantly shocked by unseemly sights and sounds; but their impurity served to render vice more repulsive, and to strengthen that purity of heart from which she derived all her enjoyment. Night always released her from her laborious duties, and brought her back to be a ministering angel at the sick bed of her mother and sister.

These sisters I must now introduce to my readers, for with one of them my tale has mostly to do. Unlike Mary, they were both pretty, delicate-looking girls, ready of speech, and remarkably pleasing in person and manners.

Mr. Rollins had paid for the instruction of these girls at the village school, in which they had been taught all sorts of plain work; had mastered all the difficulties of Mavor's Spelling-book, had read the Bible, the Dairyman's Daughter, Pilgrim's Progress, and Goldsmith's abridged History of England, and all the books in the shape of penny tracts and sixpenny novels they could borrow from their playmates when school was over.

Sophy, the elder of the two, who was eighteen years of age, had been apprenticed for the last two years with a milliner of an inferior grade in the little seaport town; and her term of service having expired, she had commenced making dresses in a humble way, for the servants in respectable families. She had to work very hard for a small remuneration, for the competition was very great, and without lowering her prices to nearly one-half, she could not have obtained employment at all. She could easily have procured a service as a nurse girl or housemaid in a gentleman's family, but the novels she had read during her residence with Mrs. Makewell, the milliner, had filled her head with foolish notions of her own beauty and consequence, and given her ideas far above her humble station, quite unfitting her to submit patiently to the control of others. Besides being vain of a very lovely face, she was very fond of dress. A clever hand at her business, she contrived to give a finish and style to the homely materials she made, and which fitted so well her slender and gracefully-formed person.

Her love of admiration induced her to lay out all her scanty earnings in adorning herself, instead of reserving a portion to help provide their daily food. Her sewing was chiefly done at home, and she attended upon her mother and sister, and prepared their frugal meals during the absence of Mary, whose situation in the "Brig's Foot" she considered a perfect degradation.

Such was Sophy Grimshawe, and there are many like her in the world. Ashamed of poverty, in which there is no real disgrace, and repining at the subordinate situation in which she found herself placed, she made no mental effort to better her condition by endeavoring to surmount it by frugal and patient industry, and a cheerful submission to the Divine will. She considered her lot hard, the dispensations of Providence cruel and unjust. She could not see why others should be better off than herself—why women with half her personal attractions should be permitted to ride in their carriages, while she had to wear coarse shoes and walk through the dust. She regarded every well-dressed female that passed the door, with feelings of envy and hatred, which embittered her life, and formed the most painful feature in the poverty she loathed and despised.

Charlotte, the sick girl, was two years younger than Sophy, and very different in person, mind and character. A fair, soft, delicate face, more winning than handsome, but full of gentleness and sweetness, was a perfect transcript of the pure spirit that animated the faithful heart in which it was enshrined. She might have been described in those charming lines of Wordsworth as

> "The sweetest flower that ever grew
> Beside the cottage door."

Contented in the midst of poverty, happy in the consciousness of moral improvement, patient under suffering, and pious without cant or affectation of superior godliness, she afforded, under the most painful circumstances, a rare example of Christian resignation to the will of God.

While reading the Gospel at school, as a portion of her daily task, it had pleased the All-Wise Dispenser of that blessed revelation to man, to open her eyes to the importance of those noble truths that were destined to set her free from the bondage of sin and death. She read, and believing that she had received a message from the skies, like the man who found the pearl of great price, she gave her whole heart and soul to God, in order to secure such an inestimable treasure. The sorrows and trials of her lowly lot were to her as stepping-stones to the heavenly land on which all her hopes were placed, and she regarded the fatal disease which wasted her feeble frame, and which had now confined her to the same bed with her mother, as the means employed by God to release her from the sufferings of earth, and open for her the gates of heaven.—How earnestly, yet how tenderly, she tried to inspire her afflicted mother with the same hopes that animated her breast! She read to her, she prayed with her, and endeavored to explain in the best way she could that mysterious change which had been wrought in her own soul, and which now, on the near approach of death, filled her mind with inexpressible joy.

