

# NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

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## ONLY A SEAMSTRESS.

BY JEANIE BELL.

### CHAPTER I.

"This world is all a fleeting show,  
• For man's illusion given;  
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,  
Deceitful shine, deceitful flow—  
There's nothing true but heaven!"

In an elegantly furnished drawing-room two ladies sat *tete-a-tete* on a lounge, discussing seamstresses in general, and one seamstress in particular. Let us take a photograph of them just as they sit. The mistress of the mansion is a handsome woman; very tall and commanding in appearance, with a quick, flashing eye, and haughty curve of the lip. Handsome as Mrs. Wellbrook is, a good judge of character would not be attracted by her appearance, but would turn with pleasure to look at her visitor, who, in simple outdoor costume, sits in graceful posture, pleading, with earnest eyes and a sweet, winning mouth, the case she has in hand. Gentle and somewhat plain-looking as Mrs. Malvern is, she is evidently one whom Mrs. Wellbrook thinks it worth while to please, for the lady's haughty lips are wreathed in gracious smiles as she gives up her own opinion in favor of her visitor's. Mrs. Malvern strongly recommended a young girl she knew as a good seamstress. To induce her friend to try the girl's powers, she gave Mrs. Wellbrook a slight sketch of her history. It was the common story of a

once wealthy family reduced to poverty and having to engage in humble work for a living. The only uncommon thing about her history was that on learning that they were living on means which did not rightly belong to them, they at once gave up their comfortable home and resolved to accept no charity from friends.

We should have said before that it was only at the father's death that Mrs. Paul and her only child discovered that they were penniless. It was a crushing blow to the mother, who had been reared in affluence, and knew poverty only by name. To the daughter, although she too had not a desire ungratified while her father lived, the trial did not come so heavy. She had a tower of strength to lean upon which her mother had not—namely, the "Rock of Ages,"—and, in the faith that her Heavenly Father had ordered all her path in love, and ever would do so, she felt little dread of the future. Thinking herself scarcely proficient enough in music to depend on that accomplishment alone for a living, and unable to leave her mother to take a situation as governess, the only other thing Miss Paul thought of as suitable work was—plain sewing. She was a quick and beautiful sewer, and soon after coming to Greylands procured sufficient employment.

Such was the history of Mrs. and Miss Paul as far as Mrs. Malvern knew it, so she