

# Second Cousin Sarah

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ANNIE JUDGE, SPINSTER," "LITTLE KATE KERRY," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

She had gone deeper than this into thought before the prudent man above stairs had finished the last will and testament of Sarah Eastbell. She had forgotten all danger in her love-dream, but she awoke suddenly to find a figure standing at her elbow, wan and ghost-like, a something from the other world she verily believed in her first surprise and horror. Two years ago this being had lived—only to-night she had been dead—and she sprang up and went back with hands spread out against the wall, too terrified to scream. "Hush! don't make a row—don't you know me?" croaked the haggard figure huskily.

"Soply—Tom's wife!" ejaculated Sarah Eastbell.

"Yes—but not dead yet—oh, dear, no—black as Tom's coat is!" she whispered back.

Sarah glanced at her. She had not yet recovered from the shock, and the woman was terribly forlorn and ragged, with a death-head gleaming from a bettered black straw bonnet.

"How did you obtain admittance to the house?"

"Through that window—it was unfastened."

"You have come in search of Tom?"

"No, no—to warn you of a danger—of an awful danger, as I live, Sally, to you and your grandmother! I can't tell you here—I don't want to be seen by Tom," she whispered still, "he would kill me if he found me at his heels. Outside in the garden I can breathe a bit."

"I will come with you."

Sarah followed Mrs. Tom Eastbell, who walked very feebly into the garden, where a little while ago she had seen Miss Holland and Captain Peterson together. Was this a further installment of the mystery about her—or in the shadows of the night would she approach closer to the truth? In thinking of Reuben Culwick, and forgetting everything else, what valuable time might she not have lost?—she who should have been watchful at all hazards of the men who she knew were dangerous.

"This from one mystery to another passed Second-cousin Sarah."

## CHAPTER XIX.

The will of Sarah Eastbell was completed, and Hartley, the maid, and a second servant were introduced into the room to witness the old lady's effort at a signature.

"It's a good thing done, after all," muttered Mrs. Eastbell as she lay down wearily.

"It's brief and unambiguous," said Reuben, contemplating the will. "But I think it sets forth your intentions clearly, aunt. What shall I do with it?"

"Lock it in that iron box," said Mrs. Eastbell.

Reuben found the key, and locked up the will, restoring the key to its place beneath his aunt's head.

It had been a day of more than ordinary fatigue and excitement to Mrs. Eastbell, and she was tired out; sleep was life to a woman of her age, and he would not trouble her again concerning the granddaughters, or ask her any questions respecting them. There would be time enough to-morrow to consider that—and Sarah was waiting for him.

Reuben went downstairs thoughtfully. He had almost resolved to proceed to the gallery in the first place, but the temptation was too strong to seek out his second-cousin, who would surely be in the drawing room awaiting him. He had a great deal to tell her now, and a little to explain concerning his past misanthropy, which had grown more strongly developed as she at last seemed to fade away more completely from him. A real heroine had his Second-cousin Sarah proved herself to be; he wished that he had been more of a hero to match, that he had more bravely endured the inevitable. She did not know yet what an obstinate and bad-tempered man he was, and how he had quarreled with everybody in turn after his father's death. He went into the drawing room full of these odd resolutions, and found Mrs. Holland there.

"Where is Sarah?" he asked, after a glance round the room had assured him of the absence of his second-cousin.

"Sarah?" said Miss Holland, springing to her feet. "Has she not been with you in Mrs. Eastbell's room?"

"She left it half an hour since."

"Wait an instant."

Mrs. Holland left the room; and Reuben remained, with a new perplexity to battle with, and rising doubts and fears to beat down.

Mrs. Holland entered the room again, and was standing at the door, a pale and more affected woman than when he had seen her a few minutes since.

"Gone!" she said at last.

"What do you mean?"

"That—that Sarah Eastbell is not in the house," explained Mrs. Holland.

"I can't be true!" ejaculated Reuben. "Stay, let me think still. For her sake give a distracted woman time to think!"

