

bunnets before I was married!' And the tears broke forth afresh.

'Accept my handkerchief,' said Ermine; 'it will serve your purpose better than fingers.'

The woman took the dainty cambric and surveyed it curiously, held at arm's length. 'Reg'lar thistle-down, now, ain't it?' she said; 'and smells like a locust-tree blossom.'

'Mr Solomon, then, belonged to the Community?' I asked, trying to gather up the threads of the story.

'No he did n't either; he's no Dutchman, I reckon, he's a Lake County man, born near Painesville, he is.'

'I thought you spoke as though he had been in the Community.'

'So he had; he did n't belong, but he worked for 'em since he was a boy, did middling well, in spite of the painting, until one day, when he come over to Sandy on a load of wood and seen me standing at the door. That was the end of him,' continued the woman, with an air of girlish pride; 'he could n't work no more for thinking of me.'

'*Où la vanité va-t-elle se nicher?*' murmured Ermine, rising. 'Come, Dora; it is time to return.'

As I hastily finished my last cup of sulphur water, our hostess followed Ermine towards the door. 'Will you have your handkercher back, marm?' she said, holding it out reluctantly.

'It was a free gift, madam,' replied my cousin; 'I wish you a good afternoon.'

'Say, will yer be coming again to-morrow?' asked the woman as I took my departure.

'Very likely; good by.'

The door closed, and then, but not till then, the melancholy dog joined us and stalked behind until we had crossed the meadow and reached the gate. We passed out and turned up the hill; but looking back we saw the outline of the woman's head at the upper window, and the dog's head at the bars, both watching us out of sight.

In the evening there came a cold wind down from the north, and the parlor, with its primitive ventilators, square openings in the side of the house, grew chilly. So a great fire of soft coal was built in the broad Franklin stove, and before its blaze we made good cheer, nor needed the one candle which flickered on the table behind us. Cider fresh from the mill, carded^g ginger-