

Second Cousin Sarah

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

CHAPTER XXIV.—(Continued.)

The great conspiracy was at an end, and Sarah Eastbell had baffled the conspirators. All that had been planned by Captain Peterson, and that Sarah's absence from Sedge Hill had rendered nugatory, all the new scheming to which that absence had given rise, and which was set in action with Sarah's return, had collapsed at the eleventh hour. Sarah was as far removed from prosperity as he had ever been.

"I-I never meant," he began, then he burst forth with—"Oh, I am so glad that you're come back, Sally—so glad that you ain't dead!"

"Were you waiting for the news of my death, then?" asked Sarah with indignation. "There is your world, Tom," she said, pointing to the door, "beyond this house, and any love of mine, from this day. You could not trust me—you set a snare for me, and called in rogues and villains to assist—you begrudged me my property and my life. Now go."

Lucy Jennings' hard voice cut short his defense, and he backed from the woman to the grounds beyond the house with every word she hurled at him.

"Tom Eastbell, some hours ago, in London, I gave information to the police where the Peterson gang were likely to be found—where you were, and in what way you were connected with them. You have not any time to lose."

He lost no time accordingly. He vanished away, a thief to the last—for he departed with Reuben Culwick's best hat rammed over his eyebrows. Sarah turned again to Reuben, her watchful protector, who would keep her for ever in his sight now, and as the door closed she linked her hands upon his arm.

"Take me in, please—I am tired out, Reuben. I have fought hard to get home!"

"Tell me how it happened—how it was that you disappeared from all of us so suddenly," said Reuben impatiently.

He did not regard Lucy Jennings—he drew his chair to his cousin's side, took her hand in his, and gazed eagerly into her face. She might fade away again from his life, if he did not make sure of her.

"Yes, yes," said Sarah, in answer to his questions; "but grandmother—tell me, first, is she not very anxious about me?"

"Your grandmother is not anxious, Sarah," said Lucy in a low tone.

"Is she ill?"

"No. She is not ill now."

"Is she—ah! you are keeping something back! Tell me, please," she said in great excitement, "where is she. She is not dead—oh! she has not died without a word from me?"

"She is in God's hands—and God keep you strong to bear the loss of her," said Lucy Jennings.

Sarah Eastbell closed her eyes, and sank back in the chair like a dead woman. Reuben, a man wholly uncharitable—as men will be in stages of excitement which strike home to them, and rob them of their self-possession—turned upon the poor preacher, who had done her best at last.

"There, you have killed her! Are you satisfied now?" he shouted at Lucy Jennings.

"I am not satisfied with this world, or with you," was the cold answer, as she bent over Sarah, and loosened the fastenings at her throat. But Sarah Eastbell had not fainted; she was only stunned by the truth, and she sat up the instant afterward, eager for the whole story, and looking piteously from one to the other.

It was not in Reuben's power to break the news to her after all, and he left it to the woman whom his impatience had wounded.

"Tell her, Lucy. It is beyond me," he said.

The tragedy of Sedge Hill was over, and he could not dwell upon its details.

CHAPTER XXV.

Lucy Jennings was writing busily in her room when Sarah came in softly. The woman-preacher had gone to her apartment away from the society of two young folks who thought of little save each other, and whose courtship did not interest her. It was one month after the death of Mrs. Eastbell.

"Oh, Lucy, what do you think he has been saying?" Sarah cried in excitement. "Who has been saying?" asked Lucy, without looking in her direction.

"Reuben, to be sure."

"Always Reuben! I had forgotten there was no other man upon the earth but Reuben Culwick," she said bitterly.

"He says I may ask your opinion if I will—and you will think how right he is."

"It will be about the first time in my life that I have thought him in the right," she muttered, then she added in her sharpest and jerkiest manner: "Well, what is it?"

"I have been telling him of your going away to-morrow—of the necessity of his going too, as you suggested, and he says—oh, Lucy! what do you think he has got to his dear old head?" she cried, clapping her hands together.

