

Second Cousin Sarah

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"ANNE JUDGE, SPINSTER," "LITTLE KATE KIRBY,"
ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

Mary Holland rose and stood beside her. Her hand fell upon Sarah Eastbell's arm, and once more the clear look in the eyes seemed beyond all deceit.

"Sarah, leave me with my miserable little secret for a while—it will be explained sooner than you think, although I dare not say a word now, for all our sakes. Have I been so false a friend that, you cannot trust me in a time of common peril?"

"If I could understand—if why did you write to Reuben Culwick?" she said, very suddenly and sharply—"why did you let me go to London in ignorance of his address?"

"It was his wish that you should not see him at his worst, I knew," she said, answering the latter question first; "and I wrote to him because those two men had arrived here."

"Reuben had not opened your letter."

"That was unfortunate," said Sarah eagerly, "if he thinks we are not safe here. And yet he has thought of us so little; he has kept away so long, we have all died away so surely from his interest that—"

Sarah stopped, and her hands were pressed quickly to her breast to still its sudden leaping, while Mary Holland clasped the other's arm, as a sudden knocking at the outer door, followed by a ringing of the bell, announced a late visitor to Sedge Hill.

"Can it be?" both young women whispered, as they went across the drawing room toward the marble-chekered hall, friends again in their suspense, and with the new distrust forgotten for a time. In the hall stood a servant, with a hand upon the door, and in the corridor were Thomas Eastbell and Captain Peterson; the former with a waxen cast of countenance, like a man seized with a strange fear.

The chain before the door was lowered, the door was opened, and a tall man came with quick strides into his father's house.

"He has come—oh! he has come," cried Sarah Eastbell joyfully, and forgetting all sense of decorum in her delight at seeing him—forgetting that he was only her second-cousin!—she ran toward him, and cast her arms about his neck, to his surprise, and in her warmth of welcome. Here was one friend at least whom she could trust.

"I am so glad that you have come," she cried; then she shrank away from his arms in her second impulse, and went with crimsoned cheeks to Mary Holland's side again. He smiled—and it was the old bright look gleaming from his full brown eyes. The welcome pleased him—it was so strange a contrast to his last reception in that house.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The wondering, scowling faces in the shadow of the corridor receded slowly, and then the door of the picture gallery was closed, as though Reuben Culwick's presence could not be tolerated at that juncture. Reuben glanced along the corridor, and then turned to Mary Holland.

"They are in the gallery?" he inquired. "And the old lady is asleep, and well watched? You should have telegraphed to me, and not have lost time by the post," he said.

"I dare not leave the house, and there was no one whom I cared to intrust with a message."

Sarah looked from one to the other curiously, and Reuben Culwick smiled. "See what a couple of conspirators we are, Sarah," he said; "but the fact is, your brother Tom and his acquaintances have been disturbing my mind of late days. I have feared that this day would come, and that you might be powerless and need help—although Tom may be a very good fellow when one is thoroughly acquainted with him."

"You know what he is," said Sarah, very moodily.

"Hence, one day," he continued, "I wrote in confidence to Miss Holland, and asked her to warn me when a crisis of this kind occurred—which it has, you see. You were Tom's sister, and Tom's sister's feelings had to be respected, besides," he added, "I was afraid of you."

"Afraid!" echoed Sarah Eastbell. "Of what?"

"Of your turning up in my Drury Lane den and offering me your compassion, and aggravating me by your assistance. I was a sour-tempered beast, Sarah, and afraid of the softening influence of second-cousinship."

"I don't understand you, Mr. Culwick," said Sarah, very coldly now; "but I never did, for the matter of that. You are suspicious of me—that's all I perceive at present."

"Well, your visit to me this morning did me a great deal of good," he condescended to explain still further—"assured me that you were a genuine young woman, and that I was an old fool; that you understood the world, and I didn't. And without Miss Holland's danger signal, I should have come in good time to Sedge Hill."

"Would you?" she cried, half laughing and half crying now.

"Miss Eastbell hardly knows what or in whom to believe, Mr. Culwick," said Mary Holland at this juncture, "and her friends and enemies are hopelessly intermixed."

