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NO. 45.

Second Cousin Sarah

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

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

Sledge Hill was a staring edifice of considerable proportions, with an aspect of newness about it that fourteen years had not done much to soften. It had been built to the order of the present proprietor, who had made much money by cotton stockings, and had risen from twenty shillings a week at the loom to the splendor of his present life. It was a new house for the new man who had been lucky enough to get rich. There were spacious grounds beyond, and there was a big room at the side, that was new to Reuben Culwick since he had last stood in his father's house, and it was this that he pulled up his horse to inspect before turning into the carriage drive.

Then he went rapidly along the drive, drew up in front of the house, and stepped lightly and briskly from the trap, giving the reins to a rosy-faced young man in livery, who emerged from some stable in the rear, to be of service to the newcomer.

"Old Jones has gone, then?" he said to the servant.

"Yes, sir. He's with Squire Black of Holston."

"And you reign in his stead. Well, we cannot all reign."

He knocked and rang, looking steadily through the glass doors the while. Another new face—a smart young housemaid, whom he had never seen before, to replace Mrs. Perkins, who was stout and sallow, came to the door and admitted him.

"Is Mr. Culwick in?"

"Yes, sir, but he's engaged just now."

"You will be kind enough to give him my card?"

The maid servant took the card and departed, and Reuben Culwick, like the merest stranger, and feeling like a stranger, very doubtful of his reception, walked up and down the spacious hall with his hands behind him, and his hat in his hands.

Presently the servant reappeared.

"Will you step this way, if you please, sir?"

Reuben followed the servant along a corridor to a door at the extremity—the door of the new room, he was certain.

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"WHO ARE YOU?" DEMANDED REUBEN.

from his old remembrance of the house. The door was opened and his name announced, and he felt that he was passing into a spacious apartment, the walls of which were bright and rich with many pictures, and the ceiling paneled and massive, with ground glass in the panels, for the proper transmutation of light on Mr. Simon Culwick's "collection." When Simon Culwick had lost his son Reuben, he had taken to the "mansion" an ancient and modern, and given them all the love that was in his heart.

But it was not at the paintings which enriched the walls that Reuben Culwick gazed with so much of curious earnestness, but at the big broad-faced man sitting before the fire in a capacious leather chair, and who was looking curiously and steadily at him. There was a pretty, fair-haired young woman, in gray silk, sitting at the table in the recess of a bay window, reading, and Reuben was conscious of her presence—that was all. She rose not at his entrance, only looked toward him with a certain degree of curiosity as he advanced, and then turned to the pages of her book as he held his hand out to his father.

"So you have thought of me at last, have you?" he roared out in a gruff bass, as a large, white-gloved hand was placed in that of his son.

"So I have come back at last," answered Reuben Culwick.

"You can sit down," said the father.

"Thank you," said the son.

This was the meeting after five years' absence—the calm after the great storm which had happened in that house five years ago. This was the home that the son had never liked, and that he felt he did not like now, although he had come to it of his own free will. There was a pause, during which each man took stock of the other without any particular reserve.

"I got your letter," said the father, "and I might have sent the carriage for you had it not rained so much."

"The horses might have caught cold instead of me," said the son dryly; "but I didn't want the carriage. I was glad that I had not further to go last night than Worcester."

He looked toward the lady in the bay window at this juncture, and his father noticed the wandering gaze, and paid no attention to the hint which it conveyed.

"Well, what have you been doing?"

"What do you suppose, after all that has passed, you have no intention of sitting down in the house and waiting complacently for my death and my money?" the father inquired.

"You told me that I should never have a penny of your money, if you remember, sir. I have never expected it after that day," said Reuben Culwick.

"Why should you?" said Mr. Culwick in a loud tone of voice, and yet without betraying any passion. "Have I been known in all my life to break my word?"

He was sticking to my word, through thick and thin, in evil report and good

report, made me what I am? I would rather break my own heart than break my word. You know it," said the father boastfully.

