" said Captain Eben. "You M's important: well, it's got to be me from my meetin'. I ought p me from servin' Him. So speak

The voice that answered was one at firmee recognized, though she had ver before heard in it the note of tation and undignified excitement. were no ponderous pauses and

Don't be a fool, Hammond!" it said. and don't stand there preaching. cat that door! Get a lamp! Are ou sure there's nobody but us in the

Captain Elkanah Daniels! Captain tanak visiting a Come-Outer! and e leader of the Come-Outers!! ace caught her breath. What in wid- She started to descend d then a thought flashed to her and. She stopped short.

"I ain't the fool. Elkanah." her uncle retort sternly. "The als are them who are deef to the Il from on high. My foot was on the eshold of His house when you led astray. It's never halted there Te. I warn you-

Step! Shut up! Eben Hammond. ell you that your precious churchs and mine, the Regular church of will go to rack and ruin if and me don't pull together this

And I tell you, Elkanah Daniels, have no blasphemy here. That litmactuary up the road is founded a mock and neither you nor any your Plariseein' priest-worshipin an shake it. The Almighty'll Mest His own. As for the Reg'lar urch that's no concern of mine." But I tell you 'tis your concern. The church is'nt, your own fam-

There was an instant of silence. see, crouching on the stairs, noticed e change in her uncle's voice as he

My own family?" he repeated slow-My cwn— And the Reg'lar What do you mean? Has Me he ain't. But that cussed girl.

shouted Captain Hammond. mh Daniels, for your own sake w, be careful. If you dast to say a another word like that, I'll-" Tldast! The hussy! But there's talkin' to you. You're as crazy sa Bedlamite. Either that, or you're the game with her. If you are. I

What game? What game in Which Captain Eben Makes Port. Hannah Poundberry?" mean? Gracie! My Gracie!

Humph! I wondered if I couldn't some sense into you, finally. Lock

Twill! I will! But Elkanah-"Lock it! Give me the key!"

The click of the lock sounded 2. 220 Where's the lamp?" demanded Dan-'s and the matches? Don't stand com whaking."

A smell of sulphur floated out into a hall. Then the sickly glow of the lamp shone through the door-

What ails you?" asked Elkanah. Ans you struck dumb? Now go and "e I there's anybody else in the

"But but there ain't. I know there Hannah's gone and Gracie's at section by this time"

She? Humph! Well, maybe she's meetin' and maybe she isn't. Maye she's over in Peters's pines, hugand kissing that man she's met ere every Sunday for I don't know ow long- Here! let go, you old

Let go, I tell you!" You ligr!" snarled Captain Eben. You low-lived liar! By the Almighty, kanah Daniels! I'll- You take that seck or I'll choke the everlastin' wall out of you. I will-"

"Let go, you lunatic! You'll kill curself. Listen! I'm not lying. It's we truth. She's met a man, I tell Been meeting him for months zness. There! now will you listen? "His name's John Ellery, and he's riminter of the Regular church in this www; that's who he is! Here! hold p! Good Lord! are you dying? Hold

The girl on the stairs sprang to her Her head was reeling and she smill scarcely stand, but she blindly regam the descent She must go to er uncle. She must. But Captain aniels's voice caused her

"There! there!" it said in a tone T relief. "That's better. Set still Be quiet, that's it. Shall I get

"Me, no! let me be. Just let me be. start what I used to be and thisand right, I tell you. Grace! And What was it you just said? don't b'lieve I heard it right." T said that daughter of yours, or

Horne, has been m him, and kissing him. She's met him ing to the parsonage. She stepped in those pines every Sunday afternoon to the door and opened it. for a long time. She was seen there with him this afternoon."

"Who-who saw her?" never tell—unless it's necessary. They are fixing to be married, and—" "Married! She marry a Reg'lar like a stranded whale.

"Have ye—have ye," panted the "Hush! Listen! They ain't married "have ye seen the doctor anywhere." et. We can stop 'em, you and I, i! Mis' Coffin?" we get right to work. It isn't too late.

"Will I-I Go on! tell me more!

