++_+_+_+ THE DOVE-COLORED DOOR.

A Story of Village Scandal Mongers and a Tragedy Wrought by Women's Idle Tongu s. By ELLA HIGGINSON.

(Copyright, 1899, by Ella Higginson.) Mrs. Frazer sat down heavily in a low | rocking chair and took her darning basket rejuctantly, "that Mis' Graham's hired girl on her lap. She drew a rather large black is an exception to the general run of 'em. stocking up over her arm, thrusting her She worshipe the ground Mis' Graham sets hand well down into the foot and spreading foot to, as would run her legs off for her." her fingers far apart. She examined it little near-sighted squint in her eyes.

darned, into the stocking.

jumped up stiffly, but so suddenly that the | O, I never hear such goin' on's." darning things rolled all over the floor. "Just because I'd set out to darn! I could an' not a soul would set foot in this house. comption fit."

I wonder who it is!" Dean. I'd almost rather it had been the

She gathered up the darning implements and the red canton flannel stocking bag and grafted an' come right on." hurried into the bedroom. She returned in a moment and with a triumphant air laid a partly embroidered pillow sham carelessly on the table, thrust a needle into it and set her thimble beside it. Then she opened the door.

"Why, Mis' Dean! You don't mean it! Really, now? Well, I'm amazed. I thought you never was comin'. Come right in-don't mind your rubbers. My carpet ain't slikwarp henrietty. I never take my rubbers off anywheres. It's too much trouble. If folks don't like my rubbers, they needn't like me-that's all! Love me, love my rubbers," she added, with a comfortable laugh, preceding her guest into the sitting room. Mrs. Dean sank into a low chair. She was a small, colorless woman with cold eyes and

"Such a hill as you live on!" she said in an injured tone, "What possessed you to buy 'way up here?"

a stubborn mouth.

"O, just to give folks somethin' to wonder about," replied Mrs. Frazer, with her mellow, exasperating laugh. "Folks are bound to ask questions, you know. If they don't ask what made us build 'way up here they ask why we didn't put a porch clear around, or a bay window in the bath room, or why we didn't run our pipes on the outside o' the house."

"Yes," said Mrs. Dean, coldly. Her pale eyes were commencing to let out a little unsuspected fire. She had many nervous movements. Her veil was too short, and she kept putting up a carelessly gloved hand to draw it down over her thin chin. Each time it sprang back, like a piece of rubber, and curved in to her lips with every breath.

"You makin' shams?" "Yes-I was just workin' on 'em."

The door bell rang. "Well!" said Mrs. Frazer. She got up more slowly this time. She was a large woman; she moved stiffly. "It never rains

but it pours." Sublimely unconscious of her rudeness she

went to the door. "O, Mis' Hostetter! You, is it? Well, I'm right glad you come. Step in. I guess you know Mis' Dean?" she added, humorously. "O my, yes," said Mrs. Hostetter, sitting

on the edge of a chair. She was tall and thin. She stooped slightly. "I was afraid it might be the minister,"

Mrs. Frazer resumed her place. "Well, talkin' about the minister," said Mrs. Dean, lowering her voice. "I just

want that you should notice how often he goes to Miss Huntley's. I've seen him go there time an' ag'in. He's mighty scarce Why, I wonder where the trunk's a-goln' in that express wagon!' The other two women came to the win dow at once.

"I wonder!" said Mrs. Frazer, rubbing her chin. "There ain't a soul movin' in round here anywheres that I know of. I can't think where it can be goin' to. Bartlo's house is right in the way, so's we can't see, even if we go outside."

"Like as not some of your neighbors has had company come," suggested Mrs. Hos-

"Well, I'll run in an' ask Mis' Bartlo tomorrow if she see where it went to." Mrs. Frazer sighed as she spoke, and turned reluctantly from the window.

"Well," said Mrs. Hostetter, drawing a long breath, "I just run in to see if you'd heard the latest. I can't stay. I've got my week's bake gettin' ready to go in the If you mean about the way Mr. Daven-

port 's been a-actin' up," said Mrs. Fracer, closing her lips grimly, "I've heard," "So 've I," said Mrs. Dean. "I think that's just harrable. I don't mean to bid him the time o' day if I die for it."

Well, I don't neither. But I just wan to tell you what Mis' Graham says when I told her. She waited tell I got all through an' then she up an' says she didn't think it could be true. After my a-tellin' 'er! So I just told her it was true." "What 'id she say then?"