Reuben, in the midst of his excitement, remembered afterward that the demeanor of Mrs. Holland induced in him for an instant a half-wondering interest, as in a dream of vague beliefs and startling inconsistencies; and then the trouble of Sarah's absence took away all thought of everything else.

"Her brother and the man he brought with him," said Reuben, "where are they?"

"They are in the gallery still; they could not have left the room without my being warned."

"They are in this plot, if plot there can be," said Reuben.

Mrs. Holland ran to the window and looked back at Reuben.

"Open!" she cried.

Reuben and Mrs. Holland stepped into the garden, and looked around. It was a dark, dry night, with the stars hidden now, and the wind sighing through the larches on the hillside with such plaintive moanings that Reuben strove to catch the accents of his cousin's voice amidst them.

"We shall find her in the garden," said Reuben, as he strode along the paths, with which he was acquainted, and directed Mrs. Holland in a different direction. When they met again a quarter of an hour had passed, and they were no nearer the discovery of Sarah Eastbell. She had vanished away completely, as by a miracle; and Reuben stood discomfited by the drawing room window.

"This is beyond all guessing at," he said, with a half groan.

"The window of the picture gallery is closed and barred," said Mrs. Holland, "but they are there still."

"I will see them at once," said Reuben; "meanwhile send out the servants to search the country. There has been foul play here."

## CHAPTER XX.

Only one person slept that night in the big house at Sedgemoor Hill. While Mrs. Eastbell slumbered, the inmates were astir, and not a few of them abroad, beating right and left for scraps of information, and falling in their object miserably. Sarah Eastbell had disappeared without a trace by which she might be followed.

As Reuben rode to Worcester he scanned the hedge rows, and the dry ditches, for a trace of her; he turned into yawning lanes where all was of an indistinguishable darkness; he reined in his horse fifty times to listen to the noises of the night—the shrill of a distant engine, tolling on with its luggage through the country to some bustling center; the rattle of the train, the rustling of the trees, the whirring of a night bird in the long grass of the meadows, the yelping of dogs in the farm-house yards, as he dashed by. He found his way at last to Worcester, and went slowly, hopelessly along

its deserted streets in the direction of the police station.

It was seven in the morning when he was at Sedgemoor Hill again. He rode back late, as if something unforeseen were to be thwarted by his quick return; and he was prepared for evil tidings, as he passed into the hall and found Miss Holland, pale as he had seen her last, awaiting him with eager eyes.

"What news—what has happened since I have been away?" he exclaimed.

"Nothing has happened," answered Mrs. Holland; "and you? Have you heard or seen—?"

"There is not a trace of her."

He sat before the fire where his cousin Sarah was surprised by her sister-in-law, and endeavored from his bewildered brain to shape out a scheme for her discovery, when the maid Hartley entered with breakfast on a little tray, and set it down on a coffee table at his side.

There was a letter lying on the tray, addressed to himself. The superscription was in a strange hand, a fine bold handwriting, characterized by too many flourishes to be wholly satisfactory, and he took up the letter curiously, broke the seal and read the following epistle:

"After your discourteous behavior of yesterday evening, I cannot, with satisfaction to myself, remain a guest in your aunt's establishment. I feel compelled to withdraw from a position which is incompatible with my dignity to remain. I have instructed Mr. Thomas Eastbell with kind regards to his grandmother, to whose hospitality and invaluable kindness I am forever deeply indebted. My servant will call for my violin in the course of next week. I beg to remain, sir, your obedient servant.

"EDWARD PETERSON."

There was a deep furrow on the brow of Reuben Culwick when he had finished the perusal of this letter.

"Why was this man allowed to leave the house?" he asked. "He who calls himself Captain Peterson."

"I didn't know that he was gone, sir. Not that I could have stopped him, Mr. Culwick, as all the servants were away when I saw him last."

"When was that?"

"At five o'clock this morning. He was talking to Miss Holland—here, just where I stand, sir—and I think that they were having a few words. I don't know for certain, but I think so."

"You suspected them?" said Reuben quickly.

