

parts. Prettified versions of working females are contributed by William P. Frith in his *AT MY WINDOW, BOULOGNE* (1872), where two robust and winsome peasants display their wares and themselves to passers-by. In contrast with Frith's artifice are the compelling depictions of feminine victims by Anna Blunden, Thomas Brooks, and Rebecca Solomon. Rebecca Solomon's *THE GOVERNESS* of 1854 is both well-painted and poignant in its comparison between distressed and blessed states of womanhood. Here a black-garbed governess suspends her activities briefly as she witnesses the marital bliss of a young husband and wife, who are oblivious to the teacher whose "invisible" status in their home makes her an outsider, i.e., neither a lady nor a servant. Another extreme of femininity is provided in what is perhaps the most commanding of all the works in this exhibition: Thomas Brooks' *RELENTING* (1855), a canvas that is trenchant in its Pre-Raphaelite attention to visual and symbolic detail. Unprotected by male society and unable to support herself and her family on mere sewing tasks, a young widow anxiously petitions the landlord for mercy. Numerous objects in this garret room -- the husband's sword, portrait and watchstand, the letter edged in black, the medicine for a sick daughter, and the withering plant on the windowsill -- all attest to the reduced circumstances of the woman and her brood. The title suggests ultimate compassion, although the widow may yet endure the solitary and desperate fate exemplified in Blunden's *THE SEMPSTRESS (THE SONG OF THE SHIRT)* of 1854. Here a woman artist, following the iconological tradition of Richard Redgrave's interpretation of Hood's famous poem, makes the needlewoman a tragic victim and melodramatically casts her as a martyred madonna praying for deliverance from her destitute lot. Yet there appeared to be no escape for femininity -- whether from a sequestered middle-class parlor or an urban street (as in John Thomson's stark photograph of *THE CRAWLER*) -- for the rules as well as the stereotypes of womanhood had been sharply defined and were upheld both by society and by the artists who served it.

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John Buchanan-Brown. *The Illustrations of William Makepeace Thackeray.* Newton Abbot, London, North Pomfret, Vt., David and Charles, 1979. 192 pp. (pp. 33-177 illustrations). \$24.50.

The phrase *ut pictura poësis* describes poetry and painting as sister arts, each echoing the themes and motifs of the other. If painting can translate literary thoughts into pictures and literature transmute images into words, would not a creative imagination be able to express itself with equal ease in both media? It would be only a