THE OMAHA DAILY BEE: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1899.

There was a bed in the room (indeed, it

was Mrs. Webb's bedroom), and upon this



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The Purple Orchid.

The dance was over. From the great house on the hill the guests had all departed and only the musicians remained. As they filed out through the ample doorarms, the first faint streak of early dawn presence. became visible in the east. One of them, a lank, plain-featured young man of gainly aspect, but penetrating eye, called the attention of the others to it.

"Look!" said he: "there is the daylight! This has been a gay night for Sutherlandtown.

"Too gay," muttered anether, starting aside, as the slight figure of a young man coming from the house behind them rushed hastily by. "Why, who's that?"

As they one and all had recognized the person thus alluded to, no one answered till he had dashed out of the gate and disappeared in the woods on the other side of the road. Then they all spoke at once.

"It's Mr. Frederick1" "He seems in a desperate hurry."

"He trod on my toes."

"Did you hear the words he was muttoring as he went by ?"

As only the last question was calculated to arouse any interest, it alone received attention.

'No: what were they? I herd him say something, but I did not catch the words. "He wasn't talking to you or me, either but I have ears that can hear an eye wink. He said: 'Thank God, this terrible night is over!' Think of that! After such a dance

and such a spread, he calls this night terrible and thanks God that it is over. thought he was one to enjoy this kind of thing more than most folks." "So did L"

The five musicians exchanged looks, then huddled in a group at the gate. He has guarreled with his sweetheart,'

suggested one. "I'm not surprised at that," declared an-"I never thought it would be a

match." "Shame if it were!" muttered the ungainly youth who had spoken first,

As the subject of this comment was the son of the gentleman whose house they were just leaving, they necessarily spoke low; but their tones were rife with curiosity, and it was evident that the topic deeply interested them. One of the five who had not

previously spoken now put in a word. "I saw him when he first led out Miss Page to dance, and I saw him again when he stood up opposite, her in the fast quadrille, and I tell you, boys, there was a mighty deal of difference in the way he looked at her the last time from what he did the first. You wouldn't have thought him the same man. Reckless young fellows like him are not to be caught by dimples only. They want cash."

"Or family, at least; and she hasn't either But what a pretty girl she is! Some fellow as rich as he and as well connected would be satisfied with her good looks alone." 'Good looks!" High soorn was observa-

ble in this exclamation, which was made by the young man who I have before characterized as ungainly. "I refuse to acknowledge that she has any good looks. On the

+ would turn on his best friends some day, grudging admiration. But he did not re- expression of terror and alarm which it Sylum's the best place for folks as has lost their wits. I-

But here a hand was put over his mouth. and the rest of the words became an inarticulate gurgle. Mr. Sutherland had just appeared on the porch, and there were not Sutherland had stepped into the house. with their instruments under their men to let their voices be heard in his

Amos Fenton, the constable

resence of Mr. Sutherland.

Sutherland; he won't notice it."

countenance of his aged friend.

'No; look at his eyes.'

"No, he is asleep.

ear a sudden shock."

ustomed to eat in?"

Could he have expected guests ?"

"Nonsense! he never killed her.

paid for it with her life."

nost demented moments."

'Asleep'

the cause. 3 60 not approve of 11.

'Miss Page must remain on the doorstep.

indertaken in Sutherlandtown without the

girl have you there?"

tutere.

He was a superb looking man, with an expression of mingled kindness and dignity hat. that invariably awakened both awe and dmiration in the spectator. No man in the country-I was going to say no womanwas more beloved, nor was any one held in higher esteem. Yet he could not control only son, as every one within ten miles

of the hill well knew At this moment his face showed both pain and shock.

"What name are you shouting out there ?" stopped him. he brokenly demanded.

"Agatha Webb."