"We can step 'em. I know it would be a good eatch for her, the sneaking can't be. It shan't be. You've got to home. His wife, Mis' Parker, a tell her so, Hammond. We folks of gone up to Boston yes'day on the Regular church have pride in our coach, and—and it's all dark and society: we won't have it disgraced. And we have been proud of our minister, the young, rattle-headed fool! We'll save him if we can. If we can't"—the speaker's teeth grated—"then we'll send him to eternal smash or die trying."

"But I can't believe it's true o'It's a mistake; some other girl and not Gracie. Why, she don't even know him. She wouldn't- But she has been out every Sunday afternoon for weeks. If it should be!" The chair creaked: Evidently, Cap-

"Well?" repeated Elkanah. "Elkanah Daniels," said Eben slowv. his voice shaking from nervous exhaustion and weakness, but with a fine ring of determination in every word, Elkanah Daniels, you listen me. I've heard you through.

your yarn is true, then my heart i broke, and I wish I might have died love that girl of mine better'n the whole wide world and yet I'd ruther see her dead afore me than married to a Reg'lar minister. Disgrace to him! Disgrace to your miserable church! What about the disgrace to mine? And the disgrace to her? Ruin to your minister! Ruin to my girl here and hereafter is what I'm thinkin' of; that and my people who worship God with me. Pll talk to Grace. I'll talk to her. But not of what'll happen to him or you-or any of your cantin', lip-servin' crew. I'll tell her to choose between him and me. And if she chooses him, I'll send her out of that door. I'll do my duty and read her out of my congregation. And I'll by the front gate of the tavern as she know she's gone to everlastin' hell, and that's worse'n the poorhouse.

better go.' The lock turned; the door opened and closed. Grace, clinging to the balusters, heard Captain Hammond cross the room, slowly and feebly. She heard him enter the sitting room. By and by, pale, but more composed, and with her mind made up, she came down into the hall. Drawing a long breath, she turned into the sitting room to face her uncle. By the light shining through the dining-room door she saw him on his knees by the haircloth sofa. She spoke his name. He did not answer nor look up. At her touch his arm slid from the couch and

CHAPTER XI.

the carpet.

Half past eight. In the vestry of the Regular church John Ellery was con-ducting his prayer meeting. The attendance was as large as usual. Three seats, however, were vacant, and along the settees people were wondering where Captain Elkanah Daniels and his daughter might be. They had not missed a service for many a day. And where was Keziah Coffin?

At the Come-Outer chapel the testifying and singing were in full blast.



He Did Not Answer or Look Up.

But Ezekiel Bassett was leading, for Captain Eben Hammond had not made his appearance. Neither had Grace tain Eben's absence was the most astonishing.

In the Regular parsonage Keziah sat alone by the sitting-room table. Prayer meeting and supper she had forgotten entirely. The minister had not come home for his evening meal, and food was furthest from the house. The little room, Captain Eben's own, keeper's thoughts. What should she was more like a skipper's cabin than could she avert the disaster so certain to overwhelm those two young people the moment their secret became

She rose and again donned her bon net and shawl. She was about to and bent over the bed. blow out the lamp when she heard rapid footsteps, the sound of some one running along the sidewalk ing now?"

The runner was a boy, Maria His gins' boy Isaac, whose widowed moth er lived down by the shore. He die "Never mind. The one that did'il the chores at the Hammond taver His freckled face was dripping wi perspiration and he puffed and ble

> "Who? Dr. Parker? Have I seen what in the world are you comin' her-

after the doctor for?" "'Cause 'cause I didn't know else to come. I been to his house an igning- Well, never mind. But it he ain't to home. Nobody ain't coach, and-and it's all dark house door's open and the shay's go

> "Who's sick? Who wants him?" "And—and—all the rest of the houses round here was shut up 'cause everybody's to meetin'. I peeked in at the meetin' house and he ain'i there, and I see your light and-" "Who's sick? Tell me that, won't