"What do you suppose she said? She just looked me in the eye, an' says, ca'mly, that if it was true she was sorry he'd done wrong, but that she didn't consider one person 'ad ought to judge another. Says she thought it was human nature to do wrong, an' that we'd ought to be sorry for each other, an' help each other up.' 'Why, the idea! What 'ld you say?

hope you give her a good one." "Weil, I did." Mrs. Hostetter spoke with jumph. "I told her well I was a Christriumph. tian an' belonged to church, an' she wouldn't ketch me upholdin' a man that 'ad turned hisself out to be what Mr. Davenport had. I asked her how you could pick out respectable folks if they was on speakin' terms with that kind. Then she said somethin' reel profane. She guessed that God could put his finger on 'em! O, that made me offul mad! I said, well, I wouldn't speak to Mr. Davenport an' I didn't reckon Mis' Dean and Mis' Frazer would, either, an' that we was the leadin' ones in the church."

"Good for you! I guess she didn't have anything furder to say to that, did she?"
"Yes, she did. Thet's what makes me so offul mad. She up an' says then, still ca'm like, that she didn't consider it would hurt any good woman to be kind to Mr. Davenport, even if he had done what was claimed ag'in him-which she didn't be-Heve! The brazen thing says that ag'in-

an' it might do him some good." The door opened suddenly and a slatternly girl burst into the room. She stopped and stared at the guests. Then she threw her hand over her face, giggled bashfully, and even called on the minister's wife-an' her

exclaiming, "O, now!" retired noisily.
"What do you think o' that?" exclaimed Mrs. Frazer, in a tone of exasperation, made excuses every time I've asked her to ashpan. I bid him the time o' day an' he 'after all I've talked to her, a-trouncin' in here that way before people! A woman might as well be crazy at onot, as to keep an' set a spell."

a hired girl. They're that mortifying." girls have an offul hard life. She on the-" feels sorry for 'em. She keeps a rockin' chair 'n in the kitchen fer her'n an' lets great voice for so thin a woman. She started to have to ask every time she wants to go look. anywheres. She says she gets cross sometimes an' lets her temper go at her girl, terrified. an' then she always goes back an' apologizes. She ain't got any sech word as Hestetter, unmoved.

"Such stillness!" said Mrs. Frazer, scorn-

fully. "A-ruinin' hired girls that way!" "Well, I must say," admitted Mrs. Dean

"The worst thing she said," put in Mrs. carefully, with her head on one side and a Hostetter, "was that she didn't think women had ought to get together an' talk Then she threaded a needle and dropped a over girls' faults. Says she'd just as soon glass cintment jar, over which she always anybody would ask her how she liked her husband as to ask her how she liked her hired girl. Says she's been guilty of such The door bell rang.
"O, mercy on us!" said Mrs. Frazer. She things herself, but she ain't goin' to again. "I guess she's crazy!"

"I guess she is. She says if we caught embroider on them pillow chams a month girls a'criticizin' our faults we'd have a about fifteen minutes by the watch—you'll deep sigh. "Well, I've got to go, too. I

"There goes that express wag'n back wonder who it is!"

The other two women sat on the edges of oven—i get inthe an done on the She lifted one edge of the shade and again em'ty," interrupted Mrs. Frazer, in a their chairs and neither moved nor spoke baking day—but I've a plenty to do." peered out cautiously. "O, my! It's Mis' perplexed tone. "I can't imagine where that trunk went to. Mr. Brown told me yeste'day that Mis' Brown wa'nt comin' home fer a week, but mebbe she just tele-

"But when you want reel scandal," said Mrs. Hostetter, in a low tone, "you have to go on a piece furder 'n Mr. Davenport." Mrs, Frazer's pillow sham sank rustling into her lap.

"Is there anything worse?" asked Mrs. Dean, breathlessly. A little smile wrinkled Mrs. Hostetter's face. "Yes," she said, briefly, "there's

somethin' worse." "What is it?" asked both women at

Mrs. Hostetter was tantalizingly slow in replying. She looked out of the window with an air of mystery glooming over her. don't know as I ought to tell you-if you ain't noticed." "I ain't noticed a thing."

"I ain't, either. It can't be in this neighborhood."

ary of two blocks. I've see it a-goin' on for in's between her 'n Mr. Mayhew-" three months. I've see it with my own eyes.