"No, sir, I don't say that" was the quick answer, as the woman flinched before his steady gaze; "but I was curious, of course. It's all in such a muddle, sir, just now, and Miss Holland's very kind she's been always very kind to all of us, but I wanted to hear what they had to say, because poor Miss Sarah was angry at those two being together in the garden last night."

"Those two—what two?"

"Miss Holland and the Captain."

"Sarah was angry," repeated Reuben, "with whom?"

"With Miss Holland; just before you came. She said she couldn't trust her. I heard that as I was passing with my mistress' gruel, quite by accident."

"That will do," said Reuben, moodily; "don't say any more. I will wait for Miss Holland."

(To be continued.)

## THE BOY AND THE MERCHANT.

Sundry Tests, a Final Choice and a Huge Mistake.

A merchant prince of Washington, needing additional help, inserted the following advertisement in a morning paper:

"Boy Wanted—\$4 a week; \$5 to the right one."

A group of two or three dozen applicants awaited the merchant the next day in his office. One at a time they were admitted, and to each in turn the merchant said:

"Take this book and read on without pause or break until I tell you to stop."

The boy would take the volume and begin to read. The merchant after a moment would rise with a sharp exclamation and drop a heavy paper-weight on the floor. This usually would excite the curiosity of the reader, who would pause and raise his eyes from the text to see what was going on. But if he refrained from doing this the merchant would put him to another test by taking a puppy dog from a closet and beginning to romp with it.

All the boys but one fell before the test of the puppy dog. They stopped reading, they looked on at the romp with smiles, and some of them even went so far as to say:

"What's the dog's name, mister?"

Those who failed like this were bidden to depart. But the one boy who did not fail the merchant took by the hand.

"I tell you to keep reading, and you kept on, though to test you I dropped a puppy dog. I'll take you, therefore, into my employ at \$4 a week, and if you do as well as I think you will your salary will be raised to \$5 a week within nine months."

The boy, who had an honest, open countenance, said: "I thank you, sir. Mother will be glad to hear of this. I will report for duty at 8 o'clock to-morrow morning."

And, bowing politely, the lad withdrew, holding his cap in his hand.

The merchant gave him, the next morning, \$25 in greenbacks to deposit in bank. "You are master of yourself," he said, "and without fear I give you a position of trust at once."

The boy set out for the bank, but never reached it. Neither did he ever return to his employer again. He disappeared completely. He was a scoundrel and thief.

Thereafter, in engaging help, the merchant was guided by references rather than by tests.

In London recently two ancient Ashanti Coronation thrones, upholstered in human skin, were offered for sale. These are said to have been brought from West Africa by a military officer. The thrones are emblems of Ashanti royalty, and without them the successors of N'kwanta and O'fisua cannot be crowned. The purchaser incurs a certain responsibility in their safe custody, and might well become the victim of one of those amazing intrigues which novelists have woven round the stolen sacred stones of the East.

There is a special class of farm laborers in Sweden who are given so many acres of land for their own use, in consideration of so many days' labor during the year for the owner of the farm. They are a sort of duxture to an estate, and their like exists in other countries.

## THE OLD AUTOGRAPH ALBUM.

Among the relics of the past, The links of Memory's clinging chain That, with its meshes, binds me fast To days that cannot come again; There is no price more precious than This booklet; thoughtfully I scan Its yellow pages, scribbled o'er By many whom I knew of yore. Here a refrain expressing love Beneath the picture of a dove, And here a half-sarcastic quip, All traced in childish penmanship.

"If you love me as I love you No knife can cut our love in two," "Woe that trite sentiment I see A name once passing dear to me, Across the past my memory flies— I see a pair of laughing eyes, I press a little hand that lay Within my own that summer day. No knife can cut our love in two." Still, it was but a earthy strand, And what a knife could never do Was, as a higher power planned, Accomplished by the reaper's hand.

