

uneasy excitement, giving from time to time low growls as her voice rose in emphatic places; and finally, as if even a dog's patience could stand it no longer, he chorused a startling point with a sharp yelp!

"There!" said Mrs. Betsey, throwing down the book. "What is the reason Jack *never* likes me to read poetry?"

Jack sprang forward as the book was thrown down, and running to Mrs. Betsey, jumped into her lap and endeavoured to kiss her in a most tumultuous and excited manner, as an expression of his immense relief.

"There! there! Jacky, good fellow—down, down! Why, how odd it is! I can't think what excites him so in my reading," said Mrs. Betsey. "It must be something that he notices in my intonations," she added, innocently.

The two sisters we have been looking in upon are worthy of a word of introduction. There are in every growing city old houses that stand as breakwaters in the tide of modern improvement, and may be held as fortresses in which the past entrenches itself against the never-ceasing encroachments of the present. The house in which the conversation just recorded has taken place was one of these. It was a fragment of ancient primitive New York known as the old Vanderheyden house, only waiting the death of old Miss Dorcas Vanderheyden and her sister, Mrs. Betsey Benthusen, to be pulled down and made into city lots and squares.

Time was when the Vanderheyden house was the country seat of old Jacob Vanderheyden, a thriving Dutch merchant, who lived there with somewhat foreign ideas of style and stateliness.

Parks and gardens and waving trees had encircled it, but the city limits had gained upon it through three generations; squares and streets had been opened through its grounds, till now the house itself and the garden-patch in the rear was all that remained of the ancient domain. Innumerable schemes of land speculators had attacked the old place; offers had been insidiously made to the proprietors which would have put them in possession of dazzling wealth, but they gallantly maintained their position. It is true their income in ready money was but scanty, and their taxes had, year by year, grown higher as the value of the land increased. Modern New York, so to speak,