

A CALIFORNIA GIRL.

A Continued Story.

SYNOPSIS.

The story opens up with Sir Roydon Garth, a young mining expert, in California, where he had been sent by an English syndicate to develop mining property. In the discharge of his duties at Deadman's Gulch he had the misfortune to break his leg, and during his illness is cared for in a rough squatter's cabin by both Marvel and his son Lance. Lance, the old man's niece, is also a member of the old man's family. Sir Roy, impressed by her beauty and gentleness, falls in love with her and proposes, but she, realizing the difference in their positions, refuses his offer. After his recovery he foolishly exhibits a large sum of money which he carried in his belt. This aroused Lance's suspicion and he drags Sir Roy upstairs to the intention of robbing him. Lance overhears Lance's plans and succeeds in arousing Sir Roy from his stupor, help him mount his horse and accompany him along the trail. She finally yields to his persuasion to marry him upon his return from a proposed prospecting trip to Nevada. Arriving in San Francisco she places her in the care of Major Emmott and his daughter, English people traveling in the west, and arranges for her to accompany the company to England to make the acquaintance of Sir Roy's aristocratic mother during his enforced absence.

CHAPTER XIX.

Poor Lilac felt that, if she remained a moment longer listening to the cruel words that came from her ladyship's lips, she would be unable to keep her enforced calm from breaking down, and she shrank with terror from the very idea of exhibiting any emotion in the old lady's presence. It was not until she had shut herself in her boudoir and locked the door that her proud self-control gave way, and, falling upon her knees by the side of the couch, she sobbed bitterly.

The unrestrained tears gave her considerable relief, and when, in half an hour's time she rose and bathed her face, she felt able to think clearly over what Lady Garth had said. There was nothing new in what she had suggested, nothing that had not come into Lilac's own doubting mind. It was this fact that made her ladyship's remarks so disturbing. All the doubts that one by one Roy's sweetheart had put behind her as unjust to her lover were brought simultaneously to life again by Lady Garth's words, and the peace which had come to her during the last few days, and which was due chiefly to the long, tender and sympathetic letters she had received from the mines, was dissipated in an instant. Everything had to be pondered again in the light of her ladyship's opinion.

The most distressing thought was that she had come between Roy and Evangeline. If all that Lady Garth had said was true, that her presence alone was preventing the happy marriage of the two people she loved, then she had no hesitation in deciding what course to take, although the taking of it would destroy all her own hopes of happiness. But, in spite of her ladyship's assertion, it was difficult to imagine that Evangeline, if her "Robin Adair" were really Roy, could have deceived her so well. Lilac walked about the room debating the point.

If she could only go to Evangeline and ask her the question which it was of such importance to her peace of mind to have answered! Twice she unlocked her door with the intention of going to her friend's room, on the chance that, in spite of the lateness of the hour, she might find her still awake, but each time she turned back and locked it again, thinking how unlikely it was that she would obtain an answer from Evangeline that would quite satisfy her doubts. However much the heiress loved her cousin, it was difficult to imagine her admitting the fact to the girl who was to become his wife; and to deny her love would be as natural even to the most truthful of women that Lilac was obliged to acknowledge to herself that no amount of denial on Evangeline's part would really satisfy her. It seemed incredible, but it was exasperatingly true, that in the same house with her was the only person who could answer the question that tortured her, and that person was her friend, and full of the deepest sympathy and affection for her, and yet it was impossible to extract from her an answer which would decide her doubts one way or the other.

Perhaps if she asked her, Evangeline would tell her his name, and then all her fears on that score would be at an end, the distraught girl unlocked her door once more and crept noiselessly in the direction of Evangeline's room. Midnight was chiming from the clock end. Flushed and excited at the thought of the dark and the darkness and silence of the house told her that everybody had retired for the night. She scarcely dared to hope that she would find her friend awake. She knocked very gently, therefore, at her bed room door when she reached it, and her heart sank when there was no answer. The hope that one word from Evangeline might set all her doubts at rest was such an exciting one, and she had been building upon it so much, that she was very reluctant to go back and wait till morning for her conversation with the heiress. Consequently, when no answer came to her second knock, she pushed open the door gently, and walked across the dark room to the side of the bed, to call Evangeline's name in a whisper.