'Is Agatha Webb hurt?' "Yes, sir, killed," repeated a half donen into the house a half hour ago, and we volces at once. "We've just come from have let him be for reasons you can easily the house. All the town is up. Some say her husband did it. "No, no!" was Mr. Sutherland's decisive, though half inaudible response. "Philemon Webb might end his own life, out not Agatha's. It was the money-Here he caught himself up, and, raising is voice, addressed the crowd of villagers more directly. "Wait," said he, "and I will go back with you. Where is Frederick ?" he declosed! He isn't dead "" manded of such members of his own house-

old as stood about him. No one knew. "I wish some one would find my son want him to go into town with me. "He's over in the woods there," volun-

eered a voice from without "In the woods!" repeated the father, in a surprised tone. Yes, sir; we all saw him go. Shall we what do these bottles mean and this parale

Fing out to him" 'No, no; I will manage very well withut him." And taking up his hat Mr. Sutherland stepped out again upon the

Suddeniv he stonned A hand had no wine in them, nor have the victuals been een laid on his arm and an insinuating touched. olce was murmuring in his ear:

"Do you mind if I go with you? I will not make any trouble." It was the same young lady we have seen

The old gentleman frowned-he who never frowned-and remarked shortly: "A scene of murder is no place for

WOINCE The face upturned to his remained unmoved.

"I think I will go." she quickly persisted 'I can easily mingle with the crowd." He said not another word against it. Miss Page was under pay in his house, but for the last few weeks no one had undertaken contradict her. In the interval since her first appearance on the porch she had exchanged the light dress in which she had danced at the ball for a darker and much nore serviceable one, and perhaps this token of her determination may have had its

o Philemon Webb. "I don't see anything but this poor sleepng man." he began. influence in silencing him. He joined the "Look at his sleeve." crowd, and together they moved down hill. This was too much for the servants of the

Mr. Sutherland, with a start, again bent The arm of his old friend lay or

verything that is to be seen in this room.

Mr. Sutherland, recalled to his duty by

hese words, looked quickly about him.

With the exception of the table and what

was on and by it there was nothing else in

he room. Naturally his glance returned

open. As soon as Mr. Sutherland entered gesture, entered a small room opening into as the victim of her husband's imbecility upon this path a man appeared from the the one in which they stood. His attention or of some vile robber's cupidity. Can you bouse and came directly toward him. It was was at once attracted by the body of the find the key to the other drawer? woman he had seen from below, lying half 東田 1755 "Ab, Mr. Sutherland," said be, "sad busi- in and half out of the window. That she "Suppose you begin, then, by looking on

ness, a very and business! But what little was dead was evident, but, as Mr. Fenton her person. It should be in her pocket, if had suid, no wound was to be seen upon no marauder has been here." "This is Miss Page, my bourekeeper's her, nor were there any marks of blood "It is not in her packet."

'Hanging to her neck, then, by a string?'

"This is a dreadful business." groaned "Not there is a locket here, but no key Mr. Sutherland, "the worst 1 have ever had A very handsome locket, Mr. Sutherland, We allow no one inside except yourself." anything to do with. Help me to lift the he said, respectfully, in recognition of the woman in; she has been long enough a "Nover mind, we will see that later, it is

the key we want sust now." "Good beavens"

"What is i "It is in her hand; the one that lies un-

The "Ah! A point, Fenten."

'A great point

"Stand by her Penton. Don't let any one ob her of that key till the coroner comes and we are at liberty to take it.

will not leave her for an instant." Meanwhile, I will put back these books. He had starcety done so when a fresh ar-

ival occurred. It was one of the village clergymen.

CHAPTER IV.

This gentleman had some information to give. As he was returning home from the bedride of a sick parishioner, some littl time before; he had been run against o the gateway in a state of great agitation This man held something in his hand the glittered, and though the encounter nearly upset them both, he had not stopped utter an apology, but stumbled away int nature than his, and though he had been the darkness in a dated and feeble way proof against it once he could not quite showing that he was neither young nor active. The minister had not been able ! see his face, but noticed the ends of a long beard blowing over his shoulder as he bur

> Philemon was a clean-shaven man. Asked if he could give the time of this encounte he replied that it was after 11 and before 12, for he was in his own house by 12

"Did you look up at these windows be fore leaving "" asked Mr. Fenton, for this interview had taken place in the presence

"I must have; for now I remember they were both lighted."

"Were the shades up?" "I think not, or I should have noticed the ceiling of the room. I remember seeing nothing

"How were the shades when you broke into the house this morning ?" inquired Mr. Sutherland of the constable.