"I think that you must be my friend," said Sarah, extending her hand to her at once. "Forgive me if I have been hard to-night."

Her hand was on the drawing room door, when a shrill voice, unmistakable, and startling at that hour, echoed through the house:

"Reuben Culwick, is that you?"

The two young women and the big bearded man between them paused and looked at each other. Sarah Eastbell whispered:

"Grandmother!"

"Yes, it is I," answered Reuben.

"Come upstairs directly, and don't bring anybody with you;" and then the head of Mrs. Eastbell appeared over the first line of balusters in the well staircase.

"Go to her," said Sarah anxiously. "She would make amends for being in your father's house. Don't thwart her."

When Reuben Culwick had reached the landing stage from which the head of his old aunt had appeared, he came to a full stop in his surprise at discovering that Second-cousin Sarah was following him.

"So you are here at last, young fellow—you have swallowed your pride, and come to see me," were the first words of Mrs. Eastbell from the bed into which she had been assisted, and before which he sat down.

"I have swallowed my pride, aunt, and come to see you," he said in her own words.

"'Lucky for you," she answered, "for, though I didn't tell Sally so, I was not going to be slighted by a bit of a boy like you."

The door was closed, and they were together in secret conference. Reuben and his aunt, with his second-cousin like a fate, shadowy and still and vigilant. There was a small table drawn close to the bedhead, with writing materials upon it, and a little reading lamp. Sarah was right. At a strange hour, and in a strange fashion, which his coming and suggested, the old woman lying there had thought of her last duty to the living, and was now in eager haste to complete it.

"You have not shaken hands with me, Reuben," she said, and the shriveled hand stole forth with the old difficulty from the bed, and he took it in his own, and felt it cling to his own and detain it. "If I have robbed you of your birthright, Reuben, and Sally says I have—I hope you bear me no ill will."

"Heaven forbid!" was the quick answer.

"Your father's money has not done me any good—and this big, cold place is as dark and dull and empty as the old almshouse—only not so warm, and Sally not always at my side now. Sally never slighted me at St. Oswald's, mind you, that's the curious part of it. I don't see what is to become of her, exactly, when I am not here to look after her," said the blind woman quaintly. "I'm as unsettled about her as I was when you came to me at Worcester, for she's an unsettled kind of child, and does strange things. I did not want her to meet you, but she would run away at last. You know my grandson Tom has come to see me?"

"Oh, yes."

"I have Tom to think of, too. He's a good lad. He hasn't forgotten me—I hate people to forget me, Reuben. Still, Sally's right, and neither she nor I—nor Tom, for that matter—has any business with your father's money. I didn't see it quite so clearly a little while ago—half an hour since—I do now."

"But—"

"There you go," said the old woman, querulously; "what's the use of interrupting people while they are talking? When I got rich, Reuben, I grew greedy, somehow—as if riches, after all, were any good to me! Wasn't I a happy woman at St. Oswald's? I haven't been happy since then. When my foolish brother left me money, he left me trouble, too, and I was too old for trouble. Now about my Sally—a willful girl enough, but true as steel, Reuben."

"What of her?" said Reuben, looking across at Sarah, who sat with her arms crossed, and her face bent very low, like a woman asleep.

"I think that I can trust you to see after my family, if I leave you all my money, as she wishes. You are not likely to turn your back upon Sarah or Tom, because it is Sarah's wish that I give up every penny of my own free will."

"Sarah is rash," muttered Reuben Culwick, "very rash."

"I think it is overdoing it myself," said the old lady very calmly; "but what peace shall I have until it's done? Has my maid put pens, and ink, and paper on that table? You are a scholar—write out my will, Reuben, in half a dozen lines. Put it all down to yourself—freehold, leasehold, money, pictures, plate—the old woman gives it all."

"At her granddaughter's wish?"

"And at her own—in common fairness, Reuben, to my dear brother's son. There, write, and let me sign it."

Reuben looked across at Sarah again. From the shadowy background she made a gesture of assent, earnest, imperative, and supplicatory.