"Evangeline, dear, are you awake? It is I—Lilac."

There was no reply, and something in the appearance of the dimly seen bed made Lilac put her hand to the pillow. The bed was empty!

"She was just beginning to wonder what could possibly have become of her friend, for the dressing room beyond, like the bed room, was in complete darkness, when the sound of low sobbing reached her ears from the inner room, the door of which was ajar. Lilac paused, with her hand still upon the pillow, undecided as to what she should do. Her first idea was to retire as quietly as she had come; but the sound of Evangeline's sobbing was so

full of anguish that Lilac could not go away without trying to comfort her and help her to bear whatever grief it was that seemed to be breaking her heart.

She crossed quickly into the dressing room, where, in the moonlight that streamed through the uncurtained window, she could see Evangeline kneeling against the old-fashioned window seat, her face in her hands, her body shaken by her sobs. So lost was she in her grief that she did not notice her friend's entrance until Lilac had thrown herself upon her knees by her side and placed her arm around her waist.

"It is I—Lilac," she said, afraid of startling her.

But Evangeline showed little surprise. "I thought everybody was asleep long ago," she responded. Her voice sounded strangely calm after the abandonment of grief a moment before.

Lilac kissed her tenderly.

"I could not sleep, and came to talk to you," she said, still kneeling by her side in the moonlight. "Can you not let me share your trouble, darling, whatever it is?"

For the moment she had forgotten her own perplexities and the question she had come to ask, but she remembered it when Evangeline answered, in her quiet, resigned voice:

"No, dear, I cannot talk about it. It is a foolishness that I shall conquer some day, although it is very hard to have to do so."

The fact that she was so anxious for her own sake to know what Evangeline's "foolishness" was made Lilac afraid to hear her confidence. It seemed to her as if her sympathy was not sympathy at all, but only a selfish curiosity; and she was glad when her friend went on without questioning. She had risen from her knees and was leaning against the woodwork of the window, so that the light no longer fell upon her face.

"I should value your sympathy, dear," she said; "but my trouble is about somebody that I ought not even to think of, because it seems that he never cared for me, although I felt sure that he did. I thought that it was only my horrible money which made him hesitate to tell me so, and, if he had not gone away, I might have said something to show him that I returned his affection. But evidently he never cared for me. I do not know why I was so sure of his love, because he never said a word of love to me, and I hate and despise myself for having given him my heart. So please do not ask me any more questions, Lilac, dear."

Lilac did not ask any more. She thought they were unnecessary. It seemed to her that every word the heiress spoke must refer to Roy; and, when Evangeline showed by an abrupt change in the conversation and of manner that her secret was to be once more locked up securely in her own breast, Miss Garth wondered at the solemnity with which Lilac kissed her and bade her "Good night," saying, as she left her:

"Do not be unhappy, dear! Perhaps Robin Adair loves you after all, and only a temporary cloud has made you doubt it. You are too sweet and noble. I think, for heaven to deny you your heart's desire."

Poor Lilac! She did not think of her own sweetness and nobility of character.

She went back to her own room, feeling that it would be a relief to her feelings to weep as Evangeline had done; but she was unable to shed a tear. Indeed, it seemed to her that she was an interloper, and that she had done a great wrong ever to let Roy speak to her of love. But for her everything would have gone smoothly in his life and Evangeline's; and she had come between them, to delude him, or by her helplessness work upon his Quixotic generosity until he thought that he loved her. He could never have guessed that Evangeline Garth cared for him as she did—the heiress could hide her feelings so well! His life had been spoiled, Lilac told herself, by her becoming part of it before he had realized his own true feelings for his cousin; and, as she began mechanically to undress, she said to herself that, for his sake as well as Evangeline's, she must have no share in his life again.