"I can't guess—what is the object of guessing when it is easy for you to explain?" was the ungracious rejoinder.

Sarah Eastbell did not notice the chilliness of Miss Jennings' remarks. She dashed into her subject forthwith; she spoke of Reuben's wish for an early marriage as a wise and natural solution to the difficulties in their way.

"In all his life he has been in a hurry," Lucy said when Sarah had completed her recital, "so what is the use of my advice? It would be an ill-timed formality, of no value to either of you. If he had been less impetuous," said Lucy, betraying a sudden excitement herself, "it would have been as well—it would have given me time to think. Sarah, you must not marry Reuben Culwick yet."

"You—you think that it is not right—it is not respectful to the memory of her I have lost?" asked Sarah.

"Respectful!" cried Lucy contemptuously. "I have not given a thought to it! But—and here followed a long pause, with Lucy glaring strangely at her visitor—"but," she continued at last, "something has happened in this room, that I have been keeping to myself, and which may alter both your lives."

"What has happened which may alter Reuben's life and mine? And why in this room, where—"

"Where a woman named Mary Holland lived for some years," said Lucy quickly—"a woman whom you learned to distrust at last?"

"We did, and yet—" "You did not distrust her in vain, perhaps," she added. "I will tell you, Sarah Eastbell, what I thought of telling Reuben Culwick—but it may be your right to hear this first of all, as it may affect you most of all—who knows? Read what is written on that paper."

Lucy Jennings opened her desk and produced a long blue envelope, on which were written words in a large clear hand, to which she pointed with her finger—the finger of fate to the timid girl who followed every movement, and leaned forward to the paper cautiously and eagerly.

Yes, Lucy Jennings was right—that which might affect the whole after life of Reuben Culwick and of herself was in the hands of the woman-preacher.

On the envelope were written these words:

"Herein is contained the last Will and Testament of Simon Culwick, of Sedge Hill, Worcester."

There was a date appended—the date of the day on which Simon Culwick had called at Hope street, Camberwell, for the first time, and last, in his life. It was a will made before he had come that day in search of his son, and it overruled all other testaments to which in his life of change he had set his trembling hand.

"Where did you find this?" Sarah asked at last.

"In that box," Lucy replied, pointing to an old-fashioned hair trunk studded with brass nails—one of the boxes which Mary Holland had never claimed. "What right had that woman with Reuben's father's will?" asked Lucy; "has she not committed a crime against the law?"

"I don't see all this yet," responded Sarah Eastbell, still thoughtfully.

"This will is sealed; it was given in trust to Mary Holland before Simon left for London. It leaves his property to Reuben, and she would have kept him from it. I see it all. I despise that woman, although I have never met her in my life."

"Mary Holland is not here to answer for herself," said Sarah; "and Mary would have preferred Reuben's being rich to my poor grandmother's coming to this house."

"She brought your grandmother here herself; there was a plot in it. Read the will."

"What right have I to read it?" asked Sarah.

"You are in possession. Reuben is too weak to bear the shock. There may be something in it which he is not to know first of all," she added, with a sudden doubt—"which is to be broken to him by degrees."

"Reuben is as brave as a lion."

"Oh, you don't know him," said Miss Jennings pityingly.

"I don't think so meanly of him as you do," cried Sarah, with sudden spirit; "I don't believe he has fretted for an instant about his father's money, though he told me so once. He has denied it since; he is above all mercenary thoughts. Come and see how he will take this news," cried Sarah, defiantly now.

"I have no interest in it; it concerns me not," said Lucy sharply; "I should not have mentioned it till I was prepared to leave the house, had you not come in with your foolish story of a hasty wedding. Go to him, Sarah. I am busy with a holier task than yours."

Reuben took the packet from Sarah's hand and read the superscription, his eyes dilating with surprise. He made no attempt to break the seal of black wax, but walked with her slowly toward the bay window at the end of the room, as though his sight were weak, and more light were needed to assist it.