The other two women sat slient, crushed. an' see the front door o' the woman it's last thing he'd do he'd up an' kiss her. Like about. It's as innocent lookin' a front door a pair o' fool lovers. They'd been maras you'd find a-goin' from one end o' the ried a long time, too. He spent all his street to the other. It's a little you can evenin's at home with her, unless there was tell about people by their front dooors."

other. There was a yellow door, and a glass off o' her. I never see his beat for admirin' hew, hanging up her bird cage at the right door, and a grained door, and a dove-colored a woman an' lettin' his admire stick out all of the dove-colored door, thrilled with suddoor. They looked at each other; then at over him so's everybody with ha'f a eye den joy and lifted her eyes to the tall alder Mrs. Hostetter. "Mis' Mayhew!" they exclaimed as one woman. Mrs. Hostetter half closed her eyes.

"Unh-hunh." she said. The silence was intense. The two women's faces were working with startled a step with her anywheres. conjecture.

"A scandal about her!" breathed out Mrs. Frazer, at last, "W'y, you'd think sugar wouldn't melt in

her mouth," said Mrs. Dean. "She sings in the choir." "An's on the liberry board."

"An' the executive committee o' the Cooperative society."

"She's the treasurer o' the Red Cross." "An secretary o' the 'sociated Charities." "Used to be," put in Mrs. Hostetter, mous letter." amiably triumphant. "Ain't you noticed she dropped everything about three months ago?

"As I live an' breathe!" said Mrs. Frazer. "So she did." "It hadn't made an impression on me."

said Mrs. Dean. a-runnin' everything in town." said Mrs.

kind of attack. Git a doctor! "Some kind of fiddlesticks, Mis' Dean, neighborhood." what's got into you?"

"O, don't you see her eyes 's all set out Mrs. Hostetter and returned to the sitting have a talk with you-" the window. She can't speak—she can't room. She sat down and looked at Mrs. even utter.' Mrs. Hostetter turned and looked out the smiled. window. She threw back her head and burst "It takes lots o' folks to make a world,"

she couldn't stop. Mrs. Frazer's eyes followed hers. The about him. I reckon if women knew all put a stop to it, we can. three women sat staring at the dove-colored that's bein' said about their husbands, they front porch. She had a bird cage in her others." band. the house and closed the door behind her- breath.

chair. "Now you'll see," she said. She pointed out that one."

"O, we didn't calculate to be redrew a gold watch out of a pocket crocheted Mrs. Dean arose slowly. "I do' know but on two chips," piped out Mrs. Dean. on her noble bust, and opened it. "In just what I would of, too," she said, with a

faces were pale of suspense, their breathing She bade her good afternoon there, forward; their eyes of watching.

disappeared within the house.

When the hearts of Mrs. Dean and Mrs. Frazer succeeded in pumping a little color back into those white, shocked faces, Mrs. Hostetter burst out laughing again. "Who is it?" said one woman, in a whis-

"O, I don't know who it is. He goes there once or twice a week. It's been a'goin' on for three months. Ever since she left off church, an' choir, an' liberry board, an' everything else. That ain't all. I've see "It's in this neighborhood. It's within an for a long time that there 's some cool feel-

"An' Mr. Maybew such a nice man!" "I never hear a word agin him vet." "An' it seems to be on his side. "You can both o' you look out o' this mercy! She ust to come to the door with window without ever a-leaving your seats him every time he went down town, an' somethin' to go to, an' then he'd always The other two women had started and take her. An' if she sung a piece, or looked out the window. The glance of each played on the plane, or declaimed—my went jumping along from one door to ancould see it. He fairly carried his admire tree. Surely that was spring herself tip around on his sleeve! An' when he come home to dinner she'd run out to the gate, an' first thing he'd do he'd up an' kiss her. Well, it's all changed now. He never goes spends an' evenin' at home; an' if she comes to the door with 'im, he just walks off with his head down, kind of slow an' thinkin',

an' never so much 's looks back once." "Mebbe somebody's give him a hint," breathed Mrs. Frazer. Mrs. Hostetter smiled and cleared her

"Mebbe somebody has," she said, mysteriously. "Mebbe somebody's sent him an anony-

Mrs. Hostetter fixed her unexpectedly with a stern gaze. "Mebbe somebody has." 'Well, my land! Don't eat a body up



'WHAT IS IT?" ASKED BOTH WOMEN AT ONCE. a sudden you just look around you an' keep i him a hint in an anonymous letter-just the

There never's very much smoke without a fire." The other two women sat staring at the dove-colored door. Who would ever have suspected a scandal behind a door of such a color? The one door on the whole street to suggest innocence and reticence-Mrs. Hostetter broke in on their thoughts.