While undressing she came across the two letters Roy had written her from Nevada, which she always carried in the bosom of her gown, and she sat down at the reading lamp in her boudoir to read them through once more. As she read, the calm apathy of a despairing determination gave place in her mind to a war of perplexing thoughts. For it was hard to go through the letters and doubt that the writer loved her with his whole heart, as he claimed to do, and if Roy really loved her with the one love of his life, as she said, she felt that no sense of duty could call upon her to give him up, and that no sacrifice she could make would be able to bring back happiness to the girl she loved more than herself.

Did Roy love her as she said he did, or were his assurances only part of his generosity, as Lady Garth called it? This was the question which troubled her as she read all night long, and she felt that she could do nothing to decide it until Roy himself came home. She wondered how she would be able to bear the suspense of waiting.

Lilac's suspense did not last so long as she had anticipated. On the morning after her eventful interview with Lady Garth and Evangeline she slept far beyond her usual hour. She had fallen into a deep sleep shortly before daybreak, worn out by the mental excitement through which she had passed, and when she opened her eyes it was to find the broad daylight streaming through the window.

A slight rustling sound attracted her attention, and, turning her head, she caught sight of Evangeline stealing on tiptoe towards the door. Evangeline stopped when she found that Lilac was awake.

"I hope I have not disturbed you," she said. "I wanted you to sleep till luncheon time, if you could, after being up so late last night. We had breakfast long ago; so I will send yours up here and you need not disturb yourself just yet."

"Oh, I am wide awake!" said Lilac, wondering whether this bright and animated Evangeline was the same girl who, a few hours before, had been sobbing her heart out over her hopeless love, or whether she had not dreamed it all. "Do you want me?"

Evangeline smiled more brightly.

"No, I expect in to prepare you for a surprise when you rise; but pray do not hurry. It is only a letter from Roy,

which you will find on your dressing table, with such wonderful news! He wrote to Aunt Gwyn at the same time, so at present I know more about the young man than you do." She stood in the doorway, and had to raise her voice to finish the sentence, for Lilac had almost disappeared into her dressing room in search of the precious epistle.

Evangeline, guessing that she would like to be quite alone, ran downstairs to discuss her cousin's expected return with her mother. For the letters her ladyship and Lilac had received were the two which Sir Roy had dispatched on the eve of his departure from the Seven Cent mines—the letters which he had written while in such doubt and perplexity with regard to his little "prairie-flower's" love.

"Isn't it glorious," said Evangeline, as she ran into the morning room and threw her arms about the old lady's still slender waist, "to think that in two days at most we shall see Roy again? It seems too good to be true. I cannot thank you you can keep from skipping about as usual."

Lady Garth answered without enthusiasm.

"Of course it will be a great pleasure to see my boy again after his long absence," she said, "but I am rather sorry that otherwise, Aunt Gwyn," said Evangeline; and her ladyship rejoined, coldly:

"Well, I cannot help thinking that perhaps it would have been better if Roydon had remained at his original intention of remaining another month abroad."

"You would like to wait another month for him? What for, auntie, pray?"

"Well, my dear, it would have given him a longer interval in which to get over his foolish infatuation for Miss Marvel. I fear from Roydon's sudden determination that he may still be under the spell which has been cast over a few words of which he has never longer he might have got over her."

"My dear aunt Gwyn, they will make a very suitable couple, and already I love Lilac almost as much as I love Roy."

"You admit that you love him, then?" questioned her ladyship quickly; and Evangeline answered without reserve:

"Yes, auntie, very much—but not as you wish me to love him, thank goodness! If you will not rejoice with me over the dear fellow's coming, I must go and rejoice with Lilac."

She found, however, when she ran upstairs full of excitement, that Lilac's door was closed; and, when she tapped at it, the only answer she received was a few words from Lilac within saying that she was busy. Evangeline went away wondering.