"Just as they are now; we have moved nothing. The shades were both down-one of them over an open window."

"Well, we may find this encounter of Mr Crane's of decided importance.

"I wish I had seen the man's face," re

What did the object look like, you saw glittering in his hand?" "I should not like to venture an opinion

I saw it but an instant. "Could it have been a knife or an old fash-

oned dagger T "It might have been."

"Alas, poor Agatha! That money, something she so despised, should cause the death of a creature so grand and simple! Un happy life, unhappy death? Fenton, I shall always mourn for Agatha Webb

"Yet she seems to have found peace a last," said the minister. "I have never seet her look so contented." Then leading Mr Sutherland aside he whispered, "What is] you say about money? Had she any con siderable amount of it? I ask because it spite of their humble means of living she always put a generous donation on the plate, and I have received more than once during my pastorate an unexpectedly large but anonymous contribution for certain charities. But As it was always for sick or suffering chil-

"Yes, yes; I have no doubt it came from her. She was by no means poor, though 1

Cold Weather Brings Catarrh.

The Severity of this Dis- seemed to be getting a firmer hold on me all the while. After spending so much money for

ease Increases Each treatment which proved to be all in vain, I was urged to try 8 S.S. This remedy proved to be the right one, for Winter, it got at the disease, and a few bottles

Though the disagreeable effects of Cacured me perfectly. The cure was a permanent one; and I have not had a tarrh are felt all the year round, cold and unpleasant weather aggravates touch of the disease for many years. the disease and it is during the winter | Swift's Specific is the only remedy that senson that its severest form is felt, will have the alightest effect upon Each succeeding year seems to in- Catarrh tensily the disease, so that it gradually fastens its hold upon the sufferer with

a grasp that becomes firmer each sea-

Catarrh often appears as only a cold at first, and is hardly noticed. But gradually the cold returns, and it is more difficult to cure, and stays longer than formerly. These symptoms cannot be mistaken; they mark the first appearance of a disease that will develop in severity and stubbornness, and which it is impossible to cure with the local treatment of sprays, washee, and similar applications. Being a disease of the blood, only a blood remedy can (Swift's Specific) is the only cure for traces of the disease.

chant of Spartanburg, S. C., writes:

"For four years I had masal catarrh. and though the case was a mild one at first, it was not long until I noticed that it was gradually growing worse. Of



Catarrh should get a start on the disease before the cold weather aggravates it. Those who have been relying upon ocal treatment will winter weather is all that is needed to show that the Zistense is still with

Sufferers from

them. A course of S. S. S. (Swift's Specific) will prove all assertions made that it is the only cure for Catarrh; it goes to the cause of the have the slightest effect upon it. S.S.S. trouble-the blood-and forces out all

Catarrh, because it is the only blood Swift's Specific is the only remedy remedy which goes to the sent of all ob- which reaches real obstinate blood dis-Swift's Specific is the only remedy stinate cases, and forces out the disease. eases: it cures Gatarrh. Rheumatism. Mr. T. A. Williams, a leading mer- Cancer, Contagious Blood Poison, Bczema, Scrofuls, and every other disease of the blood. It is guaranteed

Purely Vegetable and is the only blood remedy containing

course I was under treatment of first- no potash, mercury or other mineral class physicians, but their remedies Books mailed free to any address by were applied locally, and the Catarrh the Swift Specific Co., Atlanta, Ga.



Of Unapproached Value for the Home, Class-room, Office, or Study, Journal of Education, Boston: "This is a treasure. No one can conceive the wealth

ble people. "Thank you," was her demure reply, her shock the sensitive Mr. Sutherland. the poble figure on the couch, he rethem. His wits are not strong enough to marked with an air of mild reproof: "No, no, poor Philemon! But that he should sit sleeping here while she-but of supper in the room they were not acat once, Miss Page; and if in the few hours We don't know. It has not been eaten,

ou see. He has swallowed a glass of port. but that is all. The other glusses have had still further oblige me. "Oh. don't send me away, I entreat you."