This reading of the Scriptures was a great consolation to the poor widow; and one day she remarked, in a tone of deep regret and with many tears—

"Who will read the Bible to me, Charlotte, when you are gone? Mary cannot read, and if she could, who could understand what she read, and Sophy hates everything that is serious, and is too selfish to trouble herself to read aloud to me."

"Mother, I have thought much about that of late," said the sick girl, raising herself on the pillow into a sitting posture, and speaking with great earnestness. "The doctor said yesterday that I might survive for six or seven weeks longer—perhaps,' he added, 'until the latter end of Autumn. During that time, could I not teach you to read?"

"At fifty years of age, Charlotte!" and the poor widow smiled at the enthusiasm of her child.

"And why not, mother?" said Charlotte, calmly. "It would be a great comfort to you, during the long, lonely hours you pass in bed; the thing may appear difficult, but I assure you that it is not impossible."

"And then your weak state; think how it would fatigue you, my dear child."

"So far from that, mother, it would afford me the greatest delight!" and the sick girl clasped her thin, wasted hands together, and looked upward with an expression of gratitude and love beaming on her pale, placid face.

"Well, I will try to please you, my dear Charlotte," said Dorothy, whose breast was thrilled to its inmost core by the affectionate solicitude which that glance of angelic benevolence conveyed to her heart; "but you will find me so stupid that you will soon give it up as a bad job."

"With God all things are possible," said Charlotte, reverentially. "With His blessing, mother, we will begin to-morrow."

It was a strange but beautiful sight* to see that dying girl lying in the same bed instructing her helpless mother—a sight which drew tears from sterner eyes than mine. And virtue triumphed over obstacles which at first appeared insurmountable. Before death summoned the good daughter to a better world, she had the inexpressible joy of hearing her mother read distinctly to her Christ's Sermon on the Mount. As the old woman concluded her delightful task, the grateful Charlotte exclaimed gently, in a sort of ecstasy—"Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace." Her prayer was granted; and a few minutes after, this good and faithful disciple entered into the joy of her Lord.

This event, though long expected by Dorothy Grimshawe, was felt with keen anguish. The tuneful voice was silent that day and night which for many weeks had spoken peace to her soul. The warm young heart was still, that had so ardently hoped and prayed for her salvation, that had solved her doubts and strengthened her wavering faith; and to whom now could she turn for comfort and consolation? To Mary, whispered the voice in her soul; but Mary was absent during the greater part of the day, and Sophy was too busy with her own affairs to pay much attention to her heart-broken parent.

But deep as was the mother's grief for the loss of her dutiful child, the sorrow of the poor hunchback for her beloved sister, who had been the idolized pet of her joyless childhood, was greater still. Worn down with an incurable disease, Mrs. Grimshawe looked forward to a speedy reunion with the departed; but years of toil and suffering might yet be reserved for the patient creature, who never was heard to murmur over her painful lot.

The death of the young Charlotte, the peacemaker, the comforter and monitor to the rest of the household, was as if her good angel had departed, and the sunshine of heaven had been dimmed by her absence.

"Oh, my sister!" she murmured, in the depths of her soul, "thou wert justly dear to all; but oh! how dear to me! No one on earth loved the poor hunchback, or could read the language of her heart, like you. To others dumb and uncouth, to you my voice was natural; for it spoke to you of feelings and hopes which you alone could understand."

Mrs. Mason scolded and grumbled that, for weeks after Charlotte's death, Mary Grimshawe performed her daily tasks with less alacrity, and wandered to and fro like one in a dream. Sometimes the pent-up anguish of her heart found a vent in sad and unintelligible sounds—"A gibberish," her mistress said, "that was enough to frighten all the customers from the house."

Mary had other causes of annoyance to grieve and perplex her, independent of the death of her sister. For some weeks past, the coarse, dissolute Robert Mason had shown a decided preference for her sister Sophy, whom he proclaimed, in her hearing, to his bad associations, "to be the prettiest girl in the neighborhood—the only gal that he cared a bit for, or deemed worth a fellow's thoughts. But then," he added, carelessly, and with an air of superiority which galled Mary not a little, "the wench was poor—too poor for him. He wanted some 'un with lots of tin, that would enable him to open a good public house in town."