"Here is Roy coming home," she said to herself ruefully, "and the two people who ought to love him best the indignation seems to have sent into the dumps."

She would have wondered more if she could have entered the room and seen Lilac's pale face full of a despairing anguish.

Poor Lilac! The letter which she had just opened with such delightful anticipation had come as a cruel blow to her. Her lover unfortunately had given her no hint of the report he had received from Major Emmott or of the confusion it had brought to his mind, and she had not even been told that he had written; and the sudden change of its tone from that of his previous letters seemed to the poor girl who loved him so well capable of only one explanation. Roy had discovered that he did not love her, and she had been deceived by his hastening his return in order to tell her so; and her pride as well as her unselfish devotion to him and Evangeline urged her to leave Delverton Hall before his arrival. When Evangeline came to the door of her room she was busy packing the smaller of her two trunks.

The thought had occurred to her that it would be fairer to await the baronet's arrival, and postpone all action until she had given him an opportunity of saying what he cared for her to say; but she dismissed the thought as soon as it came. How could she be sure that she would not break down, and, by showing the intensity of her love, appeal once more to the Quixotic generosity which probably made him first suggest that she should be his wife? To leave Roy quite free to follow the dictates of his heart, she must be no longer dependent upon him for a home; he must feel that she was not suffering in any way from her action in helping him to escape from Deadman's Gulch. If she appealed no further to his pity, he would be as free as if he had never met her to marry Evangeline, whose love he must appreciate sooner or later at its true worth; and Lilac went on industriously with her packing, her hands shaking a little as she folded her dresses and her face white as death. All the time her thoughts were busy as to what she should do.

Her only idea had been to get away from Delverton Hall and hide herself in the great world of which she knew so little; but the more she thought of Roy the more clearly it began to dawn upon her how futile her plan would be. She suspected even that the responsibility of her welfare was removed from her shoulders. However much her infatuation for her had dwindled away, Sir Roydon Garth was not the man to let a girl to whom he was engaged to marry go without providing for her. There would be no rest for him until he heard that she was independent of his help. Almost in despair Lilac suspended her packing as she thought of the door, and she was running away she would only give the baronet the additional trouble of looking for her. She must avoid that at all cost; and, with a sudden inspiration, she sat down to write her last letter to the man she loved.

Evangeline knocked again while she was thus engaged, and this time Lilac rose to unlock the door.

"What a hermit you are, dear! I have been dying to rejoice with you over the good news," began the heiress impulsively; and then she saw the signs of packing; she noticed, too, that Lilac was wearing her serge traveling dress.

"You are surely not thinking of going to Liverpool to meet Roy?" she exclaimed in surprise; and Lilac answered quietly:

"No, I am going to Liverpool, but not for that. I wish you would order the brougham for me, so that I can catch the afternoon train."

"But, my dear girl, Roy may be home today, for all we know, and therefore would miss you."

"I know," said Lilac, as quietly and coldly as before. "I do not wish to meet Roy, dear."

"You do not wish to meet Roy?" Evangeline could not believe her ears. "Aren't you going to marry him?" she exclaimed incredulously. And Lilac shook her head as she answered almost in a whisper:

"No, I have decided to marry somebody I met on board the Geminal—Mr. Mark Mowbray."

CHAPTER XXI.

With feverish anxiety Sir Roydon Garth was looking forward to his arrival at Delverton Hall, and the settlement one way or the other of his doubts and misgivings. Try as he

would he found it impossible to prevent his putting one question repeatedly to himself, although he knew that it could not be answered until he reached home. All day long he was recalling every incident of his courtship, every word and look which Lilac had given him, and trying to decide from them whether he had reason to doubt her love for him, even in the face of Major Emmott's letter.

As the end of his journey approached and with it the moment when he expected to meet Lilac and learn the worst of the best, Sir Roy's impatience and disquietude increased. It seemed to him that the happiness of his whole life would depend upon the result of that interview. Absence from his sweetheart had only tended to increase his devotion to her, until he felt that the love of his little "prairie-flower" was the only thing in the world worth thinking about or living for.

