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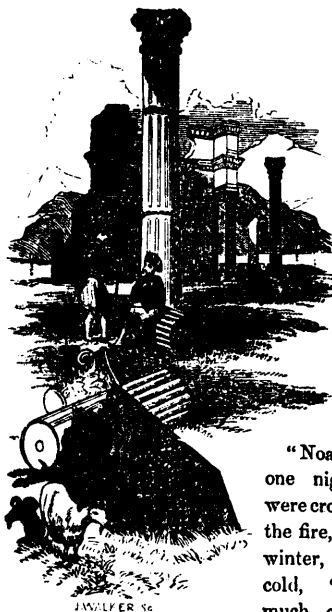
NO. 12.

NOAH COTTON:*

A TALE OF CONSCIENCE.

BY SUSANNA MOODIE.

MY MOTHER'S HISTORY.



J. WILKES sc.

BECAME a prey to constant remorse: my health daily declined. — My mother at last remarked the change in my appearance. But at that time I believe she had no idea of the cause.

“Noah,” she said one night as we were crouching over the fire, for it was winter, and very cold, “You are much changed of

late. You look ill and out of spirits; you eat little and speak less. My son what ails you?”

“I am tired of this place, mother. I should like to sell off and go to America.”

“And leave me for ever, Noah.”

“You of course would go with me.”

“Never!” said my mother emphatically. “Of all places in the world, I cannot go there.”

I looked up enquiringly.

“I will give you a sufficient reason,” she con-

tinued. “Listen to me, my son. I have never told you anything about myself, but it is time you should know all. My husband, whose name you bear, is not to my knowledge dead, but if living, he is in America.”

“Oh, that I had been his son!” I groaned internally; “well, mother proceed.”

“To make matters intelligible to you,” she continued. “I must go back to my early days. I was the only child of a poor shoemaker in the town of St. Albans. My father was reckoned a good hand at his trade, but he was sadly addicted to drink; for ten years before he died, I never remember his going one night to his bed sober. My poor mother, who was a neat quiet little woman, did all in her power to keep things strait, but first one piece of household furniture went, and then another, until we were left with bare walls and an empty cupboard.”

“‘Annie,’ said my mother, this will not do. You must go out and work for your living. You cannot starve.”

“And you, mother——”

“‘God will take care of me, my child. I cannot leave your father. He is my husband and in spite of this dreadful vice, I love him still.’

“I was reckoned a very pretty girl by my neighbors, and they were all very sorry for our altered circumstances. They blamed and pitied my father, who had been a general favorite before he became so lost to us and himself, while they respected and did all in their power to help my mother.

“One of these sympathising friends, who was the dress-maker employed by the great lady of

* Continued from page 493.—Conclusion.