"Fifty hearts as well as your own—yes, I know it," answered the other, with an unflinching gaze at his father, "and hence I come to you—not for assistance, I don't want it; not for affection, I don't expect it; but with the simple notion, which I hope that my letter conveyed to you last week, to see you, to express sorrow for a long alienation, to feel glad that you are well, to tell you that I am not unhappy, and to go away again."

The son's tones seemed to impress the father, who subsided into his easy chair, from which he had leaped forward, as if cowed by the cold, clear-tingling tones of the voice which fell upon his ears, a voice which subdued him, and an arrogance that had always been difficult to quell—which touched him, though he never owned that—which made him even prouder of his son, though the time never came for him to own that, either.

The young woman in the background leaned forward with clasped hands until he caught her glance again, when she once more turned her eyes upon her book.

"Have you made your fortune?" asked the father, in a different voice.

"On the contrary, I have been somewhat unsuccessful."

"How do you live?"

"I write—a little," he added modestly.

"It is a long story, that would scarcely interest you."

"It would not interest me in the least."

There was another long pause, during which the son, still at his ease, still singularly hard, despite his respectful manner, glanced round at the pictures on the walls, admired them even, secretly but not enviously, wondered at their cost, and looked once more in the direction of the lady, whose pensive face and quiet grace he admired also, and at whose presence he wondered in a greater degree, though he repressed all exhibition of surprise.

Suddenly the father said, with that singular abruptness characteristic of the man:

"You can stay here if you like."

"For how long?" asked the son, surprised at last out of his assumption of

stolical composure.

"Till we disagree again," said the father, with a short, forced laugh; "that will not be many days, I suppose?"

"One moment, sir," said Reuben Culwick, with grave politeness. "A mistake parted us, and we are laying the foundation of another already, unless I explain the first."

"Do so."

"I was hardly twenty-one—a rash and foolish young fellow—when you wanted me to marry your friend's daughter."

"You would have been rich—you would have been respected—it would have been for the best."

"I refused to entertain the proposal, if you remember."

"Remember! remember it!" cried the father, turning pale with anger; "do you risk this up again to insult me?"

"No, to enlighten you," said the other; "that period, Mr. Culwick, I had promised my mother that I would not marry the lady."

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Worcester. I am glad to find you well, Good day."

He extended his hand again, but this time his father refused to take it.

"You have come out of your way to give me a fresh wound, that's all," said the father, sullenly. "And you have done it effectually. I don't want you to trouble me again. You will not come here again at my invitation. I can't forgive you—why should I? I never forgive anybody. I never forgive your mother. Your two aunts offended me years ago, you know. Have I ever forgiven them? One died last summer, and I wouldn't go to see her—wouldn't go near her—and the other one is in St. Oswald's almshouse, blind as a bat, and living on eight shillings a week. Eight shillings a week, and those pictures there cost me eighty thousand pounds."

"A good investment," said Reuben Culwick, coolly, and critically looking round the walls; "they will increase in value year by year, sir."

As he looked round he became aware, for the first time, that the lady in the bay window had disappeared. She had passed from the room silently, through a second door at the extremity of the picture gallery.

"And I never gave her a penny in my life," added Mr. Culwick, sullenly.

"Poor old Sarah—blind is she? and in the almshouse, too? I am sorry. I liked old Sarah," said Reuben; "she was one of the few friends I had when I was a boy, and when you were not rich. But I am detaining you, and I am pledged to reach London to-night. Good by again."

When he had reached the door, Simon Culwick called out his name, and Reuben paused and turned.

"I am not deceitful," said the father, "and I may as well tell you that I have made my will, and that you will never be a penny the better for it. It is all left to you."

"I added, 'away from an ungrateful son.'"

There was a moment's pause, and then Reuben Culwick quitted his father's presence and closed the door after him. He went from the room into the corridor, and thence along its entire length to the dining room, where he threw himself into a chair with so thoughtful a mien that he was not for the moment aware that the young lady in gray silk whom he had seen in the bay window was stepping back into the room, and that she was about to allow of his egress. When he saw her, she put her finger to her lips, and he repressed an exclamation of surprise.

"Go back," she said, with an excited look that astonished him; "don't give up your money as your father is."

"You have been listening," said Reuben, coldly.