When at last he reached Delverton, and found himself hurrying up the drive under the arches, it seemed to him that years must have passed since the beginning of the journey. Half way towards the house he saw a tall graceful figure coming towards him. It was Evangeline starting out upon an errand of mercy to one of the villagers; but for a moment there flashed into the young baronet's mind the idea that it might be Lilac, and he stood still, empowered by a hundred emotions. His heart sank a little, and he walked on slowly when he discovered his mistake.

Evangeline flew towards him with a cry of welcome, and, putting up her hands drew down his bronzed face to kiss him affectionately. Roy had scarcely patience to receive the caress.

"Where is Lilac?" he asked, feeling that the moment was come which he had longed for and dreaded together through all his long monotonous journey.

His cousin seemed inclined to defer it.

"You must come in and see auntie, and rest and eat before you ask questions, sir," she said, with a half-hearted attempt to appear playfully imperious. But Roy ignored the suggestion.

"You have bad news for me," he said, his lips so dry that his voice sounded hoarse and indistinct.

Evangeline stared, wondering what had roused his suspicions. She thought it inadvisable to keep back the evil tidings any longer.

"Yes, dear—she went away as soon as your letters came," she said gently. "She was not worthy of your love, Roy, dear."

Her cousin interrupted her with the question:

"She has gone to Mark Mowbray?"

"Yes, dear; they are to be married soon, I believe. She has stayed here all this time letting us think that she cared for you, while intending to marry this other man as soon as you came home. But you ought not to have made me tell you. You are faint and tired."

She broke off with a cry of distress as the tall handsome man staggered back dizzily, and she threw her arm around him as if to support him. But Sir Roy put his cousin's arm away and steadied himself by an effort of will.

"It must be a mistake! I can't believe it!" he said, hoarsely; and he went on almost fiercely, "I will not believe that she has played with me in such a way until I have seen her and heard it from her own lips."

"She has left a letter for you," answered Evangeline quietly. "Come in to the house and read it. Oh, Roy, Roy, I am so sorry! I believed in her just as much as you did; but we were forced to accept what she herself said."

She burst into tears and walked by his side, crying silently for his distress, when he strode moodily towards the hall.

They entered by the open French window of the morning room, where Lady Garth was sitting writing, and the old lady sprang up to welcome back her son. But Sir Roydon Garth stood like one in a dream while she kissed him.

"I want to see her letter, mother," he said in his strangely harsh voice; and he stood motionless while the old lady hurried to fetch it.

Evangeline spoke to him, but he made no reply.

When the fatal missive was brought to him which Lilac had written with an almost breaking heart, he tore it open and read it through, his pale face betraying nothing. Suddenly, however, her ladyship uttered a sharp cry of terror, and the young man swayed slightly for a moment, then fell senseless upon the floor.

When the whole establishment at Delverton Hall had been thrown into confusion by the news that Sir Roy had arrived from abroad, and that he was taken seriously ill as he entered the house, and the men servants had been summoned to carry him, still unconscious, up to his room, and then to be dispatched in hot haste to bring medical assistance, it was Lady Garth who took possession of the letter which had finally caused her son's breakdown after all the wearing anxiety that had been sapping his strength ever since the receipt of Major Emmott's letter.

"It is plain that he cannot have completely recovered from the effects of the accident at Deadman's Gulch," the doctor said when he arrived; and his face grew very serious when the baronet's unconsciousness changed at last to delirium.

"His constitution is a sound one," said the clever old family practitioner, who, twenty-four years before, had assisted his patient into the world. "But he requires very careful nursing. Shall I engage a professional nurse for you, Lady Garth?"

Her ladyship shook her head.

"Evangeline and I are both considered good nurses," she said. "I think we shall be more zealous than any stranger could be—eh, Evangeline?"

Evangeline nodded, unable to speak. Her cousin's illness seemed to have affected her even more than Lady Garth.