"Cap'n Eben. He's awful sick. cal'late he's goin' to die, and Gracie

"Cap'n Eben? Eben Hammond! tain Eben was rising slowly to his Dyin'? What are you talkin' about?" feet. "Huh! huh!" puffed the messenger impatiently. "Didn't I tell ye? Cap'n ! Eben's adyin'. I seen him. All white and still and—and awful. And Gracie. she's all alone and-"

"Hold on! Stop! I'll tell you where the doctor is most likely. Up to Mrs Prince's. She's been poorly and he's prob'y been called there. Run! run fast as ever you can and get him and afore I heard it, But I didn't die and I'll go to Grace this minute. The poor I have heard it. Now listen to me. I thing! Don't tell anybody. Not a soul but the doctor. Half this town'll be runnin' to find out if you do, and that poor girl must be dispected already I'll go to her. You get Dr. Parker and tell him to hurry.'

"I'll tell him; don't you fret." He was gone, running harder than ever. A moment later Keziah fol-

lowed him, running also. As she ran on, a rattle of wheels and the thud of hoofs came from be hind her. Then a rocking chais drawn by a galloping horse, shot by Dr. Parker's carriage, she was sure The Higgins boy must have met the doctor and delivered his message

The horse and chaise were standing pantingly drew near it. The side door of the house was ajar and she opened That's all to-night, Elkanah. Now you it softly and entered. The dining room was empty. There was a light on the sitting room table and low voices came from the little bedroom adjoining. Then, from the bedroom, emerged Dr. Parker and Grace Van Horne. The girl was white and there were dark circles under her eyes. The doctor was very grave.

Keziah stepped forward and held out both hands. Grace looked, recognised her, and with a cry ran toward can you? Try! Ten minutes, say. Can you?"

Let. Keziah took her in her arms and "Of course I can. Cap'n Hammond. soothed her as if she were a child.

"Well, well, dear," went on Mrs. Comn hurriedly. "He will be better soon, we'll hope. You mustn't give up he fell gently over upon his side on the ship, you know. Now you go and lay down somewheres and I'll get my things off and see what there is to do. Some good strong tea might be good

"She's gone to her cousin's to stay all night. I suppose I ought to send for her, but I-"

"No, no, you hadn't. Might's well send for a poll parrot, the critter listen. I want you to marry my boy, less. I'll look out for things, me and the doctor. Where's where's Nat?" "He came in just after I sent the boy for the doctor. He's in there with -with him," indicating the bedroom. "Poor Nat!"

Keziah looked longingly toward the "Yes," she said slowly. "Poor fel-

low, it's an awful shock to him. He and his father are— But there! you lay down on that lounge!"

Grace, protesting that she couldn't sit down, she couldn't leave uncle, and there were so many things to do, was at last persuaded by Keziah and the loctor to rest for a few moments in the big rocker. Then Mrs. Coffin went into the kitchen to prepare the tea. As she went, she beckened to Dr. Parker, who joined her a moment later.

"Well, doctor?" she asked anxiously. -he had practiced in Trumet for nearly thirty years—shook his head.

"Not a single chance," he whispered. "He may possibly live till morning, but I doubt if he lasts an hour. It's his heart. I've expected it at any time."

Captain Nat was standing at the door of the bedroom. His face was sakes! Keziah-" drawn and he had seemingly grown years older since noon.

"He's come to himself, doc," he Van Horne, for that matter, but Cap. it happened or anything. And he don't ye, Keziah?" wants us all. Why! why, Keziah! are you here? You can come in, too. I know dad likes you and I guessstepped back into the bedroom. "Yes," he nodded, returning, "you come, too. He wants you."

What ought she to do? How a chamber on land. In the corner stood the captain's big boots and his oilskins hung about them. His Sunday cane was there also. And on the bureau was a worn, heavy Bible,

Dr. Parker brushed by the others "Well, cap'n," he said cheerily, he's headed for home, I guess

home, and the harbor light broad abeam, I caPlate." "Oh, no! you'll make a good many "Not in this hulk, I won't, doctor, I

Halloo, Gracie, girl! Well, your old uncle's on his beam ends, sin't he?" Grace gla red fearfully at his face. back, as if she feared what he might

about me for? I'm fit and ready for the sea I'm goin' to an wandered from his son For an instant he

"Evenin, Keziah. I don't know



"Keziah Coffin!" Cried Nat Hammond, "De You Tell Me to Marry Grace?"

that you was sick, Eben. So I come right down, to help if I could." Thank ye. You're a good-hearted woman, Keziah, even though you ain't seen the true light yet. And you're housekeeper for that hired priest-aa-" He paused, and a troubled look

came over his face "What is it, dad?" asked Nat. "I-I- Where's Gracie? She's here, ain't she?"

