She led the way down stairs, her skirt

again held close and raised clear of her ankles. Her care for it was not lost on

ness that made his mirth a taunt. The old

"When'll you be coming, sir?" she asked.

"I don't know. It's not certain we shall

come," said he. "The lady is not much

"Ah, well!" sighed the old woman, re-

For an account of their drive back to the

station materials are, again, sadly wanting.

"He hardly said a word, and I did nothing

journey. But she remembered-or chose to

relate-a little more of what passed, while

they waited for the train on the platform

pretext of smoking a cigarette, and she saw

him walking up and down, apparently in

thought. Then he came back and sat down

beside her. His manner was grave now; to

judge by his recorded words, perhaps it was

even a little pompous; but when may young

"It's no use pretending that nothing has

be the hollowest pretense, not worthy, I

think, of either of us. Perhaps we had bet-

ter take time to consider our course-and-

"You don't want to marry me now?" she

"I want to do what is best for our happi-

"I know you would never forget it," she

ness," he replied. "We cannot forget what

er-our relations to one another."

asked simply.

taken with the house."

signedly.

caretaker waited for them in the passage.

### THE GRAY FROCK. By ANTHONY HOPE.

(Copyright, 1898, by A. H. Hawkins.) The rights and wrongs of the matter are est. The matter passed from his thoughts perhaps a little obscure, and it is possible as he began to notice how satisfactorily to take his side as well as hers. Or per- Jennie moved. haps there is really no question of sides at all, no need to condemn anybody; only an- found her eyes still bright from the reveries other instance of the difficulty people have of her journey. Today was a gala day-they in understanding one another's point of drove off in a hansom to a smart restaurant view. But here, with a few lines added by in Piccadilly, joking about their extravawar of introduction, are the facts as re- gance. Everything was perfect to Winifred

Miss Winifred Petheram's father had an income from landed estate of about £5,000 been that he looked at her face only!

a year, and spent, say, £6,000, or there"It's not a large house, you know abouts; his manor house was old and beautiful, the gardens delightful, the stables of Graves. handsome and handsomely maintained, the housekeeping liberal, hospitable, almost from you," she answered, smiling. lavish. Mr. Petheram had three sons and very far, Harold." four daughters, but the sons were still young, and not the cause of any great expense. Mrs. Petheram was a quiet body, the two girls in the school room were no serious matter; in fact, apart from the horses, Milfred and Winifred were, in a pecuniary point of view, the most serious burden on the family purse. For both were pretty girls, gay and fond of society, given to paying frequent visits to town and country, and, in consequence, needing many frocks and a considerable supply of down-

day" there would be very little for anybody

except the eldest son. "Some day" meant,

of course, when Mr. Petheram reluctantly

died, and thereby brought his family into

less favorable worldly circumstances.

From this brief summary of the family's

position the duty of Mildred and Winifred

(and, in course of time, of the two girls in

the school room also) stands forth salient

and unmistakable. Mildred performed it

promptly at the age of 19 years. He was

the second son of a baronet, and his elder

brother was sickly and unmarried; but like

a wise young man he took no chances, went

space of time-something, in fact, "came off"

be provided for by his brother-in-law. Win-

ifred had just as good chances-nay, better;

had an attraction that Mildred's self-pos-

sessed good looks could not exert. But

Winifred shilly-shalfied (it was her father's

confidential afterdinner word) till she was

21, then refused Sir Barton Amesbury (in

itself a step of doubtful sanity, as was gen-

erally observed), and engaged herself to

Harold Jackson, who made two hundred a

year and had no prospect except the doubt-

ful one of maintaining his income at that

genius, when it was even betting whether a

mansion or the workhouse awaited him; for

that depends on the variety of genius. Hav-

ing taken this amazing course, Winifred

was resolute and radiantly happy; her rela-

tives, after the necessary amount of argu-

ment, shrugged their shoulders-the very in-

adequate ultima ratio to which a softening

'I can manage £300 a year for her while

civilization seems to have reduced relatives

I live," said Mr. Petheram, wiping his brow

and then dusting his boots; he was just back

"The insurance, my dear?" Mrs. Petheram suggested. But her husband shook his head;