She seemed to hesitate in her progress with him, and he put his arm round her waist, as a privileged lover under these circumstances had a right to do.

"For better or worse, for richer or poorer, my first-cousin-once-removed Sarah," said he lightly, but meaningly; "nao tell me where this sprang from."

Sarah told him, while he listened, with the paper in his hand, and looked out at the garden and the rising ground beyond it. Tots stole away during the narration.

"Mary Holland may have received—possibly did receive—private instructions from my poor father with this will," said Reuben, when Sarah had completed her narrative; "she is not to blame, I trust, even if it comes at us in this fashion. It was to be kept back, at Simon Culwick's request, a certain time, possibly, he being a secretive man. Miss Holland is not here to tell us," answered Reuben, "and you and I stand in a false position, with this will lying like a bar upon the freedom of our thoughts. I take all the responsibility; it is my right, as Simon Culwick's son."

"You are not afraid of the contents?" she asked, remembering suddenly Lucy Jennings' criticism of Reuben's temperament.

"There is nothing within the will to frighten me," he replied firmly, "or to make me glad, or cast me down. See how steady the hand is that turns over the pages of this book of fate."

His fingers broke the seal and took from the envelope the document contained therein. He looked at the paper for the first time. It was a brief will, which a few lines made clear. It was written by Simon Culwick himself, and witnessed by two servants who had left the house two years since, and it left, as Reuben had imagined from the first, as Reuben had imagined from the first, his whole of his property, free and indivisible, to his old friend's child, his faithful housekeeper, Mary Holland.

He refolded the will, and regarded attentively his second-cousin, who remained dumb with amazement.

"And Mary Holland I have turned out of her own house, so that she is not here to receive our congratulations," said Reuben Culwick coolly.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The winter set in sharply that year, like the sudden frost to the hopes of Reuben Culwick and his second cousin. It was a severe winter, that nipped things to the heart before the old year was seven days dead. A few weeks had gone by since the date of our last chap-

ter, and all with whom we are interested, or in whom we have endeavored to raise an interest, had settled down to the position born of the discovery of Miss Holland's good fortune.

Miss Holland had not been found, despite much pertinacious searching; the boxes remained unclaimed at Sedge Hill, and Sedge Hill was held in trust for her. Those interested in advertisements wondered who Miss Holland was, and why her friends were begging her to return, and hear of something to her advantage.

Reuben Culwick accepted the position very cheerfully, although Lucy Jennings thought that he was too cheerful to be natural. He was anxious to see the provisions of his father's will carried out in their entirety, and he showed no sense of disappointment at the loss of the estate to which they infallibly reduced him. He had confidence in himself, and he was anxious to do justice to Mary Holland, despite the unjust character of a will which struck him out of affluence.

He was rising in the world, too. The work grew under his hand, debts became less, more money fell to his share from the great lottery-bag of letters, and if there were no big prizes, still he drew no blanks. Among the busy unknown crowd of clever "newspaper men," he was already known, and three weeks ago the promoters of the trumpet had burst out with big offices and more machinery, and higher terms for Reuben, who had been with them in struggling days, and was now called upon to share a little in their prosperity.

He was happy in his courtship, too, for he found many opportunities to see his Second Cousin Sarah, and she was glad—ah! very glad—to see him. Sarah was in London—in apartments in York road, Lambeth, with the woman who had striven hard not to have her for a companion or friend, and yet whom she had conquered by that sweet persistency which was an attribute of her character. Sarah Eastbell was very much alone in the world now, and when the signal of distress had been raised, Lucy Jennings, with all her hardness, was at her best, and ready to be of assistance.

Reuben came courting in the evening, once or twice a week at first, when the newspapers would allow him; and there were odd half holidays, when Reuben and Sarah would stroll in St. James' Park, and talk of the happiness ahead. They both spoke of the patience to wait for each other—a calm present and a happy future—and they laughed together, not before Lucy, at Lucy's past forebodings of the misery in store for them.

