

THE HOUSE WITH THE GREEN SHUTTERS

didna ken *you* were just the same." She looked. Her mother was not listening.

Suddenly Mrs. Gourlay screamed with wild laughter, and, laughing, eyed with mirthless merriment, the look of horror with which Janet was regarding her. "Ha, ha, ha!" she screamed, "it's to be a clean sweep o' the Gourlays! Ha, ha, ha! it's to be a clean sweep o' the Gourlays!"

There is nothing uglier in life than a woman's cruel laugh, but Mrs. Gourlay's laugh was more than cruel, it was demoniac; the skirl of a human being carried by misery beyond the confines of humanity. Janet stared at her in speechless fear.

"Mother," she whispered at last, "what are we to do?"

"There's twa thirds of the poison left," said Mrs. Gourlay.

"Mother!" cried Janet.

"Gourlay's dochter may gang on the parish if she likes, but his wife never will. *You* mav hoast yourself to death in a garret in the poorhouse, but *I'll* follow my boy."

The sudden picture of her own lonely death as a pauper among strangers, when her mother and brother should be gone, was so appalling to Janet, that to die with her mother seemed pleasanter. She could not bear to be left alone.

"Mother," she cried in a frenzy, "I'll keep ye company!"

"Let us read a Chapter," said Mrs. Gourlay.

She took down the big Bible, and "the thirteenth Chapter o' first Corinthians," she announced in a loud