Mary, as she listened, secretly blessed God that they were poor, while the ruffian continued:

"His mother, the old jade, would never consent to his marrying one so much beneath him. If she only suspected him of casting a sheep's eye at Sophy Grimshawe, she would set marks on the gal's face that would spoil her beauty.—But if the gal had not been so decidedly poor, he would please himself, without asking Mammy's leave, he could tell her."

His coarse comrades received his disrespectful insubordination to his mother's authority as an excellent joke, while Mary inly shuddered at his indelicate awowal of his liking for her sister, which filled her mind with a thousand indefinite fears.

Sophy, of late, had been able to obtain but little work in the neighborhood; she was silent and dejected, and murmured constantly against her poverty, and the want of every comfort that could render life tolerable. Sometimes she talked of going into service, but against this project, so new from her mouth, her mother objected, as she had no one else during the day to wait upon her, or speak to her. More generally, however, she speculated upon some wealthy tradesman making her his wife, and placing her at once above want and work.

"I care not," she would say, "how ugly he might be, if he would only take me out of this, and make a lady of me."

Mary shook her head, and tried, in hoarse ejaculations, to express, her disapprobation of such an immoral awowal of sentiments she could but regard with horror; while she fixed upon her sister those piercing eyes, which seemed to look into her very soul—those eyes which, gleaming through fast-falling tears, made the vain girl shiver and turn away.

"Sophy," said Mrs. Grimshawe, gravely—for the remark was made one evening, by her mother's bed-side—"Mary cannot speak her thoughts but I understand her perfectly, and can speak them for her, and would seriously ask you, if you think it a crime to sell your soul for money."

"Certainly not; I would do anything to get rid of the weary life I lead. All day chained down to my needle, and all night kept awake by the moans of the sick. At eighteen years of age is it not enough to drive me mad?"

"It is what the Lord has been pleased to appoint—a heavy burden, doubtless, but meant for your good. Look at Mary; her lot is harder than yours, yet she never repines."

Sophy flashed a scornful look at her sister, as she replied—

"Mary is not exposed to the same temptations. Nature has placed her beyond them. I am handsome, and several years younger than her. She is deformed, and has a frightful impediment in her speech, and is so plain that no one could fall in love with her, or wish to make her a wife.—Men think her hideous, but they do not laugh at her for being shabby as they do at me.

This speech was made under the influence of vehement passion, and was concluded with a violent burst of tears.

Her cruel words inflicted a deep wound in the heart of the poor deformed girl. For the first time she felt degraded in her own eyes; and the afflictions under which she labored seemed disgraceful; and she wished she had been deaf as well as unintelligible. But these feelings, so foreign to her nature, were of short duration; after a brief but severe mental struggle, she surmounted her just resentment, and forgave her thoughtless sister for the unmerited reproach.—Wiping the tears from her pale, dark cheeks, she smoothed the pillows for her sick mother, and murmured with a sigh—"Lord, it was Thy hand that made me as I am; let me not rebel against Thy will."

The old woman was greatly excited by Sophy's unworthy conduct. With a great effort she raised herself nearly upright in her bed, gazing sternly upon her rebellious child.

"Mary, my darling!" she cried, at last, when she saw the deformed vainly striving to control the emotion which convulsed her whole frame—"bear with patience the sinful reproaches of this weak, vain girl. The time will come when she will be severely punished for her cruelty and injustice. It would be well for her if the image of her God were impressed upon her soul as it is upon yours, my good, dutiful child. The clay perishes, but that which gives value to the clay shall flourish in immortal youth and beauty, when the heavens shall be no more. 'Then shall the righteous shine forth like the sun'—Ah, me! I have forgotten the rest of the text, but you, Mary, know it well; let it console you, my dear girl, and dry these useless tears. I was pretty, like Sophy, once, and, like her, I thought too highly of myself. Look at me now. Look at these wrinkled, careworn cheeks—these wasted, useless limbs; are they not a lesson to human pride and vanity? I never knew my real character until I knew grief. Sorrow has been blessed to my soul, for had I never tasted the cup of affliction, I had never known the necessity of a Saviour. May his peace and blessing fortify your heart to endure every trial which his wisdom may appoint, my poor afflicted lamb!"