"Yes, uncle, I'm here. Here I am," said the girl. His fingers groped for her hand and seized it.

"Yes, yes, you're here," murmured Captain Eben. "I-I-for a minute or so, I-I had an awful dream about you. Gracie. I dreamed Never mind. honest, man to mant. Can you keep ence." me here for just a little spell longer?

"Of course I can Cap'n Hammond, what are you-" "Belay, I tell you! Yes, I guess 'twas a dream. It had to be, but 'twas so

sort of real that I- How long have I been this way?" "Oh, a little while! Now just-" "Hush! Don't pull your hand away, Some good strong tea might be good Gracie. Nat, give me yours. That's for all hands, I guess likely. Where's it. Now I put them two hands to o'clock last night. I was there and—" happy, I am sure. And I shall hop "Continued in the continue of the continu

gether. See, doctor? See, Keziah?" "Donit, uncle, don't!" pleaded Grace. as well as—as— She said— Oh, I "Don't worry about me. Think of yourself, please." "S-sh-sh! Don't put me off. Just

would be just as much good and talk after I'm gone I want you to say you will—say it now, so's I can hear it. Will you, Gracie?" Grace would have withdrawn her hand, but he would not let her. He

clung to it and to that of his son with all his failing strength. "Will you, Gracie?" he begged. "It's the last thing I'm goin' to ask of you.

I've tried to be sort of good to you, in my way, and-" "Don't, don't!" she sobbed. "Let me think a minute, uncle, dear. Oh, do been so much better!"

let me think!" "Won't you say it for me, Gracie?" pleaded Captain Eben. She hesitated no longer.

"Yes, uncle," she answered through tears, "if Nat wants me he can have me." Keziah clasped her hands. Captain Eben's face lit up with a great joy.

"Thank the Almighty!" he ex-The stout, gray-haired old physician claimed. "Lord, I do thank you. Nat, boy, you're consider'ble older than she is and you'll have to plan for her. You be a good husband to her all her days, won't ye? Why, what are you waitin' for? Why don't you answer me?"

Nat groaned aloud. "A minute dad," he stammered. "Just give me a minute, for Heaven

"Keziah!" repeated Eben. "Keziah? What are you talkin' to her for? She He laughed in supreme scorn. knows there couldn't be no better whispered. "He don't remember how match in the world. You do know it, wouldn't see you if you went. She "John, What Are You Going to Do?"

"Yes," said Keziah slowly. "I guesa -I guess you're right, Eben." "Keziah Coffin," cried Nat Ham-Wait a minute; I'll ask him." He mond, "do you tell me to marry Grace?" "Yes, Nat, I-I think your father's

right."

"Then—then—what difference does - All right, dad. Just as Grace says." "Thank God!" cried Captain Eben. "Doctor, you and Mrs. Coffin are witnesses to this. There! now my decks land. Gracie, girl, the Good Book's

over there on the bureau. Read me a chapter, won't you?" "how's she headed? How are you feel- the dining room. She had stolen away An hour later Keziah sat alone in when the reading began. Dr. Parker,

"He's gone," he said simply

CHAPTER XIL

In Which Keziah Breaks the News It was nearly five o'clock, gray dawn of what was to be a clear, beautiful they're engaged, and Dr. Parker will hope I'll have a new command pretty soon. I'm trustin' in my owners and I lifted the latch and entered the parguess they'll do the fair thing by me. Halloo, Gracle, girl! Well, your old the Hammond tavern. Busy with brought up together; 'twas the naturally and the month of the decision and the decision and the month of the decision and t the doctor and the undertaker, who ral thing that was almost bound to nics together and to parties and every. had been called from his bed by young happen. Eben's heart was set on it When he spoke her name she shrank Higgins; busy with Grace, soothing Higgins; busy with Grace, soothing for years. And she'll have a good we was keepin' comp'ny, even then, her, comforting her as best she could, husband, John, that I know. And she'll "Well, when I was eighteen after to tears streaming down her face, she bent over and kissed him.