Tots was at Reuben's house in Drury Lane, too. His love for this little waif was still as much part of his life as his love for his second-cousin. Tots belonged to old days; she had been his one comfort when he felt wholly desolate; she had been lost, and his heart had been terribly wrung in losing her; she was back, and as fond of him as ever, although there had come never again a memory of Hope Lodge. His landlord's wife took care of her as Lucy Jennings had done, and it was pleasant to have Tots with him at breakfast time.

John had been always fond of Tots. He taught her to call him Uncle John again, and though the child was older and sharper than when Reuben found her first in Camberwell, there was quickly a return to the old affection under the old kindness and attention. Life with Captain Peterson and his brothers had not hurt her—it was part of a bad dream in the beginning of a new year, though the dream figures had scarcely vanished, and one presently crossed her path, and startled her.

(To be continued.)

KING BORROWED HIS COAT.

Victor Emmanuel Has Nothing Suitable to Wear at Russia's Court.

Although Victor Emmanuel III is the first monarch of United Italy to visit Petersburg, he was well known there as crown prince. His grandfather, the other Victor Emmanuel, was equally well known, but through the Russian royalties coming to Italy. There is one characteristic anecdote told of him not generally known. The king was very stout, loved his comfort and ease, and would always prefer to wear a shooting coat rather than a uniform.

In 1873 the then empress of Russia, Marie Alexandrovna, visited the eternal city with her daughter Marie, later the duchess of Edinburgh, putting up at the Russian embassy in the Corso, where they were treated with every courtesy by the court. One evening Victor Emmanuel went to the theater, absolutely alone, in a negligé jacket. In the middle of the first act what was his horror to see the empress and her daughter enter an adjacent box. He could not slip away because they had seen him, and it seemed equally impossible to go to them in that costume.

Suddenly the king had an inspiration and, calling Senator Gadda, prefect of Rome, also present, ordered him to take off his dress coat and give it to him. This the surprised senator did, even helping the king to put it on, but Victor Emmanuel's shoulders were extraordinarily broad and no sooner had he forced himself into the coat than the seam gave way from neck to waist, and affairs were as before. The king was obliged to join the empress and her daughter in his jacket, but, never wanting in aplomb, he made such good excuses that the express enjoyed the incident thoroughly. A couple of days later Senator Gadda received a new dress suit from the royal tailor with a pin in brilliant pinned to one of the lapels.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

Prudence.

"I suppose you would like to say or do something that will live in history?"

"Well," answered Senator Sorghum, "there are so many things concerning which I should prefer to keep history uninformed that I guess I'd better not take any chances trying to break in."

Flow Roy.

Ascum—And what profession is your son to follow?

Pater—I do not know yet, but that's about all he'll do, I guess.

Ascum—What? How do you mean?

Pater—He'll follow some profession; he never seems able to catch up to anything.—*Philadelphia Press.*



LITTLE STORIES AND INCIDENTS

That Will Interest and Entertain Young Readers.

Hidden in Sight.

A new form of "hide and seek," which is "hidden in sight," is a very pretty game. All must go out of the room except one, who then places the things to be found, such as a thimble or a cotton reel, so that any one can see it, but will not notice it without looking rather hard. A thimble is not easily seen on a bright iron fender, and a reel of cotton takes a good deal of finding when properly placed on some mantel-piece ornament, or even on the top of a picture frame.

Here is another secret: Tell the seekers that they must find a handkerchief. Tie it round the handle of the door (if it is a white one); show the seekers politely in, and shut the door after them, so that they do not touch the handle. They will take a long time to find the handkerchief. It is a strict rule of the game that the first finder of an object does not make known his discovery. He just sits down. One by one the seekers sit down, until only one remains standing, and then it is time for some one to tell him and for the party to get to another game.