Mebbe you have seen a bird cage hung out on her front porch frequent, if you ha'n't seen anything else." They drew shivering breaths. They had

seen the bird cage. "Well, then, mebbe you have seen that some days it was hung on a hook on the left side o' that dove-colored door, an' some days on the right?"

They looked at each other and cleared their throats simultaneously. Each face reflected back the mortification on the other. They shook their heads, honest but ashamed. They would tell the truth though the heavens fell for it. "Well, you might of, if you'd had your

wits about you," sald Mrs. Hostetter. "You needn't squirm so. You both deserve to have it rubbed in. A-livin' right in range o' her door, the two o' you!" Her tone was bitter with reproach.

"I have seen that she's looked mighty pimpin' when she did go out," said Mrs. Dean, recovering slightly.

"An' it's been long spells between her goin' outs," said Mrs. Frazer, with lofty

"Sho's had a pale, scared look. I have seen that she was a-concealin' something." "She ain't hardly made a call. She ain't with a teethin' baby an' another on the way! She sin't been to see a soul. run in an fetch her work. She's even made | could hardly speak. O, he felt it deep. It excuses when I've offered to take mine in | was pitiful to see him try to smile-an' all | a cheer?"

"She don't want company," said Mrs. mouth," she added, cheerfully. 'Now that makes me think," said Mrs. Hostetter. "I'm glad you've see something, "I was sayin' the same thing if only that much. If you had watched that to Mis' Graham the other day, an' what d' dove-colored door a leetle closer you'd of knowing the meaning of the word honor. you s'pose she says? She says she thinks see that when the hird cage was hung out "O, my land!" cried out Mrs. Dean, in a

her go out ten times a week if she wants. forward in her chair. Her face was as gray Says she thinks it's offul hard fer a girl as ashes. Her eyes had a wild, strained appendikitis couldn't look much worse." forever," gasped Mrs. Frazer,

"What's got into you?" demanded Mrs. run, or it'll be spolit."

"Mis' Hostetter! She's a-goin' into some | "If he can't put a stop to it, I guess we can. |

with your eyes so. I wa'n't accusin' you." "Well, you can if you want," said Mrs. Hestetter, undaunted. "W'y, you never, did you?" exclaimed "Yes, I did," said Mrs. Hostetter, proud

Hostetter, loftly, "get up an' drop it all of as a peacock with an unfurled tail. "I give

mildest kind of an intimation-"O, what did you say? Tell us what you They were a-quiver with excitement.

"Well, I just said"-she leaned back and half-closed her eyes-"that when the bird cage hung on the right side of the door a young man went there early an' stayed all the afternoon. I told him-"

"O, good for you!" "I glory in your spunk. You are grit." "Good for you! Nerve-unh!" "I told him"-Mrs. Hostetter swelled out her bust superbly-"that he didn't need to take any anonymous letter's word for it All he had to do was to watch for hisself

any Toosday or Friday." "An' did he?" Her countenance fell. "Well, no, he didn't, I must say." "What! Didn't he never?"

"No, not a once." "W'y, how do you know?" "I've set here at my window every Toosday an' Friday since. I've set a little back, so's I couldn't be seen, but I've never took my eyes off o' that house. It's strained my eyes so, a-keepin' 'em set right on one spot, almost without winkin' for fear I'd miss somethin', that I've had to keep a-bathin' 'em in strong salt water. It's terrible good for the eyes. Well, if her husband had si-watched he'd been sure to see the man, an' then, of course, he'd of gone straight to the house to-well, to-er-hum-beard shone out of her face like phosphorous. him," she added, in a deep voice, "in hiser-hum-den. But he never went there once. But I see him the day after he got the letter," she continued, with a return She's to triumph, "an' he looked as gray as an

the gray wrinkles a-trembiin' around his "I don't see what ailed him, not to watch," said Mrs. Dean, helplessly, not this unexpected visit?"

"I don't see, either." "Well, watch or no watch, he's been a hole. 'That's so," said Mrs. Dean.

"We'll have to take this here dove-color talk with you." door in hand," called Mrs. Dean after her.