"To every word," was the honest confession; "and you have not said a word to please him, and much to offend. Why do you come in if in no better spirit than this? Go back to him. Tell him how sorry you are for everything—do something before you go that will leave him satisfied."

"No, I can't go back."

"You are as hard as he is," she cried; "as if it mattered what you said to him—as if it were not worth a struggle to regain your position here!"

Grasping her wrists, while her hands covered her face to hide it from his fierce gaze, Reuben exclaimed in a wondering tone: "Who are you?"

"Only the housekeeper, sir," she said, quietly; "keeping house for Simon Culwick—and in your place. You should hate me as a usurper already," she added, mockingly. "If you had any spirit in you."

"The housekeeper—yes—but—" he said wonderingly, and without regarding her strange taunts. "I was not aware of it."

"Why should you be aware of anything about me, you who are as quarrelsome and as stubborn as your father, and have kept away so long? There, go home and think of the best way to bring that old man to his senses."

"And interfere with your chance," said Reuben, lightly. He was in better spirits already, and the old manner of this young lady interested him.

"I have no chance," she answered, "or I should not be so anxious for you to get back. I should be too selfish—I should try and keep you away, being as fond of money as your father is."

"I hardly believe this."

"Mr. Reuben Culwick can believe exactly what he pleases," said the young lady, spreading out her skirts and making him a very low obeisance, which he accepted with a return of the same. He would have continued the conversation had she not darted out of the door and disappeared.

(To be continued.)

What They Said.

Penelope—Charlie called last night. Justine—That's twice in a week, isn't it?

Penelope—Yes.

Justine—In the next week?

Penelope—That's what my brother says.

Justine—And six times the next?

Penelope—That's what my brother says.

Justine—And seven times the next?

Penelope—That's what papa says.

Justine—And then what?

Penelope—Then we'll get married; that's what everybody says.

Justine—And then what?

Penelope—Then I sha'n't see him any more of an evening; that's what mamma says.—Baltimore Sun.

Mildly Rebuked.

"Didn't you say that it was going to rain to-day?"

"I did," answered the weather prophet.

"But there hasn't been a sign of moisture."

"I am perfectly aware of the fact. All I could do was to offer the best opinion on the subject that I could arrive at. If I could accurately forecast the weather, I should quit working for a salary and make a fortune in the stock market."—Washington Star.

So Thoughtful.

She—There, dear, haven't I been thoughtful of you and unselfish?

He—How?

"Why, I kept all these bills of mine away from you until the middle of the month!"

To see what is right, and not to do it, is want of courage, or of principle. —Cicero.

EVENTS OF THE DAY

GATHERED FROM ALL PARTS OF THE TWO HEMISPHERES.

Comprehensive Review of the Important Happenings of the Past Week, Presented in Condensed Form, Most Likely to Prove Interesting to Our Many Readers.

China is sure to assist Japan in the event of war.

Corea may appeal to the United States in the event of an invasion.

The house has voted \$250,000 for eradication of insects affecting cotton.

Senator Dietrich, of Nebraska, has been cleared of the charge of selling an office.

Ex-Secretary of the Treasury Charles Foster is dangerously ill at his home in Springfield, Ohio.

General Chaffee has been nominated to succeed General Young as chief of the staff of the army.

Mayor Harrison, of Chicago, is being gayer for fear of assassination on account of the theater horror.

Warships are assembling at Colon, presumably for the purpose of making a hostile demonstration against Colombia.

A bill is before the house providing for the consolidation of third and fourth class mail matter to be admitted at the rate of one cent for each two ounces.

Brigadier General Randall is likely to be promoted to major general.

Great military activity prevails at Cartagena and Savannah, Colombia.

Ex-Congressman Driggs, of New York, has been convicted of accepting a bribe.

Miss Ruth Cleveland, eldest daughter of ex-President Cleveland, is dead from diphtheria.

The senate committee has favorably reported the bill giving Tillamook a life-saving station.

The Colorado militia proposes to drive out all striking miners from Cripple Creek who will not work.

The senate committee on expositions, after hearing Oregon men, unanimously decided in favor of the 1905 fair bill.