that little discrepancy above noted, between

are and six thousand a year, had before this

caused the insurance to be a very badly

Harold Jackson-for in him the explana-

tion of Winifred's action must be sought-

was tall, good-looking, ready of speech and

decidedly agreeable. There was no aggres-

siveness about him, and his quiet manners

repelled any suspicion of bumptiousness. But it cannot be denied that to him Wini-

fred's action did not seem extraordinary; he

himself accounted for this by saying that

expensive than the maximum sum they had

decided to give for rent. Winifred knew that the delicate gray became her well, and

that Harold would think her fooking very

pretty; and she was going to see her home

and his. Her face was bright as she kissed

her father and jumped down from the dog cart, but he sighed when she had left him,

and his brow was wrinkled as he drove

Jennie back. He felt himself growing rather

old; "some day" did not seem quite as re-

mote as it used, and pretty Winnie-well,

there was no use in crying over it now.

Winful girls must have their way, and it

from his ride. "After that-"

in such cases.

broken reed.

level-unless, that is, he turned out

on the stock exchange and bed

had played the deuce with the landed inter-

Winifred's lover met her in London, and lated in her obviously candid and sincere except (a small exception, surely!) that Harold failed to praise, seemed almost not to notice, the gray costume; it must have "It's not a large house, you know," he said at lunch, smiling at her over a glass

"Well, I shan't be wanting to get away

"Are your people still abusing me?" He put the question with a laugh. "They never abused you, only me." Then came the irrepressible question: "Do you

like my new frock? I put it on on purpose -for the house, you know." Mechanically, without considering things which she obviously ought to have considered, Winifred sank into the designated leaned her elbows on the same piece of furniture as she held her face between her gloved hands. The atmosphere again as-

and was weighted with the drawbac

the air was very close. And this house

mensely enjoyed making those calcula-

beds beneath the library window. She re-

membered the day they did it. There was

and Sir Barton came in his tandem. It was

ad great fun over mapping out their

be done with it-at least compared with

"Our home," he murmured, rather senti-

nentally, it must be confessed. The ques-

tion about the frock he did not answer; he

next table, who put on her glass, looked a

her companion's attention to it. This was

Then they took another cab and headed

north-through Berkeley square, where

Winifred would have liked, but did not ex-

pect to stop, and so up to Oxford street.

Here they bore considerably to the east, then

plunged north again and drove through one

or two long streets. Harold, who had made

the journey before, paid no heed to the route,

but talked freely of delightful hours which

they were to enjoy together, of books to

read and thoughts to think, and of an in-

timate sympathy which, near as they were

already to one another, the home and the

home life alone could enable them fully to

realize. Winifred listened; but far down in

almost too hot in the sun, but simply

great thing that they wanted.

while Harold paid the bill.

a hasty clutch at her gown; a pail of dirty | ward the door. "Shall we go?" he asked. water, standing in the passage, had threatened ruin; she recoiled violently from this peril against the opposite wall and drew away again, silently exhibiting a long trail Harold as he followed her, for she heard of dark dust on her new gray frock. Har- him laugh again with an obtrusive bitterold laughed as he led the way into a small square room that opened from the passage.

"That's the parlor," said the old woman, wiping her arms with her apron. "You can find your way upstairs; nothing's locked." And with this remark she withdrew by a steep staircase leading underground.

"She's the caretaker," Harold explained. "She doesn't seem to have taken much care," observed Winifred, still indignant about her gown and holding it round her as closely as drapery clings to an antique

but try to get my face clean and my gloves presentable," was Winifred's history of their statue Miss Petheram's account of the house, its actual dimensions, accommodation and characteristics, has always been very vague, and since she refused information as to its numat Euston. He left her for a few minutes on ber in the street, verification of these details has remained impossible. Perhaps it was a reasonably capacious, arthough doubtless not extensive, dwelling; perhaps, again, it was a confined and well-nigh stifling den. Sae remembered two things-first, its all-pervading dirt; secondly, the remarkable quality men be pompous if not at such crises as which (as she alleged) distinguished its at- these? mosphere. She thought there were seven "enclosures," this term being arrived at happened, Winifred," he said. "That would (after discussion) as a compromise between "rooms" and "pens," and she knew that the windows of each of these enclosures were commanded by the windows of several other seat, laid her parasol on a small table, and apparently similar and very neighboring enclosures. Beyond this she could give no account of her first half hour in the house; her exact recollection began when she was comfortable, only it was understood that serted its peculiar quality; she rose for a left alone in the enclosure on the first floor has happened today." at a period generally referred to as "some moment and opened the window; fresh air which Harold asserted to be the drawing room, Harold himself having gone down stairs to seek the old woman and elicit from "You can look about you," he remarked cheerfully, as he left her, "and make up your mind where you're going to sitting there in my mind. He pointed to a in him to achieve, such a forgiveness as his "Experiment with that chair," he added, laughing. "I won't be long, darling.'