If I could fix things—
said young John—
"Well—I can tell you what!
In Summer I would catch a cold
In Winter catch a hot!"

A Good Deed.

"Once upon a time, a very long time ago," began grandmamma. "Is it a fairy tale?" asked Jacky.

"What is the name of it?" asked his sister Sue.

"If only you will be quiet," said grandmamma, "I will tell you all about it. It is not a fairy tale," she continued, turning to Jacky. "And its name is 'A Good Deed,'" she said, turning to Sue.

"Well," said grandmamma, when silence was restored, "I will begin again. Once upon a time, a very long time ago, a little brother and sister lived in a little fishing village with their mother, Mrs. Brown. They were very poor, for Mrs. Brown's husband had been drowned at sea, and his ship had never come home, so little Fred and Mary—the names of the brother and sister—often had to go without their dinner."

"One day a bright thought occurred to Fred. Why should they not go out on the cliffs and search for birds' eggs and sell them to visitors, and even to some of the school children? Mary hailed the idea with fervor, so next day saw the two children searching carefully for seagulls' eggs in the clefts and ledges of the cliffs."

"They were very successful for a day or two, when a little boy friend of Fred's said:

"Fred, if you can find me a cormorant's egg I will give you a whole shilling, for cormorants' eggs are so scarce."

"Fred hastened home that day and told his sister Mary all that the boy had said. Mary was also overjoyed, and both agreed to look next day for one. Next day they searched the cliffs for a cormorant's egg, but did not get one. Every day for a whole week they searched high and low but cormorants' eggs, as Fred's friend had said, were very scarce."

"One day Mary happened to notice one, but to her great disappointment, there was only one, but still, one was better than none at all, so Mary screamed to her brother.

"Look, look, Fred! a cormorant's egg, a cormorant's egg!"

"Fred looked round and noticed the egg, and with a cry of joy he sprang to get it, but what was his annoyance when Mary suddenly held him back."

"Don't, Fred," she gasped, "don't, for it is the mother's only one. Look how wistfully, she is looking at me then at the egg."

"In truth the mother was very miserable. She first stood on one leg and then on the other, glancing, as Mary had said, from the egg to Mary."

as much as to say, 'Please protect my egg from that dreadful boy.'

"Very well, then," said Fred, sulkily turning away (he always did what Mary told him), so that the egg was saved.

"Fred and Mary did not get the shilling promised; but they got something else, much nicer. While the children were down on the cliffs searching for eggs a man had gone to their mother's cottage, knocked smartly, and when admitted told Mrs. Brown that a ship of her husband's had come in, and was so valuable that it gave Mrs. Brown quite a nice salary, which enabled her to send them to school and live in a better home."

"Is that all?" asked both the children, when grandmamma had finished speaking.

"Yes," said grandmamma, "and don't you think it is a very good ending for a story?"

And both of them agreed.—*Waverley Magazine.*

He Was No Dude.

"Why, Johnny, what's the matter with you?" asked a caller who found the little fellow in bed.

"Ain't nothin' the matter with me," replied Johnny, "mother's washin' my shirt."

"Haven't you but one shirt?" he was asked.

"Say," rejoined the small urchin, "you don't expect a feller to be a dude, do you?"

Another One on Papa.

Harry (aged 5)—Papa, don't every man have his hair cut when he gets shaved?

Papa—Of course not, my son. I frequently get shaved without having my hair cut.

Harry—Well, I don't see how a barber gets the hair off your face if he doesn't cut it, papa.

Papa—Young man, it's time you were in bed.

A Hint to Mamma.

Little Margie's mamma had just corrected her for being saucy, when she went over to where her doll was and said: "Dollie, I wish somethin' would happen to one of us three, and I don't mean you or me, either."

Papa Was Getting Bald.

Little Joe—Papa, are you still growing?

Papa—No, my son.

Little Joe—But your head is growing up through your hair.

MAN NEED NEVER GROW OLD.