"There! there!" he protested. "You mustn't cry. What are you cryin' about me for? I'm fit and ready for the sea I'm goin' to saith." His eyes and much more to be feared.

"The sail my goin' to saith." His eyes and much more to be feared.

"The sail my goin' to saith." His eyes and much more to be feared.

"The last time they wandered from his son to Mrs. Colling." "It is all my fault," she repeated met, ages before—no, only the previous afternoon—she had told him it

> Dr. Parker was very anxious. to make her sleep and you must get her I will, and not before." her to take it."

the doctor. "You go home now and

would be perhaps the hardest of all. sake, won't you?" For upon her rested the responsibility At last he was listening and hesi- all, I finally said yes to the second of seeing that the minister's secret tating. was kept. And she, and no other, must break the news to him. The dining room was dark and

she heard a door open and Ellery's voice, as he called down the stairs. "Who is it?" he demanded. "Mrs. Coffin ?"

She was startled. "Yes," she said softly, after a moment. "Yes, Mr. Ellery, it's me."

pened? "Yes," she answered slowly, "somethin' has happened. Are you dressed? Could you come down?"

He replied that he would be down in a moment. When he came he found her standing by the table waiting for him. The look of her face in the lamplight shocked him.

"Why, Mrs. Coffin!" he exclaimed. "What is it? You look as if you had Doc, answer me this now, true and been through some dreadful experi-Her heart went out to him.

held out both her hands. "You poor box," she cried, "I'm try ing to tell you one of the hardest things a body can tell. Yes, some one is dead, but that ain't all. Eben Hammond, poor soul, is out of his troubles and gone.

"Eben Hammond! Captain Eben? Dead! Why. why-" "Yes, Eben's gone. He was took

must go! I must go at once!" He was on his way to the door, but rustle that sounded loud in the still she held it shut. "No," she said gravely, "you mustn't

go. John-you won't mind me callin' you John. I'm old enough, pretty nigh, to be your mother, and I've come to feel almost as if I was. John, you've got to stay here with me. You can't of all, I guess. Go somewhere andgo to that house. You can't go to

"Mrs. Coffin, what are you saying? Do you know- Have you-" "Yes, I know all about it. I know about the meetin's in the pines and all. Oh, why didn't you trust me and tell me? If you had, all would have

He looked at her in utter amazement. The blood rushed to his face. "You know that?" he whispered. "Yes. I know."

'Did she tell-" "No, nobody told. That is, only a little. I got a hint and I suspicioned somethin' afore. The rest I saw with my own eves."

He was now white, but his jaw shot forward and his teeth closed. "If you do know," he said, "you must realize that my place is with

her. Now, when she is in trouble-" "It ain't the congregation, John," she said. "Nor Trumet, nor your ministry. That means more'n you think it does, now; but it ain't that. You mustn't go to her because—well, be-

cause she don't want you to." "Doesn't want me? I know better." "She doesn't want you, John. She would send you away again, sure, sar-

didn't go when she sent you, you duty to myself?" wouldn't be the man I hope you are. John, you mustn't see Grace again. She ain't yours. She belongs to some | we do try to be fair and square. Your one else "John, Grace Van Horne is goin' to They build on you. You've done more marry Cap'n Nat Hammond. There!

that's the livin' truth." She led him over to the rocking- years." chair and gently forced him into it. He obeyed, although with no apparent with her hand on his shoulder she went on speaking. She told him of her visit to the Hammond tavern, say- you know I ain't doin' just that now?" ing nothing of Mr. Pepper's call nor of her own experience in the grove.

walking very softly, came to her and what the doctor said, and of the old laid his hand on her shoulder. Come-Outer's return to consciousness.