The vision vanished; she was back in the dirty little room again; she caught up her parasol; a streak across the dust marked where it had lain on the table; she sprang up and twisted her frock round, craning

He did not contradict her; he looked first her some information as to what were and at his watch, then along the platform for what were not tenant's fixtures in the said the approach of her train. To admit that he might forget it was impossible to him; in such a case forgetfulness would be a negation of his principles and a slur on his perhave your favorite seat. Then you shall ception. It would also be such a triumph tell me, and I shall have the picture of you over his vanity and his pride as it did not lie wooden chair, the only one then in the faults and virtues combined to put beyond the power of his nature. She looked at him, and "I smiled," she said, not seeming herself to know why she had smiled, but conscious that, in the midst of her woe, some subtle amusing thought about him had come into her mind. She had never been amused at him before; so she, too, was getting some glimmer of a revelation out of the day's experience-not the awful blaze of fight that and flashed on Harold's eyes, but a dim ray, just enough to give cause to that puzzled smile for which she could not explicitly ac-

So they parted, and for persons who had followed the affair at all closely it is hardly necessary to add that they never came together again. This issue was obvious, and Winifred seems to have made up her mind to it that very same evening, for she called her mother into her room (as the good woman passed on the way to bed), and looked up from the task of brushing the gray frock which she had spread out on the

"I don't think I shall marry Mr. Jackson now, mother," she said. Mrs. Petheram looked at her daughter and

at her daughter's gown. "You'd better tell me more about it to norrow. You look tired tonight, dear," she

But Winifred never told her any morein the first place, because the family was too delighted with the fact to care one straw about how it had come to pass, and, in the second place, on the more important ground that the thing was really too small, too trivial and too absurd to bear telling-at least to the family. To me, for some reason or other, Winifred did tell it, or some of it, enough, anyhow, to enable me, with the help of a few touches of imagination, to

conjecture how it occurred. "Don't you think it was very absurd?" she asked at the end of her story. We were sitting by the yew hedge, near the library windows, looking across the flower beds to the meadow; it was a beautiful day and the old place was charming. "Because," she added, "I did love him, you know, and it seems a small thing to separate about doesn't it?"

"If he had behaved differently-" I began "I don't see how he could be expected to," she murmured.

"You expected him to," I said firmly She turned to me with an appearance of interest, as though I might be able to in tepret to her something that had been causing her puzzle. "Or you wouldn't hav looked at him as you say you did-or smiled at him, as you admit you did. But you were wrong to expect him to, because he's not that kind of man." "What kind of man?"

"The kind of man to catch you in his old phrase), tell you that he understood all you felt, knew all you were giving up, active canvass for bondsmen in Omaha until realized the great thing you were doing for him."

winifred was listening. I went on with my imaginary scene of romantic fervor. "That when he contrasted that mean little place with the beauties you were accustomed to, with the beauties which were right and proper for you, when he saw your daintiess soiled by that dust, that gown whose

hem he would willingly-" "He needn't say quite as much as that, interrupted Winifred, smiling a little.

"Well, or words to that effect," said I "That when he did all this and saw all this you know, he loved you more, and knew that you loved him more than he had dared to dream, with a deeper love, a love that gave up for him all that you loved next best and second only to him; that after seeing your tears he would never doubt again that you would face all trials and all troubles with him at your side. Don't you think if he'd with your new frock. I beg pardon-I must said something of that kind, accompanying

> "Well?" asked Winifred. "Don't you think you might have been lving in that horrid little house now instead f being about to contract an alliance with Sir Barton Amesbury?" "How do you know I shall do that?" she

"It needs," I observed modestly, "little skill to discern the approach of the inevitable." I looked at her thoughtful face and at her eyes; they had their old look of wondering in them. "Don't you think that if he'd treated the situation in that way-?"

