

THE CALLING OF DAN MATTHEWS

the Holmes Street side, are the Doctor's roses—the admiration and despair of every flower-growing housewife in town.

Full fifty years of the Doctor's professional life have been spent in active practice in Corinth and in the country round about. He declares himself worn out now and good for nothing, save to meddle in the affairs of his neighbors, to cultivate his roses, and—when the days are bright—to go fishing. For the rest, he sits in his chair on the porch and watches the world go by.

"Old Doctors and old dogs," he growls, "how equally useless we are, and yet how much—how much we could tell if only we dared speak!"

He is big, is the Doctor—big and fat and old. He knows every soul in Corinth, particularly the children; indeed he helped most of them to come to Corinth. He is acquainted as well with every dog and cat, and horse and cow, knowing their every trick and habit, from the old brindle milker that unlatches his front gate to feed on the lawn, to the bull pup that pinches his legs when he calls on old Granny Brown. For miles around, every road, lane, by-path, shortcut and trail, is a familiar way to him. His practice, he declares, has well-nigh ruined him financially, and totally wrecked his temper. He can curse a man and cry over a baby; and he would go as far and work as hard for the illiterate and penniless backwoodsman in his cabin home as for the president of the Bank of Corinth or even Judge Strong himself.

No one ever thinks of the Doctor as loving anyone