The Oregon senators to name a man to succeed Asa B. Thompson as receiver at La Grande.

Governor Taft, of the Philippines, has assured the mikado that the policy of the United States will be one of friendly neutrality.

The entire East is experiencing bitter cold.

The Ontario, Oregon, fish hatchery may be taken in charge by the government.

Two-thirds of the Chicago theaters now closed will probably never be able to reopen.

Two "Holy Roller" apostles were given a coat of tar and feathers by citizens of Corvallis.

The navy department wants 3,000 additional enlisted men to man the vessels now completed.

Minister Bunau-Varilla, of Panama, will resign as soon as the canal treaty is ratified by the United States senate.

John Redmond, leader of the Irish parliamentary party, denounces the present British government as corrupt.

Prince Cupid, delegate to congress from Hawaii, spent a night in the Washington jail on account of intoxication.

Dowie has been looking over Texas for a favorable site for the establishment of a new Zion, to be called "Eternal City."

Representative Dixon, of Montana, has introduced a resolution providing for a wire fence along the Canadian boundary between Lake of the Woods and Point Roberts. It is the intention to endeavor the illegal entering of Chinese into the United States. The fence is to be so constructed as to give a signal when any one climbs over it.

Japan is placing large orders for coal in Wales.

King Edward is reported to be trying to get the car to yield to Japan.

The conspiracy count in the indictment against Senator Dietrich has been quashed.

The British masses are heart and soul with Japan.

Roosevelt has sent a message to the senate defending his Panama policy.

Fire in the Iowa state house partially destroyed that building. The loss is placed at \$500,000.

The supreme court has decided that Porto Ricans are not aliens and can freely enter the United States.

The senate committee, by eight to three, has decided for confirmation of appointment of Wood as major general.

The president has sent to the senate the nomination of William H. Taft to be secretary of war and Luke E. Wright to be civil governor of the Philippines.

Princess Mathilde, one of the last of the Napoleons, is dead.

The Washington shingle mill combine expects large profits during the coming year.

Marine insurance companies have made great advances on all vessels bound for the Orient.

MORE SHIPS SENT.

Russia Will Intercept Japanese Fleet Near Off Corea.

Port Arthur, Jan. 9.—Several Russian warships left at midnight to reinforce cruisers sent out for the purpose of intercepting a Japanese squadron of four ironclads which, it is said, is now approaching Corea to stop six Japanese coal laden ships from Japan destined for Port Arthur and to cancel their charter to a Russian firm.

There is a normal movement of troops in both directions on the railway, Lake Baikal is frozen.

The Port Arthur defenses are complete and the authorities are confident.

Powers Are Landing Troops.

London, Jan. 9.—None of the special cablegrams from Tokio printed in this morning's papers is able to give the contents of Russia's reply, but all concur in believing it to be unsatisfactory. It appears that the note might still be undelivered, as Baron de Rosen, Russian minister, is suffering from an ear affection, had not Baron Komura, Japanese foreign minister, visited the Russian legation to get it. According to the Standard's Tokio correspondent, an increasing number of steamships are requisitioned daily as transports.

The correspondent of the Daily Mail at Tokio reports on the authority of the newspaper Chun that one Japanese has been murdered near Port Arthur and four others have been injured.

The correspondent says that all the powers are landing troops in Corea, and the British Bluejackets landing at Chemulpo are expected to go to Seoul immediately.

Constant telegrams are passing between M. Pavloff, the Russian minister to Corea, Baron de Rosen, the Russian minister to Japan, and Viceroy Alexieff.

The insurance of the Japanese cruisers Nadeshiko and Kasug, which were built at Genoa and bought from the Argentine government, has been accomplished after considerable difficulty.

The policies have been so arranged as to permit the cruisers to go by way of the Suez canal, Cape Horn or Cape of Good Hope routes, as the circumstances of the moment may dictate.

Bulgaria Wants Reforms Instituted in Manchuria.

Constantinople, Jan. 9.—The Bulgarian government has sent a note to the porte complaining of the nonfulfillment of promises made by the Porte in 1902.

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