"Seats set for three and only one occuprobably regretted, for she instantly pied." murmured Mr. Sutherland, Strangel sought to cover up the anxiety it showed by submissive bend of the head and a step "It looks like it. I didn't know that his backward. Neither Mr. Fenton nor Mr. wife allowed him such privileges; but she Sutherland seemed to hear the one of see was always too good to him, and I fear has the other, their attention having returned o the more serious matter in hand. Had "The dress which our poor friend wears his love been anything short of the worship shows her to have been struck before rewas, he stood in too much awe of her

> 'If Philemon-' "Excuse me, sir." interrupted a volce, 'but the young woman is listening to what She is still in the hall." It was you say. the young man speaking, who had been left.

in the hall. "She is, is she!" exclaimed Fenton. sharply, his admiration for the fascinating stranger having oozed out at his companion's rebuff. "I will soon show herthe words melted into thin air as he reached the door. The young girl had disappeared, dren, 1and only a faint perfume remained in the

place where she had stood.

ing in the freeh, morning light that the uppermist both gentlemen started and dorneath. ugh old constable scratched his chin in looked at each other in amazement. consider his determination. Seeing this, showed was in striking contrast to the look she accepted her defeat gracefully, and of exaltation to be seen on the face of her wed aside to where the bushes offered dead mistress. her more or less protection from the curi-CHAPTER III. osity of those about her. Meanwhile Mr. As they re-entered the larger room they

She would come. Inquisitiveness, on or about the place where she lay.

Miss Page curtaied, looking so hewitch- poor Beter was laid. As the face came

fact that nothing of importance was ever show for the people outside."

He found himself in a small hall with a were astonished to come upon. Miss Page staircase in front and open door at the left. standing in the doorway. She was gazing at On the threshold of this open door a man the recumbent figure of the dead stood, who at the sight of him doffed his and for a moment seemed unconscious of

Passing by this man, Mr. Suther- their presence. "How did you get in? Which of my men land entered the room beyond. A table spread with estables met his view, beside was weak enough to let you pass, against which in an attitude which struck him at my express instructions?" asked the conhe moment as peculiar, sat Philemon stable, who was of an irritable and sus- this very corner by a man rushing out o Wabb, the well known master of the house. piclous nature.

Astonished at seeing his old friend in She let the hood drop from her head, and, this room and in such a position, he was turning, surveyed him with a slow smile. about to address him, when Mr. Fenton There was witchery in that smile sufficient to affect a much more cultivated and callous "Wait" said he. "Take a look at poor Philemon before you disturb him. He was

resist the effect of its repetition. sitting just as you see him when we broke "I insisted upon entering," said she. "Do into the house a half hour ago, and we not blame the men; they did not want to use force against a woman." She had not a good ried away. appreciate. Examine him closely, Mr.

roice and she knew it; but she covered up this defect by a choice of intonations that "But what ails him? Why does he sit carried her lightest speech to the heart. rouched against the table? Is he hurt. Hard-visaged Amos Fenton gave a grunt.

which was as near an expression of approval is he ever gave to any one. Mr. Sutherland stooped and pushed aside "Well! well!" he growled, but not illthe long gray locks that half concealed the naturedly, "it's a morbid curiosity that of the dead.

brings you here. Better drop it, girl; it, 'Why, he cried, startled, "they are won't do you any good in the eyes of sensi-

dimpling at the corners in a way to "Yes. He was asleep when we came in and he is asleep yet. Some of the neighbors wanted to wake him, but I would not let Glancing from her to the still outlines of

"I do not understand you, Miss Page If this solemn sight has no power to stop your coquetries, nothing can. As for your uriosity, it is both ill-timed and unwomanly. Let me see you leave this house

must elapse before breakfast you can find time to pack your trunks, you will marked the latter.

It was a cry from her inner heart, which

tlring," commented Mr. Sutherland, after fift his hand against her, even in his another short survey of Mrs. Webb's figure. "I don't trust men of uncertain wits." re-urned the other. "You have not noticed

contrary, I consider her plain." "O! O!" burst in protest from more than

one mouth. "And why does she have every fellow in the room dangling after her, then ?" asked the player on the yellow flageolet.

"But she hasn't a regular feature." "What difference does that make when it isn't her features you notice, but herself." "I don't like her."