Her ladyship would not admit that there was anything serious in her son's illness, or that the departure of his sweetheart had any particular connection with it.

"He has been overworking himself over this horrible mining business," she said to Evangeline when the doctor had gone, "and the departure of Miss Marvel will no doubt come as a relief to him when he is well enough to realize that she is fully provided for. The thought seemed to comfort her not a little; but in spite of the brave face she showed to her niece it required all Lady Garth's remarkable power of ignoring unwelcome facts to keep her from breaking down. For, although she would not admit it even to herself, the disturbing thought troubled her that she was in a great measure responsible for the Californian girl's sudden departure. When she read the letter which had fallen from her own hand she felt more than ever that she was responsible for her decision to leave Roy free and marry another man was due to their interview on the night before she left Delverton.

SHORT STORIES.

TOOK IN TOO MUCH TERRITORY.

"The reports of the threatened blindness of ex-Senator Palmer of Illinois brings to my mind the last talk I had with him, and the last story I heard him tell," said an Illinois congressman to a Washington Post man. "It was in Springfield last spring at the old senator's home. A visitor had just been repeating some Spanish boasts, and expressed the fear that we should come out of the war with an easy won victory.

"That makes me think of a man, said the ex-senator, 'who used to live down here in Macoupin county, at Carlinville. He went down to St. Louis once, and when he came back he was full of bad whisky and fighting talk. He got off the train at the Carlinville depot and began to talk big.

"'Whoopee!' he said, 'I can lick any man in this town!'

"'Nobody paid any attention, and the man went on:

"'I can lick any man in Macoupin county!' he yelled.

"'Still nobody noticed him. He waxed bolder.

"'Come on!' he shouted. 'I can lick any man in the state of Illinois!'

"Here somebody took exception to his remarks and knocked him down. He struggled to a sitting posture and appeared to reflect.

"'Oh, Jim,' he said to himself, aloud. 'Oh, Jim; I reckon you took in too much territory that last time.'"

WHERE HE GOT HIS PORT.

A capital story concerning a prominent member of the stock exchange is going the rounds. He was a man who enjoyed his wine and always took great care of it when happened to pick up a choice vintage. While living in a fashionable quarter of the West End he chanced to buy a large cask of very fine old port, which he had placed at the extreme end of his cellar; and, to make perfectly sure that it should not be touched, he had a wall built across the cellar, and so closed it in, says a London paper.

It was about a year or two later that he one evening accepted an invitation to dine with his next-door neighbor, when the latter brought out some fine old port. Several glasses having been drunk, the man of shares and stocks, recognizing its excellent quality, asked his host where he could get some port like it.

"Well, old fellow," returned the other, "I will let you into a secret, but don't say a word about it. I was having some alterations made in my cellar lately, when we discovered that some old fool who lived in this house before had built a wall around a large cask of port and had forgotten all about it. This is some of it, but I'm afraid there isn't much left."

The effect upon the worthy stockbroker's feelings may be imagined.

OUR CHINESE "JACKIES."

It is not generally known that among the brave men who manned Dewey's ships in the battle of Manila, were about 50 Chinamen who fought bravely their white brothers with as great bravery as anyone who participated in the fight. Admiral Dewey, whose praise is by no means cheap, has spoken in glowing terms of the work performed by these men, and their coolness while under fire. In fact, so desirous is he that some fitting reward should be given these Chinamen that he asked congress to permit them to settle in the United States in accordance with an oft-repeated request from them. Congress, it seems, however, was powerless to grant the request, in spite of the deserving character of the men, owing to the Chinese exclusion act which forbids Chinamen to enter this country. The law is the result of agitation against Chinese labor in competition with American labor, the Chinaman being able to live on so much less that he could take lower wages and thus force down the wages of Americans. For the present, at least, these men will have to go without the reward they would take at Dewey's request, owing to this law. So long as they remain on Dewey's ships, however, they will be under the protection of the American flag, but they cannot receive that protection by entering America's domains.

