

**THE GREEN VELVET
DRESS. THE
BEAUTIFUL VILLA**

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The green velvet dress. The beautiful villa by Thomas Nelson

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THOMAS NELSON

**THE GREEN VELVET
DRESS. THE
BEAUTIFUL VILLA**



JENNY AT THE MILLINER'S.

THE GREEN VELVET DRESS.

THE BEAUTIFUL VILLA.



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS,
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THE GREEN VELVET DRESS.

"Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox
and hatred therewith."—Prov. xv. 17.



THE WALK TO THE VILLA.

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WRAP your cloak tight round you,
my lass; for the wind's bitter
cold this morning: and here—see

—you wouldn't be the worse of my bit of a shawl under it."

"Oh! but, mother, remember your rheumatics."

"I'm a'most right again, Jenny, and I ben't out in the cold," said the poor woman, stirring the few glowing embers which scarcely gave even the appearance of a fire.

"And come back soon again, Jenny dear," cried a pale, bare-footed little boy, running from the corner; "I hope the grand lady won't keep you long."

"I must seek for early violets in the hedges for you, Tommy."

"No, I don't want the violets, I want you back;" and the little thin arms were thrown round her neck, and the child's lips pressed to her cheek.

"Oh, Tommy! I wish I were a grand lady!—I wish I had plenty of money! Shouldn't you have meat enough, and all kinds of food, to make you strong and hearty again!"

"And new shoes!" suggested the child.

"And a blazing fire, and—"

"Hush, my children!" said the mother, gently, "and don't let your thoughts go run-

ning after what God Almighty has not seen good to give us. We've a-many blessings in this little cot of ours, and I always say that the three prime ones, sunshine for the eyes, hope for the heart, and love in the home, are as free to the poor as to the rich."

The sharp, cutting cold of a March wind, which drove the icy sleet against her face, did not tend to make little Jenny share her mother's spirit of contentment. She hastened up the high hill, holding her bonnet to keep it on, and wishing that she had some better protection against the blast than her thin cloak or her mother's thread-bare shawl. She was to call at the house of a milliner, for whom she was accustomed to run errands and to do little pieces of plain work, in order to carry a parcel from her to a lady who lived at the Hall about three miles distant.

Jenny arrived at the milliner's, her cheeks glowing with exercise and the cold.

"Take a seat by the fire, and warm yourself, Jenny; I've just a stitch more to put to this trimming, and the dress will be ready for you to take to Lady Grange in two minutes."

So Jenny sat down and looked on with

admiring eyes, as the finishing touch was given to a dress which, to her, appeared the very perfection of beauty and splendour.

"It must be a pleasure," thought the girl, "even to touch that lovely soft green velvet; and what must it be to wear it! I could not fancy any one's ever feeling unhappy in such a dress!"

It was a very foolish thought, certainly; but I have known people older than Jenny Green who have made reflections just as foolish. Those who suffer from the pressure of poverty are apt to forget that there are other and worse evils in the world; and that just as heavy a heart may, and often does, beat under a robe of velvet as beneath a thread-bare cloak.

The dress was finished, folded, wrapped up in linen, and confided to the girl, with many an injunction to carry it carefully, and not to loiter on the way; injunctions which Jenny conscientiously obeyed, being duly impressed with the importance of her errand and the amount of confidence reposed in her. The size of her parcel occasioned her some inconvenience: she had no longer a hand free to hold on her bonnet, which, blown

back on her shoulders, only hung by its faded ribbons, while the gale made sad untidy work with her hair. Jenny's shoes were very old, and the road steep and stony,—she became both foot-sore and tired; but her worst trouble was the uneasy, discontented thoughts, which seemed to flow into her bosom from the parcel which she carried.

“How nice and warm and comfortable it feels! I don't believe that the lady who will wear it ever knows what it is to be hungry or cold. She is never tired, for she has a fine coach to ride in,—oh! how grand it must be to ride in a coach! And then to dress like a queen, and feast on good things every day! How very, very happy she must be! I wish that I were a lady, that I do! I'd have a velvet dress of a different colour for every day in the week; and dear Tommy should have a white pony to ride on; and mother, oh! darling mother! should have everything nice that I could think of,—she should never have time to wish for anything: how happy we should all be together! But there's no use thinking about it,” added Jenny sadly, as on the crest of the