

A VILLAGE SCANDAL.

"I do not believe it," said Mrs. Grant, emphatically. "But every body says must be true," said Mrs. Jeffrey.

"I don't know it's round, but I'm willing to believe it on good evidence. Thank heaven, I'm not an attorney that I won't believe, I'm one of the sort that can be convinced of a thing even if I don't see it."

"She is my friend, and I love her dearly," she said. "But this wicked, shameful story, I simply cannot believe it. Oh, Mrs. Jeffrey, can you not see that it is a matter of conscience with me?"

"Mrs. Jeffrey, a little ashamed but of the same opinion still, rose to go. "If the matter is brought up in the church, you will then hear all the members of the church see the letter you may change your mind."

"The Fall was convulsed over its first scandal. The tongue of censure, that had formerly reposed when Abram H. Uris had carried his mother off to the parsonage, and indulged in suitable criticisms in her neighbor's house, had been baptized in the river and died of inflammatory rheumatism a week afterward, had now broken silence and carried the story from house to house until it was on everybody's lips."

"A mania for visiting seemed to have been outgrowing the subject of a broken engagement. It was seen every day, with a little bundle of knitting or crochet in hand, going to make informal visits or calls at the homes of their intimate friends or near neighbors. To be sure each lady was very particular to explain, if opportunity offered, that she had promised Mrs. So-and-so a new dress or pattern, or she had been intending to take her work and 'run in' to see Mrs. Such-and-such for six months or more. It was really a relief to Mrs. Jeffrey and Mrs. Martin, engaged in earnest and confidential conversation. Overheard in the apple tree the robin sang unheard. On the floor a mischievous kitten played with Mrs. Martin's ball of yarn, tangling it in her paws. Mrs. Jeffrey's crocheted work lay idly in her lap."

"She always did seem frivolous to me," remarked Mrs. Jeffrey. "No care of her house, no interest in her duties. There's a great deal said in these days about a woman's hiding a God-given talent under a bushel, and smothering her genius under domestic drudgery; but I've noticed that the women who are domestic and take an interest in their homes are not the women who figure in scandal cases in this village."

father's grocery. The contents are in a different position, with Mr. Colton's name on the label. He said that Mr. Colton had made an explanation, which will no doubt be satisfactory."

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