Mrs. Mayhew had come out on her wouldn't be so fresh a-talkin' about for a moment. Then the old woman cried She stood looking off toward a fir "Yes," said Mrs. Frazer, slowly, "but Be they ladies, or bean't they? grove that approached the house closely on ain't that awful about Mis' Mayhew? I "I don't know," said Mrs. Mayhew, and one side. While they still watched she can't git over her a-havin' such a virtuous laughed out scornfully. But almost inturned slowly and hung the cage up on the lockin' front door. I'll never trust dove- stantly her face showed contrition.

right side of the door. Then she went into color again as long as the Lord gives me the most innocent looking door in that west-ern town. the length an' the breadth of this hull you will forgive me. I know you mean this town for an innocent-lookin' house," she in kindness, but your words cut my heart Mrs. Hostetter settled comfortably in her added, with great solemnity. "I'd of like knives.

ain't got a week's bake ready to go in the The other two women sat on the edges of oven-I get mine all done on the proper while the minutes got themselves by. Their Mrs. Frazer went to the door with her. was noiseless. Their backs ached of leaning when Mrs. Dean had reached the gate Mrs. Frazer ran heavily down the steps and Suddenly a man came out of the depths stood on the walk. She stood with her of the wood and walked rapidly toward the body balanced backward, holding one hand house. He kept among the tall ferns and in arched over her eyes. The wind was strong. the shadow of the trees. He was a young- It streamed her light gown out in flapping looking man. His hat was drawn down over folds and gave bold glimpses of her thick his eyes and there was something furtive in ankles. "O, say, Mis' Dean," she called out, his movements. He approached the dove- lifting her voice importantly, "I'll drop in colored door, which opened at once, and he tomorrow sure, an' let you know where

that trunk went to." It was an afternoon in spring. The firs had pushed out their new pushy growth of pale, delicate green. The saps had mounted through swelling veins and blown their spicy fragrance through the air. The shadbush was in white and fringy bloom. The wild current hung her red clusters of beauty over the creek that went foaming down to the Sound. Out in the woods the salmonberry's crimson bells swung fairy music for those who were born with the gift of divine hearing. In shallow ponds and marsh places the mellow-throated from murmured day and night. The red-vested robin rocked in the dappled alder's top and sang his sweet but few-noted love lyric to his sweetheart. The beautiful skunk cabbage had lifted its pale waxen candles from out the broad green leaves. The ferns no matter how hard we might be insulted." mother. It made me miserable, and I, in were thrusting their bent heads through Her voice was as sharp as her face. the moist earth, like mottled silver serpents. The meadows and the hillsides had Mrs. Frazer, determined to have her lau- unable to appreciate the unselfishness and run to yellow with dandellons and butter- rels, too. "Not an etom. We have see nobility of her character. Her brother, too, cups.

You are very, very sweet! called the red-vested robin, and Mrs. Maytoeing across the hills in her pale green gown, with blown golden hair about her. and the laughter of rills following after her footsteps. There was a wreath of star flowers about her brow, and about her waist a buttercup zone. Her breath had the cup of her hand. And ah, the irresistible lure of her-

Then a cloud fell upon Mrs. Mayhew's face. She turned with a sigh and entered the house. Her brow was lined deep with But he was angry- O, he made it hard for curiosity in what you are probably pleased to

never come to that western town. She had there was so much work-I could not have as best we may, the bitterness and the laughed and sung herself, in sheer happi- even one servant. I could not bear that humiliation which you have heaped upon us," ness, into every one's heart. The men ad- any one should know- She was my mother, mired her, the women loved her, her hus- my dear, faithful mother! My heart has somehow. Their faces were of a dull red; band adored her. For two years she had bled night and day, but I have done my their breathing was somewhat hurried. "If been the envied leader of all—the most duty to her— He has made it hard for I ever, in all my born days!" said Mrs. Dean, been the envied leader of all—the most duty to her— He has made it hard for I ever, in all my born days!" said Mrs. Dean. beautiful, the most gracious, the most accomplished of her sex. complished of her sex.

church, the Red Cross society knew her no him only. Then there has been trouble more. She was not well, she said, and her between us because of it. Have you not white face and dark-colored eyes were silent seen that he looks iilwitnesses in proof of the assertion. At first there was wonder, then curiosity, then a Hostetter, deliberately. "He looks mighty putting together of heads and gossip. Mrs. Mayhew suspected nothing.

were other things to occupy her thoughts. bird cages on the right side o' doors, an' Life was holding another cup-a new cup-to that then men come a-sneakin' there-" her lips, and she was drinking it without a murmur. The gravest sin one can commit against her neighbors is to bear a trouble in silence without taking them into her it. He is in the house now. And then, to confidence. This sin Mrs. Mayhew had committed. People of a certain belief, endeavoring to explain their conception of sin and its inevitable punishment to unenlightened minds, usually assure us in childlike argument that "if we put our hands into the fire we will be burned." When Mrs. Mayhew "kept things" from her neighbors she was unconsciously putting her small hand into the man you've got hid som'ers here now.' a hot fire. A day was to come when she would take it out, only to learn that it was too late for remedies to be of avail.