A laugh followed thiss

That won't bother her. Sweetwater,

Sutherland does, if you don't, and that's much more to the point. And he'll marry her yet; he can't help it. Why, she'd witch the devil into leading her to the altar if she took a notion to have him for her bridegroom.

"There would be consistency in that, muttered the fellow just addressed. "But, Mr. Frederick-"

"Hush! There's some one on the doorstep. Why, it's she!

They all glanced back. The graceful figure of a young girl dressed in white was to be seen leaning toward them from the open doorway. Behind her shone a blaze of light-the candles not having been yet extinguished in the hall-and against this brilliant background her slight form, with all its bewitching outlines, stood out in plain relief. There was an anxious bend to it, however, which none of them had ever observed in it before.

Who was that?" she began in a high. almost strident voice, totally out of keeping ear. with the sensuous ourves of her strange. sweet face. But the question remained incomplete as well as unanswered, for at that moment her attention, as well as that of the men lingering at the gate, was attracted by the sound of hurrying feet and con-

fused cries coming up the hill. "Murder! murder!" was the word panted out by more than one harsh voice; and in another instant a dozen men and boys came rushing into sight in a state of such excitement that the five musicians recoiled from the gate, and one of them went so far as to start back toward the house. As he did so he noticed a curious thing. The young woman whom they had all perceived

standing in the door a moment before had vanished, yet she was known to profess the keenest curiosity of any one in town. Page. "Murder! murder!" A terrible and un-

precedented ory in this old, God-fearing They came in hoarse explanation town. from the jostling group as they stopped at the gate: "Mrs. Webb has been killed! Stabbed with a knife! Tell Mr. Suther- had been to the wharves to see their land!"

Mrs. Webb!

As the musicians heard this name, so their way home, and gave the alarm. Withhenored and so universally beloved, they out that we might not yet have known what to a man uttered a cry. Mrs. Webb! Why, had happened." it was impossible. Shouting in their turn . for Mr. Sutherland, they all crowded forward.

There was a board fence about the simple "Not Mrs. Webb!" they protested. "Who yard within which slood the humble house could have the during or the heart to kill forever after to be pointed out as the scene "God knows," answered a volce from of Sutherlandtown's most heartrending her?" the highway. "But she's dead-we've just tragedy. In this fence was a gate, and through this gate now passed Mr. Sutherland

"But Mrs. Webb ?"

"Come in and see.

"Then it's the old man's work," quavered and his would be companion, Miss Page. A a piping voice well known as that of the path bordered by blac bushes led the way village shoemaker's. "I've always said he 'to the house, the door of which stood wide



house. One by one they too left the house pon the table, and on its blue cotton sleeve till it stood absolutely empty. Jerry anuffed here was a smear which might have been out the candles and shut the front door. wine, but which was-blood. but the side entrance stood wide open, and As Mr. Sutherland became assured of this | below. into this entrance, as the last footstep died he turned slightly pale and looked inquirout on the hillside, passed a light and reso-

ingly at the two men who were intently lute figure. It was that of the musician watching him. who had questioned Miss Page's attractions. "This is bad," said he. "Any other marks of blood below stairs?"

CHAPTER II.

"No; that one smear is all." Sutherlandtown was a seaport. The vil-"O, Philemon!" bust from Mr. Sutherland, lage, which was a small one, consisted of one n deep emotion. Then as he looked long long street running parallel with the coast and shudderingly at his friend, he added and numerous cross streets munning down slowly from the billside and ending on the wharves. "He has been in the room where she was On one of the corners thus made stood the killed; so much is evident. But that he Webb house, with its front door on the main street and its side door on one of the hillselieve, or he would not be sleeping here side lanes. As the group of men and boys lke a log. Come, let us go upstairs who had been in search of Mr. Sutherland Fenton, with an admonitory gesture toentered this last mentioned lane they could ward his subordinate, turned directly toward. pick out this house from all the others, as the staircase. Mr. Sutherland followed him. was the only one in which a light was and they at once proceeded to the upper hall still burning. Mr. Sutherland lost no time and into the large front room, which had in entering upon the scene of tragedy. As been the scene of the tragedy. his imposing figure emerged from the dark-It was the parlor or sitting room of this ness and paused on the outskirts of the small and unpretentious house. A rag carcrowd, blocking up every entrance to the