"And this strange idea is my second-cousin's?" Reuben said, still looking at her. "She trusts me so much, knowing so little of me, in a foggy dream of restitution. She thinks of my wrongs, at a time when I am learning to forget them. She accepts dependence, she risks poverty and privation, and puts herself entirely in my power."

"Entirely," replied the old woman; "isn't it safe?"

"It is romance, not reality. A wild folly, and not the common prudence that should regulate all lives. I will have nothing to do with it. Besides, he who writes a will in which he is interested, and by which he is to profit, does it at his own risk—a very great one in the eyes of the law, aunt," continued Reuben, "and after all the document may not be worth the paper on which it is written. Hence your will would get into Chancery. Mrs. Eastbell, depend upon it. I'll give you my idea, if you'll keep quiet for five minutes."

"I don't think much of your ideas," said Mrs. Eastbell, candidly, "but go on."

Reuben took up a pen, dipped it into the ink, and commenced writing very rapidly. The old woman lay back and listened to the scratching of his pen upon the paper, and Sarah Eastbell, intensely curious, advanced on tiptoe toward him, and regarded him defiantly as he curved his hand before his work and looked hard at her, with his mouth twitching at the corners, as if his old aggravating smile were difficult to repress. When he had finished writing, he said:

"Now, listen. I, Sarah Eastbell, of Sedge Hill, in the County of Worcester-shire, do hereby bequeath to my dear nephew, Reuben Culwick, what does it mean when you have got through it all?"

"This," replied her nephew, looking at his second-cousin again, "that you leave all your property to your granddaughter, Sarah."

"No—no!" cried Sarah, taken off her guard, and coming into the foreground, rebellious and angry: "I will not have this jugglery, grandmother—I will not have this done."

"Good gracious!" cried the old lady, "are you here, too? Why don't you shriek a little louder, or fire a blunderbuss off in my ears, or something, Sally? Of all the aggravating people in the world I think you are the worst, playing at shuttlecock with my money, and not letting me have a word to say about it for myself. I'll die without a will now—see if I don't! And here goes, too!"

Mrs. Eastbell flopped wildly over in bed, and turned her back upon them.

"See what your obstinacy has done!" said Sarah angrily to her cousin.

"One moment," said Reuben; "this is an idea, Mrs. Eastbell, by which a large amount of legacy duty is saved. You can trust Sarah—so can I."

"Yes, but how's it to end?" said Mrs. Eastbell.

"Only in one way, and that I submit to your kind consideration. Aunt," he said in an earnest tone, "before I leave Sedge Hill I shall ask your permission to pay my addresses to my Second-cousin Sarah. I am not worthy of her—she knows that!—but I have learned to love her very much within the last four-and-twenty hours."

There was a long silence before Mrs. Eastbell said in a husky voice:

"You don't mean to say, Reuben, that you have been thinking of my Sally? That would make this business very straight and square, and as Sally's fond of you—"

"Oh, grandamma! I never said so," murmured Sarah Eastbell, without lowering her hands from her face.

"What a horrible story-teller you are!" cried her grandmother.

"It is a mercenary match," said Reuben; "I offer myself, without a penny in the world, to a rich young heiress, who could do much better for herself, and who is far above me in every respect—who is even too young for me, considering what an old foggy I have grown of late days."

"You're no great catch for Sally, certainly," observed Mrs. Eastbell, "but if Sally says she'll have you, it ends the bother of the money in a proper sort of way."

"All your money to Sarah Eastbell, it being privately understood that Sarah is not to forget her brother Tom, or—her second-cousin Reuben," said our hero, taking up the pen.

"Yes, Tom and you can both trust Sarah," Mrs. Eastbell replied.

Sarah Eastbell was even now scarcely satisfied with the drawing up of the will in her favor—it was not what she had wished—had she been less confused, less happy, she might have suggested fresh additions and conditions; but she stood on the threshold of a new world, with the man who was the hero of her life in the foreground of her brightness. She seemed to hesitate as her hands were lowered from her face, and Reuben said meaningly:

"And Sarah Eastbell can trust me, I hope?"