On this spring day, then, she hung the bird cage on the right side of the innocentlooking door. A few moments later a man came hurrying from the dark wood. She opened the door at once and admitted him. Twenty minutes fater Mrs. Dean, Mrs. Frazer and Mrs. Hostetter stood before the same door and looked at each other. Their hearts had pumped the blood all away from

their faces. "Shall we knock?" questioned Mrs. Dean, in a thin whisper, "Knock!" said Mrs. Hostetter's uncom-

promising bass. "An' give him time to hide? What's the use in coming if we don't take 'em by surprise. Let me git a-holt o' that door handle. You both look as white as pillow slips. I'll lead the way. I ain't

The door swung open readily and they rustled and swished into the wide hall. They closed the door behind them and stood listening. The hall ran clear through the house, with rooms opening into it on both murmur of voices came faintly through a

nodded their heads silently.

Down the hall, huddled together like frightened sheep-only sheep are innocent things and harmless-went Mrs. Hostetter, Mrs. Frazer and Mrs. Dean. They opened the door and peered into the room, and this this awful burden is on my sister. Yet is what they saw: A large, sunny room, having an air of comfort. Easy chairs and rugs, and in the windows blooming plants. In the center of the room Mrs. Mayhew, stern and white, meeting their gaze with undaunted eyes. In one corner of the room a bed, and, sitting up in it, propped with pillows, a miserable old wreck of a woman, leering at them with wild, cunning eyes. Her cheeks were sunken; her nose and her chin almost met; her body was bowed almost double. The awful light of insanity At the wholly unexpected sight of her

the three women huddled closer together, horrified and aghast. "Hey, hey!" cried the old creature, with a dreadful laugh. "Why don't you give the ladies a cheer? Be they ladies, or bean't they? If they be, why don't you give 'em

Then, with her heart beating till it hew spoke. "To what am I indebted for

Mre. Hostetter's speech had been long prepared and committed to memory. But not a word of it came. Whatever the three husband from her. You have hounded down mighty elck-looking man ever since. He women had expected to find behind that a guilty, repentant wretch, who had noth looks as if he'd been pulled through a knot dove-colored door, it was certainly not that ing left but to be near his mother and A man with a cancer or a case of bed and its dread occupant. The room sister, whose lives he had ruined, and who seemed whirling around them. Mrs. Hos- must now start out again on his lonely wantetter endeavored to give utterance to some "O, mercy, my bread," exclaimed Mrs. of her carefully prepared sentences and Hostetter, getting up excitedly. "I must failed dismally. Finally she faltered out: yourselves Christians. Are these the things "We-we-that is-we wanted to have a "Well?"

"We-we've seen for a long time that peered at them with dreadful eyes; the

very noses"-her voice strengthened as she Mrs. Frazer closed the door carefully after went on-"an" we concluded we'd come an"

"Well?" Dean, Mrs. Dean looked at her. Both "We've seen you hang that birdcage out we've see that fellow come an' stay an' stay. out laughling. "O, that's what 's got into said Mrs. Dean. "The idee o' her a-makin' We don't propose to have such goin'ons you," she said, and went on laughing as if out so about other people's actin-ups. Look right under our noses. You've got him hid at her husband. The whole town a talkin' here som'ers, now. If your husband can't She paused, and there was intense silence

> "Why don't you give 'em a cheer? out:

"O, I didn't mean that," she cried, turn-If you'd of told me to hunt up ing imploringly to the women. "I beg that

"O, we didn't calculate to be received

We can't have any such goin'-one in this somethin' was a-goin' on right under our | pupils were like little blue-black bullets. | conductor motioned her to another seat and 'Why don't you give 'em a cheer? They don't look like ladies, but give 'em a cheer nnyhow."

"And now," concluded the young man walking to the door of the inner room and on the right-hand side o' the door; an' then throwing it open, "my sister's husband will say a few words to you, and then we will regretfully permit you to depart." When the three women became convinced

that it was really Mr. Maybew who was enering their faces were things to behold and remember. Mrs. Frazer confessed afterward that she had a "giddy feeling-as f she'd let all holts go; the very carpet itelf went up and down in waves under her. Mrs. Dean shrank back against the wall for support. Mrs. Hostetter's fine fighting eathers dropped, but she stood her ground bravely

Mr. Mayhew advanced and stood beside his He was pale and worn-looking. He wife. spoke in quiet, even tones.

