"Nonsense! He never killed her Had his love been anything short of the worship it was he stood in too much awe of her to lift his band

against her, even in his most demented

"I don't trust men of uncertain wits,"

eturned the other. "You have not no-

ticed everything that is to be seen in

Mr. Sutherland, recalled to his duty

by these words, looked quickly about

him. With the exception of the table

and what was on and by it there was

nothing else in the room. Naturally

his glance returned to Philemon Webb.
"I don't see anything but this poor

Mr. Sutherland, with a start, again

bent down. The arm of his old friend

sleeping man," he began.

"Look at his sleeve,"

moments."

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his wife allowed him such privileges. But she was always too good to him and I fear has paid for it with her The Mystery of Ratharine Green Agatha Webb

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CHAPTER II. A BLOODY SLEEVE.

Sutherlandtown was, a seaport. The village, which was a small one, consisted of one long street running parallel with the coast and numerous cross streets running down from the hillside and ending on the wharfs. On one of the corners thus made stood the Webb house, with its front door on the main street and its side door on one of the hillside lanes. As the group of men and boys who had been in search of Mr. Sutherland entered this last mentioned lane they could pick out this house from all the others, as it was the only one in which a light was still burning. Mr. Sutherland lost no time in entering upon the scene of the tragedy. As his imposing figure emerged from the darkness and paused on the outskirts of the crowd blocking up every entrance to the house, a mur-

But before he could enter some one plucked him by the sleeve.

"Look up!" whispered a voice into

mur of welcome went up, after which

a way was made for him to the front

He did so and saw a woman's body hanging half out of an upper window. It hung limp, and the sight made him sick notwithstanding his threescore years of experience.

"Who's that?" he cried. "That's no Agatha Webb's head and shoulders." "No, it's Batsy, the cook. She's dead We left her where we found her for the coroner to see."
"But this is horrible!" murmured Mr.

Sutherland. "Has there been a butch-As he uttered these words he felt another quick pressure on his arm. Look-

ing down, he saw leaning against him the form of a young woman, but before he could address her she had started upright again and was moving on with the throng. It was Miss Page. "It was the sight of this woman

hanging from the window which first drew attention to the house," volunteered a man who was standing as a sort of guardian at the main gateway. "Some of the sailors' wives who had been to the wharfs to see their husbands off on the ship that sailed at day. break saw it as they came up the lane on their way home and gave the alarm. Without that we might not yet have known what had happened."

"But Mrs. Webb?" "But Mrs. Webb?"

"Come in and see."

There was a board fence about the simple yard within which stood the humble house forever after to be pointed out as the scene of Sutherlandtown's most heartrending tragedy. In this tence was a gate, and through this gate new passed Mr. Sutherland and his would be companion, Miss Page. A path bordered by lilac bushes led the way to the house, the door of which stood wide open. As soon as Mr. wide open. As soon as Mr. herland entered upon this path s man appeared from the house and came directly toward him. It was

Amos Fenton, the constable. "Ah, Mr. Sutherland," said he, "said business, a very sad business! But what little girl have you there?" "This is Miss Page, my housekeeper's blece. She would come. Inquisitive

ness, the cause. I do not approve of step. We allow no one inside excepting yourself," he said respectfully, in recognition of the fact that nothing of importance was ever undertaken in Sutherlandtown without the presence

of Mr. Sutherland. Miss Page courtesied, looking so be witching in the fresh morning light that the tough old constable scratched his chin in grudging admiration. But he did not reconsider his determination. Seeing this, she accepted her defeat gracefully and moved aside to where the bushes offered her more or less protection from the curiosity of those about her. Meanwhile Mr. Sutherland had stepped into the house.

