

attactin' a ghastly hole of about 7 by 9 dimensions in the left knee.

I sat silently in my chair like a statute, while she remarked thus, and as she paused I says to her agin, fixing my mild but stern grey eyes upon her weary form, bendin' over the dilapidated folds of the 8th.

"Are you happy, Betsy?"

"I have got something to lean on," says she.

I thought of the fragile form bendin' over the lean and haggard horse, and totterin' away, withered by age and grief, in the swallow tailed coat, and says I in a pityin accent,

"Don't lean too hard, Betsy."

"Why?" says she.

Says I, in a kind of a blind way, "You may be sorry if you do," and then I says to her in clear and piercin' accents these words,

"Do you love your husband, Betsy?"

"I don't think love is necessary," says she, "I am married, which is enough to satisfy any woman who is more or less reasonable, that is the main and important thing, and as I have said, love and respect, and so forth are miners, as—

"Miners!" says I, in a tone of deep indignity. "Miners! Betsy Bobbet—"

"Mrs. Betsy Bobbet Slimpsey," says she, correctin' of me proudly, as she attacted another mournful lookin' hole as big as my two hands.

"Well! Betsy Slimpsey!" says I, beginnin' again, and wavin' my right hand in a eloquent wave, "There hain't no more beautiful sight on earth than to see two human soles, out of pure love to each other, gently approachin' each other, as if they must. And at last all their hopes and thoughts, and affections runnin' in together, so you can't separate 'em nohow, jest like two drops of rain water, in a mornin' glory blow. And to see 'em nestlin' there, nor not earin' for nobody outside the blow, contented and bound up in each othar, till the sun evaporates 'em, (as it were) and draws 'em up together into the heaven, not separatin' of 'em up there—why such a marriage as that is a sight that does men and angels good to look at. But when a woman sells herself, swaps her purity, her self-respect, her truth, and her sole, for barter or any kind, such as a house and lot, a few thousand dollars, the name of bein' married, a horse and buggy, some jewellery, and etcetera, and not only sells herself, but worse than the Turk wimmen goes round herself, huntin' up a buyer, crazy, wild eyed, afraid she won't find none—when she does find one, suppose she does have a minister for salesman, my contempt for that female is unmitigable."

Betsy still looked so wrapped up in dignity, as she bravely attacked the seat of another pair of trousers, that it fairly made me mad. Insted of that proud and triumphant mean I wanted her to look some stricken, and I resumed in a tone of indignaty, almost burnin' enough to set fire to her apron,

"Nor I don't want these wimmen that have sold themselves for a certificate with a man's name to it—I don't want to hear 'em talk about infamy; haint they infamous themselves? What have they done different from these other bad wimmen, only they have got a stiddy place, and a little better wages, such as respectability in the eyes of fools and etcetera. Do you suppose that a woman standin' up in front of a minister and tellin' a few pesky lies, such as, 'I promise to love a man I hate, and respect a man that hain't respectable, and honour and obey a man I calculate to make toe the mark'—do you suppose these few lies makes her any purer in the eyes of God, than if she had sold herself without tellin' 'em, as the other infamous wimmen did? Not any. Marriage is like baptism, as I have said more'n a hundred times, you have got to have the inward grace and the outward form to make it lawful and right. What good does the water do, if your sole haint baptised with the love of God? It haint no better than fallin' into the creek."

I paused, spotted in the face from conflictin' emotions, and Betsy begun in a haughty triumphant tone,

"Womans speah—"

Which words and tone combined with recollections of the aged sufferer in the blue swallow tailed coat, so worked on my indignation, that I walked out of the house without listenin' to another word, and put on my bunnet out in the door yard.

But I hollered back to her from the bars—for Josiah Allen's wife haint one to desert duty in any crisis—"that the four youngest boys ought to be sweat, and take some saffern tea, and I should give the five girls, and the twins, some catnip, and I'd let the rest of 'em be, till the docter come."

I haint seen Betsy since, for she is havin' a hard time of it. She has to work like a dog. For Simon Slimpsey bein' so poor, and not bein' no calculator, it makes it hard for 'em to get along. And the old man seems to have lost what little energy he had, since he was married, Betsy is so hard on him. He has the horrors awfully. Betsy takes in work, but they have a hard time to get along. Miss Gowdey says that Betsy told her that she didn't mind workin' so hard, but she did hate to give up writin' poetry, but she didn't get no time for it. So as is generally the