"So you see," she said "It's settled

I killed him! I killed him, Aunt Ke was his happiness and his future only siah! What shall I do? Oh, why that she thought of. He choked and ried in another year. And then we couldn't I have died instead? It would drew his hand across his eyes. "Mrs. Coffin," he said, "you tell me

have been so much better, better for it will be her ruin. You tell me so, kind gen'rally are. As much my fault You say she doesn't want me I tell as his and as much his as mine, I cal'. "She must rest," he told Mrs. Cof- you that the only thing that will keep late. Anyhow, we was both proud, or fin. "She must, or her brain will give me from her is hearing that from her thought we was, and neither would way. I'm going to give her something own lips. When she tells me to leave give in. And he says to me, 'You'll be

"She'll tell you, John; she'll tell you, back, then.' And says I, bein' a fool So Keziah tried and, at last, Grace And I know Grace. She's made up her 'I guess not. There's other fish in the did take the drug. In a little while mind and wen't change it. But I do sea.' He sailed and I did wish him she was sleeping, uneasily and with ask you this: I ask you not to go now, back, but I wouldn't write fust and moans and sobbings, but sleeping, nev- Wait a little while, do. I left her neither would he. And then come anasleep, worn out by what sh' been other man." "Now it's your turn, Keziah," said through and under the effects of the She paused, hesitated, and then condoctor's sleepin' medicine. He said tinued. rest, yourself. We don't need you any she must rest or he was afraid her more just now. Now you go home. brain would give out. For her sake, He was handsome then, in a way, and You've had a hard night, like the rest then, wait a little. Then, if you don't he had money to spend, and he liked hear from her, maybe I can arrange a me. He wanted me to marry him. If-How hard he had no idea. And Ke- meetin' place where you can see her if the other, the one that went away, siah, as she wearily entered the par- without anyone's knowin' it. I'll try, had written I never would have sonage, realized that the morning But do wait a little while, for her thought of such a thing, but he didn't

"Won't you?" begged Keziah.

wait. I'll wait until noon, somehow, if misery either. That come later. His gloomy. She lighted the lamp. Then I can. I'll try. But not a minute people was well off and he'd never later. Not one. You don't know what worked much of any. He did for a you're talking about, Mrs. Coffin." thank you for her sake."

noon. At six o'clock, through the dew last went off to sea afore the mast. "It's morrong," said the minister. Higgins boy. For the first time in his have stood that; I did stand it. I took "Are you sick? Has anything hap short life he had been awake all night in sewin' and kept up an appearance, and he moved slowly.

Ike held up an envelope, clutched in a fered me money, so's I needn't dis-

answer." Mrs. Coffin closed the door and tore open the envelope. Within was ar other addressed, in Grace's handwri ing, to Mr. Ellery. The housekeep entered the study, handed it to his

and turned away. "Dear John," wrote Grace. "I pr sume Aunt Keziah has told you to uncle's death and of my promise i Nat. It is true. I am going to mare him. I am sure this is right and for the best. Our friendship was a mi take and you must not see me agait

"GRACE VAN HORNE." Beneath was another paragraph. "Captain Eben dead! Why, he was that you may be. I shall pray fo

The note fell to the floor with ness. Then Keziah heard the minister's step. She turned. He was moving slowly across the room.

"John, what are you goin' to do?" He shook his head "I don't know." he said. "Go away somewhere, first and try to live it down. I can't, of course, but I must try." She put out her hand. "I know it'll e hard," she said, "stayin' here, I nean. But your duty to others-"

"Don't you think we've heard enough

tin sure. She would. And if you about duty to others? How about my

"I guess that's the last thing we ought to think about in the world, if church thinks a heap of you, John. in the little while you've been here than Mr. Langley did in his last fifteen

"You've never been asked to sit are clear and I'd better get ready to realization of what he was doing. Still more than all the world marry some quietly by and see the one you love one else." "How do you know I ain't? How do