Sophy's heart was softened by her mother's passionate appeal, Heartily ashamed of herself, she approached nearer to her weeping sister.

"Mary," she faltered, in a tone of deep self-reproach, "I did not mean to vex you. I know that you are better than me, and you must not take so to heart my wild words; I am miserable and unhappy; I do not always know what I say."

The eyes of the sisters met; Sophy flung her arms about Mary's neck and kissed her.

"You forgive me, Mary?"

The hunchback smiled through tears—and such a smile—so eloquent—so full of love and grateful affection, that Sophy felt she was more than forgiven.

"Why are you unhappy Sophy?" asked Mrs. Grimshawe, seizing the favorable moment to make a more lasting impression on her mind.

"Because we are so poor."

"We have endured many evils worse than poverty.

"None, none. That word comprises them all. To be hungry, shabby, despised; and you wonder that my soul rebels against it?"

"Are not unkind words and reproaches more hard to bear?"

Sophy hung her head, and was silent.

"Mary would eat dry bread for a week, and be cheerful and resigned, and wear a coarse, shabby garment, without shedding a single tear. These are hardships, my girl; but they do not affect the heart, or cause one pang of remorse. But, seriously, Sophy, do you think that you would improve your present condition, or render yourself happier, by marrying a man you did not love, for money?"

"Yes." This was said emphatically.

"O, do it not, my child! It is a great sin to enter into a solemn covenant, and swear at God's holy altar to love and honor and obey a man for whom you have neither affection, nor respect.—No blessing from God can follow such an union. Nature would assert her rights, and punish you severely for having broken her laws."

"Nonsense, mother! The thing is done every day, and I see none of these evil results. Johanna Carter married old George Hughes for his money, and they live very comfortably together. I will accept, like her, the first good offer that comes in my way."

Mary writhed, and tried for some time to make her thoughts audible, at last she succeeded in gasping out—

"Robert Mason!—not him—not him!"

"Robert Mason! What, Bully Bob? Does he admire me? Well, Mary, I will quiet your apprehensions by assuring you that the regard is not mutual. And what would the old witch his mother say?"

"Let her never have it to say, that her lad *ed married Daniel Grimshawe's daughter," said Dorothy, indignantly.

"Oh, but I should like to plague that old fiend, by letting her imagine that I encouraged her son. She has always something spiteful to say to me. It would be rare fun to torment her a little. I will be very sweet to Master Bob for the time to come."

Mary caught her arm, and looked imploringly in her face.

"So you are afraid of my marrying Bob Mason? What foolish women you are! He is not rich enough for me—a drunken spendthrift!—When I sell my soul for money, as mother calls my getting a rich husband, it shall be to one who is better able to pay for it."

And in high spirits the hitherto discontented grumbler undressed and retired to bed leaving Mary to pray for her during the greater part of the night, to entreat God to forgive her volatile sister, and make her sensible of her sin.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

*This touching scene was witnessed by the Author.

"Touch us gently, Time."

The following is from the Gossip with Readers and Correspondents, which forms so attractive a features in the *Knickerbocker Magazine*:

"My hair is getting gray; the crow's-feet are multiplying about my eyes, and the wrinkles becoming deeper and deeper in my forehead and around my mouth.—Well, what of this to *thee*, my reader?—Nothing in particular; only I thought for a moment, while looking in the glass this morning, of the beautiful lines of Barry Cornwall, and immediately made up my mind to ask old Father Time to deal "gently" with me. But first, reader, to the lines. Just read them:—

> "Touch us gently, gently, Time!
> Let us glide a down thy stream
> Gently—as we sometimes glide
> Through a quiet, quiet dream'
> Humble voyagers are we.
> Husband, wife, and children three—
> (One is lost—an angel—fled
> To the azure overhead!)
> "Touch us gently, gently, Time!
> We've no proud nor soaring wings;
> Our ambition, our content,
> Lies in simple, simple things.
> Humble voyagers are we,
> O'er life's dim unsounded sea,
> Seeking only some calm clime;
> Touch us gently, gently, Time!"

"Are they not beautiful? Our friend George Loder, has set them exquisitely to music."