"Yes," she answered to his appeal, "but the will should say—"

"The will must say neither more nor less than that you are sole legatee—I will not have my name in connection with this money," he said very firmly; "and I prefer," he added in a different and softer tone, "to be wholly at the mercy of my second-cousin."

Sarah said no more in argument. If there were a man to be trusted in the world, it was Reuben Culwick; or if there were a man less likely to be moved from his position, it was surely he also. She slipped quietly from the room, leaving Reuben with her grandmother, and went downstairs into the drawing room.

She took her place before the fire, fast dying out with neglect, and thought of the end of all anxiety and uncertainty, and of the beginning of her happiness, with Reuben's love growing stronger every day, and Reuben's troubles at an end forever.

(To be continued.)

HER "YARB" TEA.

She Was Not Cured by the Young Doctor's Prescription After All.

Dr. Chase has not long had the privilege of writing "M.D." after his name, which may account for his belief in the correctness of his own theories. He is fond of experimenting with new drugs, and has a sturdy faith in his own methods and his own prescriptions. He had been working assiduously on a grip remedy, says the Chicago News, and was eager to prove its virtues to two skeptical colleagues. At length his opportunity came.

Old Mrs. Luther, who had never been known to employ a doctor, sent for him. She undoubtedly had the grip. The doctor called twice a day, and watched closely the effect of his treatment. He reported the symptoms to his two friends, the other doctors, and told them how sure he felt of victory. The old lady did, indeed, begin to mend. Finally the day came when the disease was undoubtedly checked. Then the young doctor called in his friends.

"Now just tell these doctors, Mrs. Luther," he began, affably, "how pleasantly the medicine has affected you, and all about it."

The old lady fingered the bedquilt nervously, and finally said, "Well, the truth is, doctor, I took only one dose of your medicine. When my old man gets sick I have an awful time getting him to swallow the yarb tea I make, and when I tasted that medicine of yours and found it so nice and sweet I says to myself, 'Now the old man would take this without a bit of trouble. I'll save it till he needs it some time, and I'll go on drinking my yarb tea. It's only fair if I have the doctor that he should have the medicine.' And I've got along pretty well, doctor, now hasn't I?"

The young man joined, although rather lamely, in the laugh that followed.

Somewhat Different.

Nell—Would you marry a man just because he happened to be rich?

Bess—Of course not. But then I would try awfully hard to get him to marry me.

Modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues.—Goldsmith.

Boys And Girls

Little Stories and Incidents that Will Interest and Entertain Young Readers

A Wise Old Muskrat.

When a boy, and still barbarian enough to delight in trapping, partly from a love of the chase that was born in me and partly to put money into a boy's empty pocket, I once caught a muskrat in a steel trap that slid off into deep water at the first pull, and so drowned the creature mercifully.

It was due to the careful instructions of Natty Dingle, at whose feet I sat to learn woodcraft, and who used the method to save all his pelts. For often an animal, when caught in a trap, will snap the bone by a twist of his body, and then cut the leg off with his teeth, and so escape, leaving his foot in the trap's jaws. This is common enough among fur-bearing animals to excite no comment; and it is sad now to remember that sometimes I would find animals drowned in my traps that had previously suffered at the hands of other trappers.

I remember especially one big musquash that I was going to shoot near one of my traps when I stopped short at noticing some queer thing about him. The trap was set in shallow water where a path made by muskrats came up out of the river into the grass. Just over the trap was a turnip on a pointed stick to draw the creature's attention and give him something to anticipate until he should put his foot on the deadly pan beneath.

But the old musquash avoided the path as if he had suffered in such places before. Instead, he came out at another spot behind the trap, and I saw with horrible regret that he had cut off both his forelegs, probably at different times, when he had been twice caught in man's abominable inventions. When he came up out of the stream he rose on his hind legs and waddled through the grass like a bear or a monkey, for he had no forefeet to rest upon. He climbed a tussock beside the bait with immense caution, pulled in the turnip with his poor stumps of forearms, ate it where he was, and slipped back into the stream again; while the boy watched with a new wonder in the twilight, and forgot all about the gun he had brought with him to shoot muskrats as he tended his traps.

