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Would You Have Done it Yourself, Sir?

(Florence E. Burch, in 'Friendly Greetings.')

A cheque was missing in Mr. Rothwell's office.

Not often this good gentleman gave such a thing a chance to happen—as indeed no one ought to; for it is a sadly culpable thing to leave a stumbling-block in other people's way.

But Mr. Rothwell's carefulness in the matter was not so much the result of conscientiousness as of suspicion and mistrust. Where many a man would have said 'Not right to subject any one to temptation,' he said 'Show me an honest man!' And accordingly he never turned his back on his office for ever so short a time without pocketing his keys. But this time his habit of caution had been over-reached. Something had occurred to put him about, and he had gone out in rather a hurry. His keys he had taken with him; but the desk he had omitted to lock.

Mr. Rothwell was in a terrible wax.

That he should have done such a thing was annoying enough. But when a man makes a boast to himself that he never puts himself at the mercy of other people's honesty, it is both humiliating and startling to find that for once his boast is vain. But to find, furthermore, that this

bit of chance carelessness should have been seized upon by the fingers of dishonesty!

Mr. Rothwell was fairly in a rage with himself and fate, and—the delinquent.

One thing was certain! His desk had been watched; else why should this have happened on the very first possible occasion? The theft lay between his caretaker and his clerk. Yet no! The clerk was having a half-day off, and had gone out before Mr. Rothwell. Clearly the caretaker was accountable. She was always on the spot, and the door of the room in

which his clerk worked, was always closed; of course, he no sooner left the office than she made a point of coming in to have a look round!

'She shall have a chance of looking round now!' said Mr. Rothwell to himself, with grim humor. Whereupon he pressed the electric button with such furious persistence that Martha Wills, who was just taking her dinner, rushed upstairs with the oven-cloth in her hand, fearing an apoplectic seizure or something of that kind

'OH, SIR,' CRIED MARTHA, 'YOU DON'T THINK I'VE TAKEN IT.'