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MY DISCOVERY.

A STORY TOLD OVER A COUNTER.

AREY AND CROFTON'S drapery establishment lies westward of Regent Street. It is a somewhat extensive concern, one shop having been added to another to keep pace with growing trade.

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The Vareys live on the premises to have personal supervision of the young people under their roof, although the bulk of their

shop assistants sleep at their own homes.

Portly Mr. Crofton had had a fit, and lay there in no condition for removal to his own residence, which was out by St. John's Wood. Mrs. Varey could not well superadd the duties of a nurse to her many cares, so a messenger was despatched for me, and fortunately I was at home, having left a convalescent patient over-night.

Wanting a new hair-brush, I stepped into Mrs. Chappell's, on my way thither. There was a new shopwoman behind the counter, and at the desk was Mrs. Chappell, making an entry in her order-book. She wore her gold-mounted spectacles.

It was so seldom I saw her clear eyes through glasses, that I was at once reminded of the scene I had witnessed in that shop ten weeks before, when Jane Saunders restored them to the mistress she had that day quitted, and protested with such vehement indignation against the iniquity of hiding them amongst the

things in her box, to take away her character, and fix on her as the mysterious thief!

"I see you have not lost your spectacles again, Mrs. Chappell," I said, whilst looking out a brush. "I suppose you have not recovered any other of the missing articles?" She came forward as I spoke.

"Found them! No, indeed! I wish I had. My sister, Mrs. Merton, influenced by your story of the silver fork, insisted on a renewed search of house and shop; and, would you believe it? although we did not find so much as a ribbon we had lost, we discovered that many things were gone, not previously missed—a silver fillagree brooch, which came as a present from Paris; a light blue cashmere shawl, and a new black silk dress of mine, which was likewise a present from Paris, and many other things not worth enumerating. I assure you the discovery made me quite ill."

"Well, those were losses," I replied.

"So they were," she responded; "the dress was a rich one, too good for ordinary use; I had only worn it once or twice, and, as ill luck would have it, a child I took in my arms trickled orange-juice in a line straight down the bodice. And, as worse luck would have it, whilst I was debating how best to arrange the lace trimming so as to hide the stain, the dress itself was carried off—all that was left being these spare