It does not belong with my story, but that night the traps came in, and never went out again; and I can never pass a trap now anywhere without poking a stick into it to save some poor innocent leg.—William J. Long, in Outlook.

He Tidy.

Robert J. Burdette wrote the following characteristic introduction to the chapter on neatness in William P. Pearce's "Stepping-Stones to Manhood."

You can make yourself look an inch taller by a neat, well-fitting dress. You can actually make yourself taller by an erect, manly carriage. Slovenliness is contagious. It communicates itself from the dress to the character. The boy who slouches and slumps in figure and gait is dangerously apt to slump morally. The dust and grime on your clothes is liable to get into

your brain. The dirt under your finger-nails is likely to work into your thoughts. Grease spots down the front of your coat will destroy self-respect almost as quickly as a habit of lying. Tidiness is one of the cheapest luxuries in the world. It is also one of the most comfortable. When you know, when you are "dead sure" that you are just right—"perfectly correct"—from hat to shoe-tye, the king of England couldn't stare you out of countenance; he couldn't embarrass you, and he wouldn't if he could.

Needed No Assistance.

Said William Wantsome: "Quite certain I am That you can't, without help, get through that pot of jam."

Said Christopher Keeps: "Of that notion be rid. For I can, much obliged all the same." And he did!

A Young Telegrapher.

Robert T. Baird, aged 11 years, the son of Robert L. Baird, of Grovania, Ga., holds a unique place among the bright youths of Georgia. He is a fast and accurate telegraph operator, and has already done regular work in Western Union offices. At one time he was in charge of the office at Vienna as day operator. Young Baird seems to have taken to the key by instinct. When only 7 he could sit at the instrument and send before his father knew he was acquainted with the alphabet. At 9 he could receive, and now he is considered a competent operator.

When Children Play.

Sometimes the children play outside From early until late, Then blank and still the nursery lies; The whole house seems to wait.

But when the children come indoors They race upstairs and shout, They tramp across the nursery floor And pull the things about.

Then all the house seems full of life, The nursery, stairs and hall; And on the playground out-of-doors The blackness seems to fall.

Baseball in Porto Rico.

The San Juan News says that Americans have virtually made baseball the national outdoor sport of Porto Rico. Tennis tournaments are also held, and football, cycling and other pastimes have been tried to some extent. When a Northerner is acclimated, it is said, he enjoys the various forms of outdoor exercise much as we do in the North.

A Deferred Restitution.

A pig belonging to a widow named Murphy mysteriously vanished one night, and Pat Hennessy, a ne'er-do-well, was suspected of having had something to do with its disappearance. He denied all knowledge of the pig, however, and as there was no evidence against him he was allowed to go free; but at Mrs. Murphy's instigation, the priest went to see him.

"Pat," said the priest, "if you've no fear of the law in this world, at least give a thought to the hereafter. When you're before the Judgment Seat, what are you going to say about that pig?"

"Shure, I dunno," replied Pat. "Will they be after askin' about th' pig in Purgatory, yer Riverence?"

"They will," said the priest. "Will Mrs. Murphy be there, yer Riverence?"

"Yes, Pat."

"An' the pig?"

"Yes, Pat."

"Shure, I'll wait an' give it to her thim, yer Riverence."—Woman's Home Companion.

Infant Marriages.

According to recent census report, 143 boys and 187 girls under one year of age were married in India during a single year. The record during the same year for marriages of children under five years was 2,297 for boys and 3,534 for girls. As a consequence of this state of affairs there were, at the time the census was taken, twenty-two widowers and twenty-seven widows less than a year old, and some 300 less than five years old.

Not in Such Cold Weather.

Bridget—The butcher's wagon's at the door, mum.

Mrs. Housekeep—Ah! has he got pigs' feet?

Bridget—How kin Oi tell, mum? Shure, 'tis too cold fur him to be goin' barefooted this weather.—Philadelphia Press.

