

hanging down over plump white shoulders ; the costumes were various, but the faces were the same. I gazed in silence, seeing no likeness to anything earthly. Erminia took out her glasses and scanned the pictures slowly.

'Yourself, madam, I perceive,' she said, much to my surprise.

'Yes, 'm, that 's me,' replied our hostess, complacently. 'I never was like those yellow-haired girls over to the Community. Sol allers said my face was real rental.'

'Rental ? I repeated, inquiringly.

'Oriental, of course,' said Ermine. 'Mr.—Mr. Solomon is quite right. May I ask the names of these characters, madam ?'

'Queen of Sheby, Judy, Ruth, Esthy, Po-co-hon-tus, Goddess-aliberty, Sunset, and eight Octobers, them with the grapes. Sunset's the one with the red paint behind it like clouds.'

'Truly a remarkable collection,' said Ermine. Does Mr. Solomon devote much time to his art ?'

'No, not now. He could n't make a cent out of it, so he's took to digging coal. He painted all them when we was first married, and he went a journey all the way to Cincinnati to sell em. First he was going to buy me a silk dress and some ear-rings, and, after that, a farm. But pretty soon home he come on a canal-boat, without a shilling, and a bringing all the pictures back with him ! Well, then he tried most everything, but he never could keep to any one trade, for he'd just as lief quit work in the middle of the forenoon and go to painting ; no boss 'll stand that, you know. We kep' a going down, and I had to sell the few things my father give me when he found I was married whether or no,— my chany, my feather-beds, and my nice clothes, piece by piece. I held on to the big looking-glass for four years, but at last it had to go, and then I just gave up and put on a linsey-woolsey gown. When a girl's spirit 's once broke, she don't care for nothing, you know ; so, when the Community offered to take Sol back as coal-digger, I just said, "Go," and we come.' Here she tried to smear the tears away with her bony hands, and gave a low groan.

'Groaning probably relieves you,' observed Ermine.

'Yes, 'm. It's kinder company like, when I'm all alone. But you see it's hard on the prettiest girl in Sandy to have to live in this lone lorn place. Why, ladies, you might n't believe it, but I had open-work stockings, and feathers in my winter