

THE HOUSE WITH THE GREEN SHUTTERS

A few dead ashes were sticking from the lower bars of the range. Postie crossed to the fireplace and looked down at the fender. That bright spot would be the place, now, where auld Gourlay killed himself. The women must have rubbed it so bright in trying to get out the blood. It was an uncanny thing to keep in the house, that. He stared at the fatal spot till he grew eerie in the strange stillness.

"Guidwife!" he cried, "Jennet! Don't ye hear?"

They did not hear, it seemed.

"God!" said he, "they sleep sound after all their misfortunes!"

At last—partly in impatience, and partly from a wish to pry—he opened the door of the parlour. "*Oh, my God!*" he screamed, leaping back, and with his bulky bag got stuck in the kitchen door, in his desperate hurry to be gone.

He ran round to the Square in front, and down to Sandy Toddle, who was informing a bunch of unshaven bodies that the Gourlays were "sequestered."

"Oh, my God, post, what have you seen, to bring that look to your eyes? What have you seen, man? Speak for God's sake! What is it?"

The post gasped and stammered—then "Ooh!" he shivered in horror, and covered his eyes, at a sudden picture in his brain.

"Speak!" said a man solemnly.

"They have—they have—they have a' killed themselves," stammered the postman, pointing to the Gourlays'.

Their loins were loosened beneath them. The scrape