About all the difference between a guest from New York and one from Smith's Cross Roads is that the former refers to the servant girl as a maid, and the latter wants to sit in the kitchen and visit with her.

THE THREE ARMS OF THE JAPANESE SERVICE.



WHERE THE PILGRIMS LANDED.

Immigrants First Came to Shore in Cape Cod Bay.

Plymouth Rock has never been considered the first place where the pilgrims landed. The Mayflower reached Cape Cod Bay on Nov. 9, 1620, and two days later the voyagers were roaming over the country trying to find a place to settle, says the Boston Transcript.

Authorities differ as to the exact date when the landing was made at Provincetown, but it was not later than Nov. 11, 1620. John Fiske, in his "The Beginnings of New England," says:

"The foul weather prevented any accurate calculation of latitude and longitude, and they were so far out in their reckoning that when they caught sight of land on the 9th of November it was to Cape Cod that they had come. Their patent gave them no authority to set-

tle here, as it was beyond the jurisdiction of the London company. They turned their prow southward, but encountering perilous shoals and a stiff head wind they desisted and sought shelter in Cape Cod Bay. On the 11th they decided to find some place or abode in this neighborhood, anticipating no difficulty in getting a patent from the Plymouth company, which was anxious to obtain settlers. For five weeks they stayed in the ship while little parties were exploring the coast and deciding upon the best site for a town. It was purely a coincidence that the spot which they chose had already received from John Smith the name of Plymouth, the beautiful port in Devonshire from which the Mayflower had sailed."

The ten commandments are good examples of broken English.

CAN'T GET AT THE WEEVIL.

Peat of Southern Cotton Planters De-

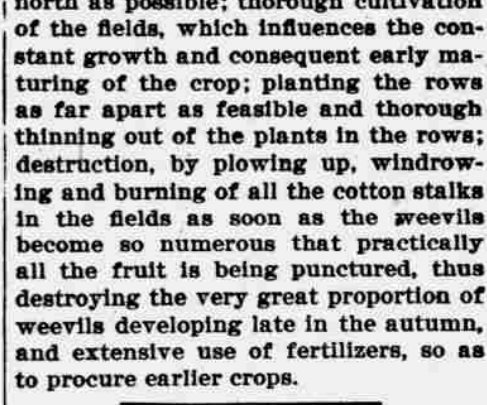
See Effort at Its Extirmination.

For some time past W. D. Hunter, a boll weevil expert in the service of the Agricultural Department, has been investigating the habits of the pest, with a view to devising means for its extirpation. In a report just issued as an emergency bulletin he says the work of his division for several years "has demonstrated that there is not even a remote probability that the boll weevil ever will be exterminated." The bulletin adds:

"Although the very large yields of cotton of former times may no longer be possible, it is, nevertheless, entirely feasible to produce cotton at a margin of profit that will compare favorably with that involved in the production of most of the staple crops of the United States by following what have become known generally as the cultured methods, involving changes and modifications of the system of cotton-raising made necessary by the weevil. They were originally suggested by a careful study of the life history of the pest, and naturally any improvements that may eventually be made will be the result of the continuation of that study. They have now been tested successfully on a large scale by the division of entomology as well as by many planters during two very unfavorable seasons. Of greatest advantage is the reducing of the number of the weevils by the destruction of the plants in the fall. The advantage thus gained is followed up by bending every effort toward procuring an early crop the following season."

The changes in the cotton-raising system urgently recommended are: Early planting with seed from as far north as possible; thorough cultivation of the fields, which influences the constant growth and consequent early maturing of the crop; planting the rows as far apart as feasible and thorough thinning out of the plants in the rows; destruction, by plowing up, windrowing and burning of all the cotton stalks in the fields as soon as the weevils become so numerous that practically all the fruit is being punctured, thus destroying the very great proportion of weevils developing late in the autumn, and extensive use of fertilizers, so as to procure earlier crops.

A STRANGE MONUMENT IN KOREA.



This monument, in the form of a bayonet, was erected in Seoul, Korea, to the memory of Japanese soldiers who were killed in the war with China. It is reproduced from the London Graphic.

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