O treasured names! O memory! What were existence without thee? For art thou not the magic key With which we penetrate the seal That locks away the musty past And, in our leisure moments, steal Great solace from that storehouse vast? Bereft of these, how man would grope Into the future's unknown scope, As up some storm-swept, rocky slope, The shipwrecked mariner doth crawl, Before him dread uncertainty, Behind, the cruel, yawning sea— And darkness hanging over all.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

## The Tale of a Tale

It started on the small sofa in the alcove beside the reading lamp, and there were only two people in the room. One of them stood on the hearth rug, with his back to the fire, looking down on the other as she sat fingering the manuscript on her lap.

"Why do you want to read it?" she asked.

"Because you wrote it," he answered, with great simplicity.

"She frowned. "You ought to say it's because my other stories have been so successful, and I get such nice puffs in the papers."

"Those reasons may suffice for the rest of the world, but they don't for me."

"Perhaps you expect too much?" she said, and studied her manuscript deeply.

"Do it," he asked, and studied her profoundly. The clock ticked loudly and the fire crackled.

"By the way!" she remarked. "You'll be the first person to read this story of mine, so that I shall be impatient for your verdict!"

"I'll read it to-night and report to-morrow," he assured her, promptly.

"Does the first necessitate the second?" she asked, raising her eyebrows.

"As far as I'm concerned," he answered, lowering his, whereupon she held out her story with a heavenly smile; but he, being of a grasping disposition, took first the manuscript and then the hand that held it, and—oh—well!

The clock ticked loudly and the fire crackled.

Two hours later he stood in his own front hall, turning his pockets inside out by the light of the midnight oil; then he searched for the front steps and examined the pavement outside, and finally patrolled a certain street to a certain house till a certain small hour of the morning, when he returned to his abode uttering unholo words.

"What are you looking for?" she demanded, on entering the drawing room the next morning.

"Nothing," he answered, rising hastily from an evident inspection of the carpet. His face was pale, and his searching eye roamed uneasily over the furniture.

"I thought you might have dropped something!" she suggested, casually.

"Oh, no!" he responded, defiantly. So she sat down on the sofa, her face very grave, but the corner of her mouth slightly twitching.

"Well, what do you think of it?" she inquired.

"Oh!" he said, with a start. "That story of yours! It was great—really absorbing! I can assure you it kept me awake until 4 o'clock this morning."

"And yet it is comparatively short. You must read very slowly! Do tell me what you like best about it."

"Oh, well," he stammered, "I liked it all immensely, but what appealed to me especially was that—er—scene where the heroine—er—gets the best of it."

And, paying no heed to her blank looks, he hastened on into the safe waters of abstract literary criticism, saying: "In those few passages you show a breadth of view, a right appreciation of value, a sense of the tone significance which, if I may be permitted to say so, is quite above the average."

He felt that he was doing well, but at this point she brought him back to earth.

"Do you think," she asked him, earnest and wide-eyed, "that Gregory ought to have done it?"

"Who?" he asked, staggered for the moment. "What?" And then recollecting himself—"Yes." This stoutly. "I think Gregory was perfectly justified. Do you see how, under the circumstances, he could have done otherwise. I am quite certain that in his place I should have done just the same thing!"

"What thing?" she asked, as she poked the fire with her back turned. Then, as he did not answer immediately, she said, gently: "I don't think that you quite understand what scene I referred to, but I'll show you in a moment, if you'll just hand me the manuscript."

"The manuscript?" he queried, blankly.

He took two turns up and down the room, then faced her, crimson and crestfallen.

"I'm extremely sorry to tell you," he said, bitterly, "that your manuscript is the article blue of her eyes from the truth upon his lips—is left

## RUSSIAN SOLDIERS IN A WINTER CAMP.



While the soldiers of both the Russian and Japanese armies are equipped as well as possible to withstand the terrible cold, it is impossible to entirely protect them, and this is one reason why it is believed that had operations in Manchuria been delayed, a soldier, wounded even slightly, would be almost certain to die, for to lie on the ground during a Manchurian night would be fatal even in the heavy coats and other wraps worn. Every three Russian soldiers carry a small tent in sections, for their own accommodation in the field. It stands about three feet six inches from the ground and is supported by three poles, each in two joints like a fishing rod. Frequently the men pitch the tent over a hole dug in the ground and filled with straw. For extra warmth they throw the excavated earth on the top of the canvas and put a layer of snow over all.