"I have heard all that my wife said, although she did not mean for me to hear it, "We and I am glad. She spoke the truth. I



"AS FOR YOU WOMEN-"

everything. We have even see the cold has spoken the truth. The letter which one feelin's betwixt you an' Mr. Mayhew-a man of you must have been so kind as to write that this hull town, from one end to the me made me feel more bitterly toward my other, looks up to. Everybody has seen wife for having placed us both in false posithe cold feelin's that's come betwixt you." tions. I brooded over it without telling her. white lily, smitten and crushed by a storm. author of the letter would make the visit She clung, trembling, to the chair, and of investigation which you are now doing

does not see it in the right light. He loves as she passed. "I declare I most wish to Then the change came. The choir, the me so tenderly that he feels my duty is to | mercy we hadn't gone."

"We have seen that," interrupted Mrs. ill. Most men would-to get anonymous let- it to a soul." There ters a-tellin' 'em that their wife hung out

"O, surely," said Mrs. Mayhew, gazing at her with wide, fascinating eyes. "No one would be so cruel! Why, he knew all about | this hull town." hurt him with such a letter. To let him know that I was suspected. * * And he never told me! He bore that, too, for my sake, in silence!"

like us to believe that, would you? You'd like to make us believe he knows all about tried Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and "Nothing would make us believe your husband is in this house now but seein' him in the flesh and blood," said Mrs. Hostetter, in the flesh and blood," said Mrs. Hostetter, solemnly. "May the Lord have mercy on you for a sinful woman! Your only hope of salvation is to make a full confession of your sins. Bring out the partner of your guilt," she exhorted in a loud voice. "Bring out the partner of your so," let him suffer the awful effects.

A Trying Situation.

When the car had stopped at the corner a poor looking woman got on, relates the Detroit Free Press.

"Please take a seat further forward," said the conductor, and he waited for her to do so. The woman paid no attention. The conductor repeated what he had said before, and they would be suffered to the same way in the smoking seat. him out, an' let him suffer the awful effects of his secret sin. Nothing can save either of you but bein' purged with fire. Mebbe you think it was pleasant fer us to come here an' be insulted? We've done our duty like Christian women, an' we're ready to leave it all to the Lord. Bring out the partner of went along to where the woman sat and

ti all to the Lord. Bring out the partner of your guilt—"

Her voice faltered. The door of an inner room had opened. A young man came waiting at the corner all this time. So he went along to where the woman sat and helped her to alight. It became evident then that she did not know what she was expected to do, as she started for the curbstone, to wait for another car. But the

slowly toward them. Not greatly like a triumphant lover looked he. He was pale and haggard. The three women started and grasped hold of one another convulsively. He faced them with an

air of desperation. "You want to know who I am?" he said. 'She'd die or lose her reputation forever sides. From a room at the farther end a before she'd tell you, but I'll tell you. I'm her brother; the son of her mother. I live closed door. They looked at each other and in a hut up in the forest, and I don't dare to show my wretched face to man. I'm an escaped convict from the penitentiary, where I went for forgery. I was guilty, too. It is my fault that my old mother sits there in bed a jibbering idiot. It is my fault that twice a week for months she has been letting me come here, because my mother knows me and is calmed by my presence. Only an angel would have clung to such an abandoned wretch as I am and tried to make a man of him. She has never once reproached me; never lost faith that I will yet be a man. Her husband, modest ladies, knows all about my coming. The birdcage was not hung out to inform me that he was not at home, but that none of her kindly interested neighbors were making afternoon visits. Since you have known of my visits for six months I am almost stunned with wonder that you did not drop in before. I marvel, in fact, that you did not take up your bed and board in this unhappy home. Your delicate self-repression fills me with admiration."

He paused for a second, in absolute need of breath. When he spoke again a glance at his sister's face, which showed signs of seemed to shake her slight body, Mrs. May- deep suffering, had changed his look and "Well," he said, deliberately, "you tone. have invaded the sacredness of my slater's home. You have wormed out her sorrowful secrets. You have tried to estrange her dering with no place in which to lay his head. You belong to the church. You call Christ taught you to do? Are these-"Hey, hey!" cried the old creature on the bed. "What's all this fuss about?"