house, a murmur of welcome went up, after of the plainest kind, but the woman who lay which a way was made for him to the front outstretched on the stiff old-fashioned ounge opposite the door was far from be-But before he could enter some one ng in accord with the homely type of her

plucked him by the steeve "Look up!" whispered a voice into his

He did so, and saw a woman's body hanging half out of an upper window. It hung repore, that Mr. Sutherland, accustomed as limp, and the sight made him sick, notwithhe was to her poble appearance, experienced standing his three score years of experience. shock of surprise that found vent in these "Who's that?" he cried. "That's not vorde Agatha Webb's head and shoulders." "Murdered! she" You have made some

'No, it's Betsy, the cook. She's dead, too. We left her where we found her for the coroner to see."

"But this is horrible." murmured Mr. Sutherland. "Has there been a butcher her?

ceapon which made this ghasily wound? As he uttered these words he felt another "She was struck while standing or sitquick pressure on his arm. Looking down ing at this table." returned the constable. he saw leaning against him the form of a pinting to two or three drops of blood on its young woman, but before he could address mooth surface. "The weapon we have not ber she had started upright again and was und, but the wound shows that it was moving on with the throng. It was Miss inflicted by a three-sided dagger." "It was the sight of this woman hanging

"A three-sided dagger?" "Yes. from the window which first drew attention "I didn't know there was such a thing to the house," volunteered a man who was n town: Philemon could have had no dagstanding as a sort of guardian at the main

ger. gateway. "Some of the sallors' wives who "It does not seem so, but one can never ell. Simple cottages like these often conhusbands off on the ship that sailed at daytain the most unlooked-for articles."

nistake, my friends. Look at her facel'

But even in the set of saying this

otton dress and he cried:

break saw it as they came up the lane on Mr. Sutherland thought of what this cottage did contain, and scrutinized the constable closely. But the latter showed no liscomposure. "I cannot imagine a dagger being among

is effects," he pursued. "Where was the Mr. Sutherland aside and said: ody of Mrs. Webb lying when you came "Where you see it now. Nothing has been

moved or changed. She was found here, on this lounge, in he same position in which we see her now?

YOU. BIT. "But that is incredible. Look at the way he lies! Hands crossed, eyes closed, as hough made ready for her burial. loving hands could have done this. What does it mean? "It means Philemon; that is what it

means, Philemon." Mr. Sutherland shuddered, but said noth-He was dumfounded by these evidences of a crazy man's work. Philemen Webb always seemed so harmiess, though

he had been failing in mind for the last ten years. "But," cried Mr. Sutherland, suddenly rousing, "there is another victim. I saw

ald woman Betsy hanging from a window ledge, dead. "Yes, she is in this other room; but there is no wound on Batsy." 'How was she killed. then ?"

"That the doctors must tell us. Mr. Sutherland, guided by Mr. Fenton's

"A most extraordinary person," grumbled [myself never knew the extent of her means the constable, turning back, but stopping till lately. Philemon was a good business again as a faint murmur came up from man once; but they evidently preferred to

"The gentleman is waking," called up a volce whose lack of music was quite perceptible at a distance. With a bound Mr. Fenton descended the

stairs, followed by Mr. Sutherland. Miss Page stood before the door of the room in which sat Philemon Webb. As they anything." reached her side she made a little bow that was half mocking, half deprecatory, and

slipped from the house. An almost unbearable sensation of incongruity vanished to her having money." with her, and Mr. Sutherland, for one, inderstood what was done there I cannot breathed like a man relieved. "I wish the doctor would come." Fenton

said, as they watched the slow lifting of Philemon Webb's head. "Our fastest rider has gone for him, but he's out Portchester way, and it may be an hour yet before he can get here. "Philemon "'

Mr. Sutherland had advanced and was standing by his old friend's side. "Philemon, what has become of your

pet covered the floor and the furniture was guests? You've waited for them here till morning. The old man with a dazed look surveyed the two plates set on either side of him and

shook his head. "James and John are getting proud," said urroundings. Though the victim of a viche. "or they forget, they forget. ient death, her face and form, both of a James and John. He must mean the beauty seldom to be found among women of any station, were so majestic in their caim Zabels, yet there were many others answering to these names in town. Mr. Sutherland

made another effort. "Philemon, where is your wife? I do not see any place set here for her?"