"I recollect distinctly, years ago, looking with a sort of sympathetic pity upon a relative of mine whose hair was turning grey, and was quite surprised at his apparent indifference to the fact, at the same time believing it out of the question that my dark locks would ever put forth any silvery hairs; but lo! here they are by the score, and yet I do not actually mind it, although it isn't the pleasantest thing in the world to have a friend come up to you half a dozen times a day.

"Why, Pipes you're getting quite grey, I declare!"

Therefore, old Father Time, "touch us gently," if you please! Some years ago, at parting with a very dear sister, she remarked to me:

"I will not say good bye, for I know we shall meet again, at least before Time can have made any material change in either of us."

"She is dead—and my hair is turning grey. Time has made changes; but gently has he dealt with me.

"In what way, after separation, do we meet? Do we look at each other with the same feeling that we had at parting? Does not, in many cases, the surprise felt, if not expressed at the impress of the "seeds of mortality" in our outward appearance, amount to positive pain? I think so. We meet again in middle age. "Touch us gently Time!" Has the heart changed? have the affections waned? No! But touch us gently, *gently*, Time! And some have gone to dig gold—the young, the middle-aged, the old.—They have left the homesteads of their youth, the pleasant fireside, the *smiles of wives*, and the voices of their little ones; and they have toiled and labored; and what, in many cases, has been their reward! In their wooden-rocker, peeping up from a heap of mud, sand, and stones, a few specks of glittering metal make glad the eye—Gold! found at last! I must have more!

"Touch me gently, Time!" They toil, and toil; traverse the ravines, valleys and hills. In abundance they find the bright, bright metal! They will turn to the loved ones at home!—"Touch us gently, Time!" And years have passed, and the foot-steps are homeward bound! Oh! then let there be some green spot left that has not felt the withering influence of thy cold hand, old Father Time! upon which the eye of the wanderer can rest with pleasure unspeakable; that will bring back to him—through the long vista—a touch of boyhood; that will make him remember, even though the springs of morality are fast thickening, and the wrinkles growing deeper! 'Touch us gently. Time!"

May that prayer be answered.

Fanny Fern's Answer.

The London *Athenæum*, having roughly criticised "Fanny Fern," she talks back to John Bull as follows:

Johnny, had you any little *private reason of your own* for omitting the closing sentence in the obnoxious "fern leaf" above quoted, viz: *"and speak of every woman as you would wish your mother or sister to be spoken of?"* Oh, Johnny, Johnny, will you *never* get out of your mouth the taste of that cup of tea that my forefathers mixed for yours in Boston harbor? Will you never cease *jibbing*, Johnny? "*Not a country bone in my body?*" Ask the 175,000 buyers of *Fern Leaves*. (I go by my publisher's advertisements as to numbers, keeping a sharp eye, with a view to a settlement by and by!)—Ask them if *Fern Leaves* show that I do not love the country? Johnny, dear, I was "*raised*" in the country, not far from a spot called Bunker Hill, where, if I remember right, you once received a shot. How it came to hit you *in the back*, is best known to yourself.

As to the "architecture of a coat," I do know it, whenever I see a man with one on that is badly cut, and whose bump of self-esteem draws so powerfully on the top of his head as to lift his heels from the ground, that—*he is an Englishman*.

But, Johnny, I forgive you; partly because I penned sundry little squibs in *Fern Leaves* about you Britishers, in full expectation of a box on the ear, and partly because I know how many little things you have had lately to try your placid temper. It is aggravating, Johnny, to have Cobden and Hume constantly hammering Parliament about the New York press and thrusting it into your tory faces as a model of what *English* newspaper ought to be as to price, size and matter. This must be very provoking, Johnny, to a person of your inflation and pomposity. And then there is Kossuth's Sheffield *expose* of your miserable, shuffling, pussy-cat war-policy—dispatching your armies just in time to be too late for action, and allowing your fleets to hover about points from whence Russia cannot be vitally [illegible] instead of shaking them all out of their boots, as you ought, and *as we did you*, Johnny, after that little tea party I before alluded to.

Well, we forgive you Johnny, for being such a blustering coward. Your younger brother America is getting along nicely, and throws [illegible] in your teeth, your old taunt, "*Who reads an American book?*" Literary "*fecundity*", in [illegible]