He found himself in a small hall with a staircase in front and an open door at the left. On the threshold of this open door a man stood, who ai sight of him doffed his bat. Passing by this man, Mr. Sutherland entered the room beyond. A table spread with eatables met his view, beside which, in an attitude which struck him at the moment as peculiar, sat Philemon Webb, the well known master of the

Astonished at seeing his old friend in this room and in such a position, he

was about to address him when Mr.
Fenton stopped him.
"Wait!" said he. "Take a look at
poor Philemon before you disturb him
He was sitting just as you see him when we broke into the house a hall aour ago, and we to ve let him be for reasons you can easily appreciate. Ex-amine him closely, Mr. Sutherland; he won't notice it."

"But what ails him? Why does he sit crouched against the table? Is he

"No; look at his eyes." Mr. Sutherland stopped and pushed sside the long gray locks that half concealed the countenance of his aged

"Why," he cried startled, "they are closed! He isn't dead?" "No; he is asleep."

"Yes. He was asleep when we came in and he is asleep yet. Some of the neighbors wanted to awake him, but I neighbors wanted to awake him, but I would not let them. His wits are not strong enough to bear a sudden shock."

"No, no, poor Philemon! But that he should sit sleeping here while she—but what do these bottles mean and this parade of supper in the room they were not accustomed to eat in?"

"We don't know. It has not been eaten, you see. He has swallowed a glass of port, but that is all. The other glasses have had no wine in them, nor have the victuals been touched."

"Seats for three and only one occupied," murmured Mr. Sutherland.
"Strange! Could he have expected

Could be have expected

"It looks like it. I don't know that

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lay crooked upon the table, and on its hiue cotton sleeve there was a smear which might have been wine but which As Mr. Sutherland became assured of

As Mr. Sutherland became assured of this, he turned slightly paid and looked inquiringly at the two men who were intently watching him.

"This is bad," said he. "Any other marks of blood below stairs?"

"No. That one smear is all." "Oh, Philemon!" burst from Mr.

Sutherland in deep emotion. Then as he looked long and shudderingly at his friend he added slowly: "He has been in the room where she was killed, so much is evident. By that he understood what was done there I cannot believe or he would not

be sleeping here like a log. Come, let us go upstairs." Fenton, with an admonitory gesture toward his subordinate, turned directly toward the staircase. Mr. Sutherland followed him, and they at once proceeded to the upper hall and into the large front room, which had been the

scene of the tragedy.

It was the parior or sitting room of this small and unpretentious bouse. A rag carpet covered the floor, and the furniture was of the plainest kind, but the weman who lay outstretched on the stiff old fashioned lounge epposite the door was far from being in accord with the homely type of her surroundings. Though the victim of a violent death, her face and form, both of a beaut seldom to be found among women any station, were so majestic in their calm repose that Mr. Sutherland, as customed as he was to her noble ap pearance, experienced a shock of a prise that found vent in these words:
"Murdered! She? You have ma

some mistake, my friends. Look at But even in the act of saying this his eyes fell on the blood which had dyed her cotton dress, and he cried:

Where was she struck and where is

the weapon which made this ghastly "She was struck while standing of itting at this table," returned the constable, pointing to two or three drops of blood on its smooth surface. The weapon we have not found, but the

would shows that it was inflicted by s three sided dagger." "A three sided dagger?" "Yes." "I didn't know there was such ! thing in town. Philemon could have

had no dagger." "It does not seem so, but one can never tell. Simple cottages like these often contain the most unlooked for ar

Mr. Sutherland thought of whatithi cottage did contain and scrutinized the



onstable closely. But the latter show-

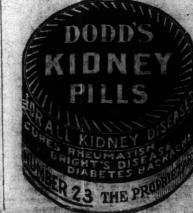
"I cannot imagine a dagger theing among its effects," he pursued. "Where was the body of Mrs. Webb lying when

"Where you see it now. Nothing thas been moved or changed." "She was found here, on this lounge, in the same position in which we see

"Yes, sir." "But that is incredible. Look at the way she lies! Hands crossed, eyes closed, as though made ready for her burial. Only loving hands could have done this. What does it mean?"

"It means Philemen; that is what it means, Philemon." (To be continued)

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