asked. "Perhaps," she said softly. "But he wouldn't think of all that. He was such an idealist." I really do not know why she applied that

term to him at that moment except that he used to apply it to himself at many moments. But since it seemed to her to explain his conduct, there is no need to quarrel with the epithet.
"And I hope," said I, "that the gray frock

wasn't irretrievably ruined?" "I've never worn it again," she murmured So I suppose it was ruined-unless she has some other reason. But she would be right to treat it differently from other frocks; it must mean a good deal to her, although

failed to mean anything except its own pretty self to Mr. Jackson. Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup is the unfailing cure for a hacking cough. Price 25c.

Sybl Sanderson's Husband Dying. NEW YORK, Dec. 6.—Antonio Terry, the Cuban millionaire and husband of Sybi Sanderson the California prima donne, is, according to private letters received in this city, dying of liver complaint at Nice France. Mme. Terry, who was stricken with

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State Treasurer Out Hunting for Men to Guarantee His Integrity.

OMAHA CAPITALISTS ARE SOMEWHAT SHY

Local Bankers and Business Men Not Inclined to Sign Unless the List of Ontside Names is Materially Strengthened.

State Treasurer Meserve is in Omaha for the presumable purpose of probing the disposition of local capitalists in regard to assisting him to furnish the new bond that will be required before he can enter on his second term. So far, however, no definite arms, smother you in kisses (allow me the arrangements have been made and it is understood that Mr. Meserve will not push ap he has secured definite assurances from the

est of the state. It is an open secret that the Omaha bankers and business men who furnished a large proportion of Meserve's bond two years ago will not sign another document of the sort unless it is reinforced by decidedly better backing. One of the heaviest bondsmen said esterday that it would be impossible for Meserve to get the same support in Omaha unless the remainder of his bond was ma-

terially improved. "The Omaha bondsmen," he declared. 'represent practically the entire responsibility of Meserve's first bond. A big proportion of the other bondsmen were men of doubtful financial standing and it has developed that in case of any difficulty the entire burden would be thrown on us. I think Mr. Meserve understands that there must be a different program this time. We shall insist on examining his list of bondsmen before we have anything to do with it and unless the remainder of the bond is thoroughly satisfactory, we will not be responsible for a dollar. This is not on account of any lack of confidence in the integrity of the treasurer, but it is simply a business proposi-

Several local bordsmen say they have not yet been approached by Mr. Meserve in regard to the new bond, but it is pretty thoroughly understood that there have been sufficient negotiations in one way or another to inform him of the conditions he must meet. It is understood that a number of the Lincoln names on the present bond will not be accepted by the Omaha men and that the treasurer will be compelled to obtain pretty nearly an entirely new lot of backers outside of Douglas county.

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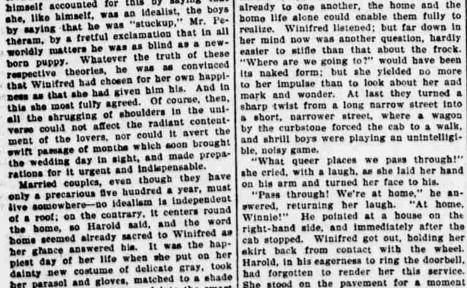
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her parasol and gloves, matched to a shade She stood on the pavement for a moment with her gown, and mounted into the smart looking about her. One of the boys cried, dog cart which Jennie, the new chestnut "Crickey, there's a swell!" and she liked mare, was to draw to the station. A letter the boy for it. Then she turned to the had come from Harold to say that, after long search, he had found a house which would "It wants a lick of paint," said Harold suit them, and was only just a trifle more cheerfully, as he rung the bell again.

"It certainly does," she admitted, looking up at the dirty walls. An old woman opened the door; she might be said, by way of metaphor, to need the same process as the walls; a very narrow passage was disclosed behind her.

"Welcome!" said Harold, giving Winifred his hand and then presenting her to the old woman. "This is my future wife," he explained. "We've come to look at the house. But we won't bother you, Mrs. Blidgett; we'd rather run over it by ourselves. We shall enjoy that, shan't we, Winnie?" Winnie's answer was a little scream and see."