Debutantes Come and Go, but the Popular Bean Lasts Forever.

The popular man as the seasons repeat themselves is apt to feel a little lonely. "Where are they all, the old familiar companions?" he asks himself as he looks up and down the dinner tables and sees every year the fresh new faces of a new set of debutantes. For the girls drop from the ranks, while the men stay on. The latter are always of importance at a dance, but a surplus of women is fatal to any entertainment. The so-called older girls therefore feel that it behooves them to withdraw in favor of the younger sets which each year come to the fore, demanding recognition, and to find their winter entertainments in the quieter functions, consisting of theater parties, dinners with their own contemporaries, the opera, etc. What is called a fourth winter girl rarely appears at any of the dances or dinners given in honor of the younger ones, although their man friends are all expected to be present.

"There is no use denying the fact that the world has much more use for the men than for us, and that they keep young much longer than we do," said an "older" young woman. "The partners I used to dance with are still doing duty at the various functions, while I have been out of it for years, and girls much younger than I am have had to retire to give place to their little sisters. Yes, men certainly have the advantage in everything. I saw a man of 70 on the ice playing hockey the other day, and he seemed to enjoy it with the zest of a boy. Every one said how attractive it was to see a man keep his youth like that, but if granny ran around in like fashion with a lot of girls, the poor old dear would make herself ridiculous. Now, wouldn't she? We must grow old whether or not; but a man need only grow old if he wants to."

A Call-Down.

"That's Mrs. Ayers in the box," said Mr. Gotham, who had taken Miss Beaconsstreet to the opera. "She's very fond of display."

"Ah! you New Yorkers are so careless in your speech," exclaimed Miss Beaconsstreet. "Why did you say 'dis' for 'this'? Besides, this is an opera, not a play."—*Philadelphia Press.*

Corroboration.

"Rich coves," remarked Ragged Roger, "say that money brings care and worry."

"It does to me," added Weary Wiggins.

"To you? You have no money."

"No; that's why I worry."—*Detroit Free Press.*

A married woman is always suspicious when her husband gives her an expensive present.

Ayer's

Your doctor will tell you that thin, pale, weak, nervous children become strong and well by taking Ayer's Sarsaparilla. Small doses, for a few days.

Sarsaparilla

The change is very prompt and very marked. Ask your doctor why it is. He has our formula and will explain.

"When 13 years old, for many months no one thought I could live because of this blood. But, in a few weeks, Ayer's Sarsaparilla completely restored me to health."
—MRS. E. BUCKMINSTER, Vineland, N. J.
\$1.00 a bottle. All druggists. J. C. AYER & CO., Lowell, Mass.

The Children

Biliousness, constipation prevent recovery. Cure these with Ayer's Pills.

Her Big Feet.

A respectable old gentleman, somewhat tight, on entering an omnibus, got his feet entangled in a lady's dress and fell headlong. He staggered to his feet, and looking round, indignantly demanded who struck him. A gentleman present remarked sotto voce: "You fell over that lady's feet; nobody struck you."

The indignant citizen turned round and surveyed the cause of the accident a moment, and then, as if by no means satisfied with the cause of his mishap, said:

"Madame, you have got the biggest feet I ever saw!"

"Sir!" responded the lady, flushing with anger.

"Pray, don't apologize; it ain't your fault, but take my advice, sit sideways in the future, and give them the full range of the bus."

Rheumatism in Utah.

Frisco, Utah, May 2nd.—There is a great deal of rheumatism in this and neighboring states and this painful disease has crippled many a strong man and woman among an otherwise healthy people.

Recently, however, there has been introduced into Utah a remedy for Rheumatism which bids fair to stamp out this awfully painful complaint. The name of this new remedy is Dodd's Kidney Pills, and it has already wrought some wonderful cures. Right here in Frisco there is a case of a Mr. Grace who had Rheumatism so bad in his feet that he could hardly walk. He tried many remedies in vain but Dodd's Kidney Pills cured him.