"Agatha's sick, Agatha's cross; she don't care for poor old man like me. 'Agatha's dead-and you know it." thundered back the constable with ill-judged yes fell on the blood which had dyed her "Who killed her? Tell me that. Who killed her ""

"Where was she struck and where is the A sudden quenching of the last spark of utterly irresponsible mind, he cried:

> Jericho." Mr. Sutherland took him by the arm and led him upstairs. Perhaps the eight of his

dead wife would restore him. But he looked at her with the same indifference he showed to everything else. "I don't like her calico dresses." said he.

'She might have worn silk, but she wouldn't. Agatha, will you wear slik to my funeral? The experiment was too painful and they drew him away. But the constable's curiosity had been roused and after they had found some one to take care of him he drew

"What did the old man mean by saying

off than they seem ?" Mr. Sutherland closed the door before replying.

"They are rich," he declared, to the utter amazement of the other. "That is, they were, but they may have been robbed; if so, Philemon was not the wretch who killed her. I have been told that she kept her money in an old-fashioned cupboard. Do you suppose they alluded to that one"

He pointed to a door set in the wall over the fire place, and Mr. Fenton, perceiving a key sticking in the lock, stepped quickly across the floor and opened it. A row of books met his eyes, but on taking them down couple of drawers were seen at their bark.

"Are they locked ?" asked Mr. Sutherland. "One is and one is not." "Open the one that is unlocked."

Mr. Fenton did so. "It is empty," said he.

Mr. Sutherland cast a look toward the dead woman, and sgaln the perfect serenity of her countenance struck him

"I do not know whether to regard her

live simply, having no children living-

"They have lost six, I have been told." "So the Portchester folks say. They probably had no heart for display or for even the simplest luxuries. At all events

they did not indulge in them." "Philemon has long been past indulging in

'O, he likes his comfort, and he has had it, Agatha never stinted him. "But why do you think her death was due

"She had a large sum in the house, and

there are some who knew this." "And it is gone ?"

"That we shall know later."

As the coroner arrived at this moment, the minister's curiosity had to wait. Fortunately for his equantiality no one had the presumption to ask him to leave the room. The coroner was a man of but few words.

and but little given to emotion. Yet, they were surprised at his first question. "Who is the young woman who is standing outside there, the only one in the yard?"

Mr. Sutherland, moving rapidly to the window, drew aside the shade "It is Miss Page, my housekéeper's niece,"

he explained. "I do not understand her interest in this affair: she followed me here from the house and could hardly be got to leave this room into which she intruded herself against my express command."

"But look at her atitude!" It was Mr. Fenton who spoke. "She's crazier than Philemon, it seems to me."

There was some reason for this remark Guarded by the high fence from the gaze of the pushing crowd without, she stood upright and immovable in the middle of the yard, like one on watch. The hood, which she had dropped from her head when she thought her eyes and smile might be of use

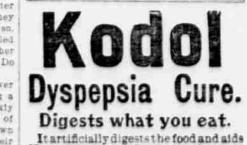
to her in the furtherance of her plans, had intelligence in the old man's eye was the been drawn over it again, so that she looked dreadful effect of these words. Laughing more like a statue in gray than a living, with that strange gurgle which proclaims an breathing woman. Yet there was menuce in her attitude and a purpose in the solitary "The pussy cat! It was the pussy cat. stand she took in that circle of board-Whot's killed? I'm not killed. Let's go to girded grass, which caused a thrill in the breasts of those who looked at her from

> the chumber of death. "A mysterious young woman." muttered the minister.

"And one that I neither countenance nor understand," interpolated Mr. Sutherland. I have just shown her the displeasure I feel at her actions by dismissing her from my house.

The coroner gave him a quick look, seemed about to speak, but changed his mind and turned toward the dead woman. (To be Continued.)

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