## PIPE SMOKED BY RALEIGH.

Quaint Retic that is Descended from Elizabeth's Time.

During the last fortnight Americans in London have been flocking to the shipping exhibition in Whitechapel to see a relic of United States history which will be interesting likewise to their countrymen at home. This is nothing less than the pipe smoked by Sir Walter Raleigh, which is also, of course, the first ever smoked in this country, the famous courier of Queen Elizabeth having introduced the "fragrant weed" in England on his return from America. The pipe belongs to the Prince of Wales, who always has seen to its being guarded most carefully. There is little doubt that this is the pipe that Sir Walter was enjoying when his servant, frightened at the cloud of smoke, dashed a pail of cold water over his master to extinguish the flames which he thought were threatening the knight's life. It is probable, too, that Raleigh used this pipe when he demonstrated to Queen Elizabeth the weight of a given amount of smoke by weighing some tobacco, smoking it and weighing the ashes.

Even more interesting than these, however, are the associations of the pipe with the latter part of the court favorite's life. It was his constant companion when he placed the battlement outside the prison at the tower of London while composing his history of the world.

To this day the window in the white tower is pointed out where Sir Walter smoked his pipe as he watched his rival, the Earl of Essex, walk to the scaffold erected on the green just below, and there is equally trustworthy substantiation for the tradition that this was the pipe the knight carried with him to the block when it came his turn to take "the sharp medicine but a cure for all diseases."

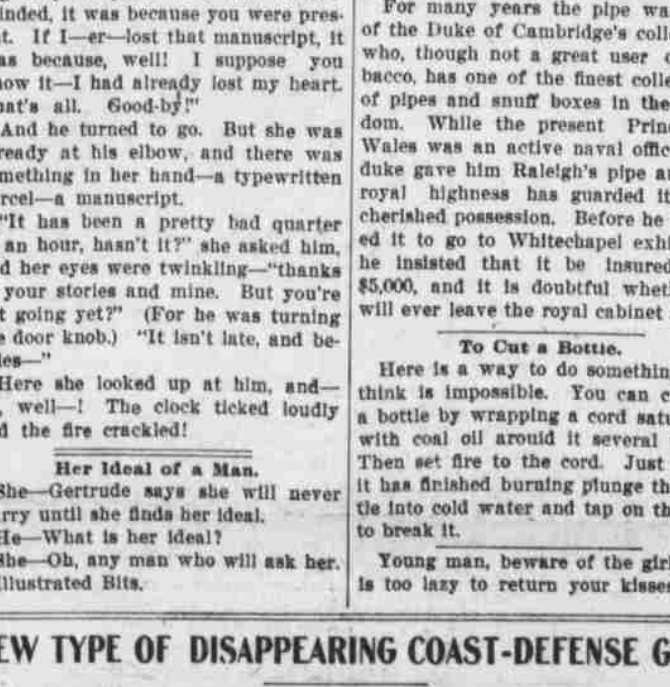
For many years the pipe was part of the Duke of Cambridge's collection of pipes and snuff boxes in the kingdom. While the present Prince of Wales was an active naval officer the duke gave him Raleigh's pipe and his royal highness has guarded it as a cherished possession. Before he allowed it to go to Whitechapel exhibition he insisted that it be insured for \$5,000, and it is doubtful whether it will ever leave the royal cabinet again.

To Cut a Bottle.

Here is a way to do something you think is impossible. You can cut off a bottle by wrapping a cord saturated with coal oil around it several times. Then set fire to the cord. Just when it has finished burning plunge the bottle into cold water and tap on the end to break it.

Young man, beware of the girl who is too lazy to return your kisses.

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This particular Crozier-Buffington gun defends Fort Sumter in South Carolina. Similar guns are to defend all American ports. When not firing the gun can be dropped from the position shown here down below the level of the battlements. The arm which supports the weight of the gun is pivoted at its base near the cylinders, one of which can be seen above the men standing below. The base is a complicated piece of mechanism.

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