"Mrs. Coffin!" "John Ellery, you listen to me. You he room John Ellery heard her de-She told of Captain Eben's seizure, of think I'm a homely old woman, prob-

shly, set in my ways as an eight-day eleck. I guess I look like it and act like it. But I ain't so awful old—on the edge of forty, that's all. And when I was your age I wa'n't so awful homely, either. I had fellers aplenty hangin' round and I could have married any one of a dozen. This ain't boastin'; land knows I'm fur from that. I was brought up in this town and even when I was a girl at school there was only one boy I cared two straws about. He and I went to picwhere. Folks used to laugh and say

say. But he only smiled as, with the and petting her as a mother might do her best to make him happy. He's ther died, I went up to New Bedford "Well, when I was eighteen, after fato work in a store there. Wanted to earn my own way. And this young feller I'm tellin' you about went away to sea, but every time he come home from a voyage he come to see me and things went on that way till we was promised to each other. The engagement wa'n't announced, but 'twas so. just the same. We'd have been mar-

"Twas a fool quarrel, same as that sorry after I'm gone. You'll wish me

write. And, my pride bein' hurt, and chap.

"Well, for the first year 'twa'n't so "Yes," he answered slowly. "I'll bad. Not happiness exactly, but not little while after we was married, but "Yes, I do. I know well. And I not for long. Then he begun to drink and carry on and lost his place. Pret-But he did not have to wait until ty soon he begun to neglect me and at soaked grass of the yard, came the We was poor as poverty, but I could somehow. Never told a soul. His The housekeeper opened the door folks come patronizin' around and ofgrace them. I sent 'em rightabout in "It's for you, Mrs. Keziah," he said a hurry. Once in a while he'd come "Gracie she sent it. There ain't no home, get tipsy and abuse me. Still said nothin'. Thank God, there was no children; that's the one thing I've

been thankful for. "You can't keep such things quiet always. People are bound to find out. They come to me and said, 'Why don't you leave him?' but I wouldn't. I could have divorced him easy enough, there was reasons plenty, but I wouldn't do that. Then word came that he was dead, drowned off in the East Indies somewheres. I come back here to keep house for Sol, my brother, and I kept house for him till he died and they offered me this place here at the parsonage. There! that's my story, part of it, more'n I ever told

a livin' soul afore, except Sol." She ceased speaking. The minister, who had sat silent by the window, pathetically listening or trying en, turned his head.

"I apologize, Mrs. Coffin," he said dully, "you have had trials, hard ones. But-"But they ain't as hard as yours you think? Well, I haven't quite fin-

shed yet. After word come of my husband's death, the other man come and wanted me to marry him. And I wanted to-oh, how I wanted to! cared as much for him as I ever did; more, I guess. But I wouldn't-I culdn't, though it wrung my heart out to say no. I give him up-why? cause I thought I had a duty laid on Ellery sighed. "I can see but one

given us by God, to marry the one we love." Keziah's agitation, which had grown as she told her story, suddenly flashed nto flame.

uty," he said. "That is the duty

"Is that as fur as you can see?" she sked fiercely. "It's an easy duty, en-or looks easy now. I've got a arder one; it's to stand by the promse I gave and the man I married." He looked at her as if he thought she had lost her wits. "The man you married?" he replied

Why, the man you married is dead."

"No, he ain't. You remember the etter you saw me reading that night when you come back from Come-Outers' meetin'? Well, that letter was from him. He's alive. Yes, he's alive. Alive and knockin' round the world somewheres. Every little while he writes me for money and, if I have any, I send it to him. Why? Why 'cause I'm a coward, after all. I guess, and I'm scared he'll do what he says a will and come back. Perhaps you nink I'm a fool to put up with it; hat's what most folks would say if they knew it. They'd tell me I ought o divorce him. Well, I can't, I can't. walked into the mess blindfolded; parried him in spite of warnin's and verything. I took him for better or or worse, and now that he's turned out worse, I must take my medicine. can't live with him-that I can't dout while he lives I'll stay his wife d give him what money I can spare. hat's the duty I told you was laid on e, and it's a hard one, but I don't un away from it." She stopped short; then covering

To be Continued.

er face with her apron, she rar from

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20 p.m. Picton, Welling and intermediate station p.m., 9.20 r.m.