"I DON'T THINK I SHALL MARRY MR. JACKSON NOW, MOTHER." her neck back; ah, that she had reconwas gained at the expense of spoilt gloves, ingly well to do in an exceedingly brief baby's cries and an inquisitive woman's gloves; then with a cry of horror she dived for her handkerchief, put it to her lips, and stare from over the way. Shutting the winin South Africa, and when that happens ordi- dow again, she returned to her chair-the scrubbed her cheeks; the handkerchief came pary limits of time and probability are sus- symbol of what was to be her favorite seat away soiled, dingy, almost black. This last pended. So with Mildred all was very well; in days to come, her chosen corner in the and it was odds that one of the boys would house which had been the subject of so on the floor, she rested her arms on the many talks and so many dreams. There

were a great many flies in the room; the burst into sobs, just as she used to in childfor her sensitive face and wondering eyes noise of adjacent humanity in street and hood when her brothers crumpled a clean frock or somebody spoke to her roughly. houses was miscellaneous and penetrating, And between her sobs she cried, almost was rather more expensive that their loudly, very bitterly: "O, it's too mean and calculations had allowed. They had imdirty and horrid!" Harold had stolen softly upstairs, meaning ions down there in the country, under the to surprise the girl he loved, perhaps to let old yew hedge, and in sight of the flower a snatched kiss be her first knowledge of his

> lightful in the shade. She and Harold had asked in a tone of cold surprise It was very absurd-she couldn't stop cry £500 a year and proving how much might more reasonable, nothing more adequate. anything they could want once they had the nothing less trivial would come than confused murmurs of "My frock, Harold!" "My

she exclaimed, exhibiting the gloves and was thinking of the home. Winifred was parasol. nomentarily grateful to a stout lady at the "See what? Are you crying because the the frock, and with a nod of approval called

> gaze in which fright and expectation seemed mingled, as though there were a great peril and just one thing that might narrowly avert

cheeks again. He watched her with hostile curiosity, appearing to think her a very strange spectacle. Presently he spoke. "I thought you loved me. O, I daresay you thought so, too, till I came into competition add your gloves and your parasol. As for his words with the appropriate actionsthe house, it's no doubt mean and horrid: we were going to be poor, you see." He laughed scornfully, as he added, "You might even have had to do a little dusting yourself

now and then! Horrible!"

"This is really rather a ludicrous scene,"

"I know what you must think of me." she burst out, "but-but you don't under-

folly of his delusion about her. Against all this her look and what it asked for had very little chance and she could find no words that did not aggravate her offense.

At least there's only one thing I paralysis six or eight months ago, is re-He bowed and waved his hand to- parted to be improving in health.

outrage overcame her; the parasol dropped table and laid her face on them, and she

return. He flushed red, and his lips se sternly: he walked across the room to her a cricket match in the meadow. Mildred with a heavy tread. She looked up, saw nd her husband brought the drag over him, and knew that her exclamation had been "What in the world is the matter?" he

> ing; and from amid her weeping nothing parasol!" "O, my face, my gloves!" He smiled contemptuously. "Don't you see?"

room's dirty?" He paused and then added, "I'm sorry you think it mean and horrid Very sorry, Winifred." Offense was deep and bitter in his voice; he looked at her with a sort of disgust; she stopped sobbing and regarded him with

it. But his eyes were very hard. She dried her tears and then forfornly scrubbed her

"I just sat there and looked at him." That was Winifred's own account of her behavior. It is not very explicit, and heaves oom for much conjecture as to what her look said or tried to say. But whatever the nessage was he did not read it. He was engrossed in his own indignation, readier to hurt than to understand, full of his own wrong of the mistake he had made, of her extraordinary want of love, of courage, of the high soul. Very likely all this was a natural enough state of mind for him to be in. Justice admits his provocation; the triviality of her spoken excuses gave his anger only too fine an opportunity. He easily persuaded himself that here was a revelation of the real woman, a flash of light that showed her true nature, showing, too, the

ne went on. "Is there any use in prolonging it?" He waited for her to speak, but she was still tongue-tied. "The caretaker needn't be distressed by seeing the awful effects of her omission to dust the room, but if you're composed enough we might as well go." He looked around the "You'll be glad to be out of this," he ended.

stand-you don't see-" "No doubt I'm stupid, but I confees I don't. At least there's only one thing I