

1849

On Receiving a Watchguard from a Lady

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proprietor and deputy will immediately discover you as one of the aristocracy, the reactioners, the examiners ; then you'll see your money caught at ; you're rich, and in consequence it's quite a *catch!* Oh, how the poor are rich, and the rich are poor, in this time in which we live ! The Blouse bears envy to the Cloak, which is really wrong. The Blouse, which has never reached revolutions, which finds everywhere—whatever to the contrary—bread and work, doesn't know the grief and misery which the Cloak bears within its folds. Nor does it know how much it is elbowed by the Coats, which say to it—clear out ! They lose more than they gain by the change.

ON RECEIVING A WATCHGUARD FROM A LADY.

THE Parcæ are three mythologic dames ;
 Lachesis, Clotho, Atropos, their names.
 Clotho a distaff holds, from which is spun
 The thread of life by Lachesis ; this done,
 Sad Atropos, in sable vesture, stands
 To clip the thread, with scissors in her hands.

Oh, what transcendent spinsters ! spinning still
 The varied filaments of good and ill !
 Here golden hope, brown melancholy there,
 White peace, red war, dun sorrow, black despair ;
 All particolored shades of weal and woe,
 All forms of joy and grief the fibres show.
 Trembling with hope and fear, I gazed to see
 What fate the busy dames would spin for me.

Behold ! a blithesome maid comes tripping by,
 Song in her voice, and laughter in her eye ;
 Beside those shriveled termagants she seems
 Fair as Diana in Endymion's dreams.
 Is she my guardian sprite from fairy land ?
 And what that slender texture in her hand ?
 Entranced I saw her on the distaff place
 That braid, that might Apollo's bosom grace.
 " Good dames," she said, " my fingers this have wrought
 For a dull fellow, who my friendship sought ;
 Be kind, and in his sombre life-thread twine
 The brighter colors of this work of mine."