braced up to do our dooty like Christians, have been jealous of her devotion to her turn, made her miserable by my hardness "You can't deceive us an atom," put in and coldness. Until this hour I have been Now, indeed, Mrs. Mayhew was like a But, foreseeing that sconer or later the looked at them with dark, terrified eyes. | us the honor to make, I have remained at "This-this is my mother," she faltered. home every Tuesday and Friday since, to "She is old and feeble, and she-she had protect my wife when she needed me. trouble. It affected her mind. I had her My wife"-without looking at her he brought here, so I could care for her as a reached out for her hand, which she gave daughter should." She gathered courage him quickly and eifently, drawing nearer to bore the attar of lost ecstacy in the pink as she went on. "He-my husband-did not him-"is a woman who will let me atone wish it. He thought it would be too much and make her so happy that she will forgive for my strength-would make me ill- But me. Henceforth I shall bear her burdens it would have killed me to see her taken-" and help her to do her duty. Now you know She burst out into wild sobbing. "I couldn't. all. And now-as you have gratified your me to do my duty to her. I almost went consider a truly Christian manner and spirit A sweeter-faced woman than she had mad myself. I gave up everything, and -we shall be glad to be left alone, to bear, They got themselves out of the house

> "I don't believe a word of it," cried out Mrs. Frazer, lifting her dress hi

though her skirts were trailing a little. "I'll tell it to the length an' the breadth o'

It Saved His Baby.

"I take great pleasure in recommending Chamberlain's Colic Cholera and Diarrhoea to the people of this vicinity," says sake, in silence!"

"Oh, he's in the house now, is he?" cried
Mr. J. H. Doak, Williams, Oregon. "When
my haby was terribly sick with the diarmrs. Dean, in her shrill staccato. "You'd rhoea we were unable to cure him with the doctor's assistance. As a last resort we Diarrhoea remedy, and I am happy to say received immediate relief and a complete cure.'

A Trying Situation.

helped her on. Then she said her first word: "Ich ferstehe nicht Englische."

All weak places in your system effectually closed against disease by DeWitts Little Sarly Risers. They cleanse the bowels, promptly cure chronic constipation, regulate

the liver and fill you with new life and vigor. Small, pleasant, sure; never gripe. What a Personal Involves.

Detroit Journal: "Will you kindly say in your paper that Mr. William Jones is visiting in Boston?" asked the man, "We charge 10 cents a line for personals,

"Very well," said the man. "It will hardly take more than one line, I suppose." The editor wrote, and read aloud as he wrote-

"Mr. William Jones is visiting friends in Boston. The William Jones who is visiting friends in Boston is not William Jones, the grocer, who has just got in a carload of fresh cucumbers, which he will sell at your own price; or Dr. William Jones, who cures deafness by electricity; or Prof. William Jones, the palmist, who tells your past and future for \$1; or Hon. William Jones, who being urged by his friends to run for congress, or Bill Jones-" Here there intervened the sound of scurry

ing feet. The editor was alone. Irritating stings, bites, scratches, wounds and cuts southed and healed by DeWitt's

Witch Harel Salve—a sure and safe applica-tion for tortured desh. Beware of counter-

Went Prepared. Chicago Tribune: "Have I got to wear a uli dress suit," asked the guest, "in order Chicago Tribune: Bate guest, "in order to est dinner at this hotel?"

"That is our invariable rule," said the flunkey who had stopped him at the door of the dining room.

"Ah? Then excuse me one moment, whereupon the lightning change artist or the Sure Thing Vaudeville company stepped behind the door, and in six seconds emerged therefrom, to all appearances a gentleman and clearly entitled to admission.

CASTORIA For Infants and Children.

Dyspepsia Cure Digests what you eat.

Prepared by E. C. DeWitt & Co., Chicago.

Another

Mrs. Frazer, lifting her dress high on both sides. "There's something a-goin' on. The brass of 'em—a-tellin' a story like that to our faxes! I guess we'd better not breathe it to a soul."

"Breathe it!" said Mrs. Hestetter, in a deep voice. She was walking on ahead, leading the retreat with great, high steps, even though her skirts were trailing a little. "I'll ber of

to her credit will receive as a present a \$250.00 Alaska sealskin jacket made to measure. There will also be nine additional prizes Two valued at \$25 each and seven of \$10 cash each.

These contests open only to the women of Nebraska and the city of Council Bluffs, Ia. Bring or send all wrappers to Jas. S. Kirk & Co., 306 S. 12th St. Omaha.

Idlie A. Ragatz, Columbus, Neb., had the greatest number of White Russian soap wrappers up to noon, Aug. 31, and receives the \$10 cash prize.

WHITE RUSSIAN SOAP WRAPFERS

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