THE RARE QUEZZEL.

On all the postage stamps of Guatemala is engraved a somewhat distorted representation of the quetzal, which is rightly called the bird of liberty, as it dies almost immediately when captured. So extreme is its love of freedom, that if captured and in a few seconds restored to liberty, it would seem as if the contamination of the hand could not be removed, and it will drop lifeless after flying but a few yards. If it is caught in a trap it is always found dead, and when the young are taken from the nest they die at once. It is found only in a small portion of the country, and is seldom seen alive, since it cannot be kept long in captivity.

It is a bird of beautiful plumage, having two extremely long tail feathers and a superbly crested head. It is said that its pride in its tail feathers is greater than its love of life, for if one of them accidentally becomes broken the bird goes to its nest and dies from grief and mortification. It builds a round-roofed nest, having two holes on opposite sides, so that the quetzal literally "goes in at one door and out at the other," and thus avoids any necessity for tail-breaking, and consequent heart-breaking, by never turning round in order to make its exit from the nest.

NOT AN OBSERVANT MAN.

The old man in the shaggy overcoat mentioned something about Kansas in his talk, and the Bostonian leaned over toward him and asked:

"Did you say you were from Kansas?"

"No; but I jest' come from there."

"Then I want to ask you a few questions. How are times out there?"

"I dunno."

"Is money plenty or tight?"

"Can't say."

"But don't you know how the farmers are feeling?"

"Is business good or bad in the towns?"

"I didn't ask anybody."

"You—you are not an observing man," said the Bostonian.

"No, I guess not. I went out to Kansas to see a widder I used to know, and to ask her to marry me. I got to her house at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I asked her to have me, and she said she wouldn't, and at 3:30 I was on my way back. I didn't see no crops, nor ask about good times or bad. The state of Kansas may be holdin a reg'lar Fourth of July over good times, or everybody may be goin' to the poorhouse. All I know about it is that I'm an old fool for spendin' \$60 to run arter a Kansas widder when I could hev married a New Hampshire gal fur twelve shillin's!"

WROTE "THE HEAVENLY TWINS."

About a mile from Tunbridge Wells, England, in a little gray house, lives Sarah Grand, who wrote the "Heavenly Twins." She is nearing middle age, is a medium-sized woman, with dark hair, clear-cut features, and is an easy conversationalist.

In the room where her writing is done there are so quaint things, among them a stord mounted so he appears to be watching her at work. That she may not forget the suffering world, she keeps close by her desk an engraving of Dudley Hardy's picture of the destitute poor of London. Her desk is a table of mahogany, fitted with drawers, and the top is littered with blotters, books, ink, pens and papers. The chair at the desk is high-backed, with curved legs, and a bookcase stands close at hand.

There is a bay window in the writing room which has been made in a cozy corner with couch, pillows and curtains. Handsome rugs and paintings add to the room.

Sarah Grand is fond of children, especially Beth, the baby daughter of her stepson, and the child frequently plays about while her grandmother is writing, seemingly not at all disturbed by childish prattle.

A POSSIBILITY.

She was a portly lady, with a lot of bundles—and it may be noted at this point that it is almost always the case that the larger a lady is, the larger and more numerous are the bundles she carries—and when she entered the railroad station she was puffing so that a drowsy man on the front seat jumped up suddenly, thinking it was the engine of the train he was waiting for. She approached the ticket window and there she put her bundles in all the available space. They were nice, new store bundles, however, and no objection was made.

"Is the train for Jungleville gone yet?" she inquired.

"No, ma'am," responded the clerk.

"How far is it there?"

"About seventy miles, I guess, ma'am," for he was new to that place and was not thoroughly conversant with details.

"What's the price of a ticket?"

"One ninety-eight, ma'am."

"One ninety-eight?" she repeated.

"How does that happen?"

"I don't know, ma'am," he replied, as he saw her bundles. "I guess it must be marked down from \$2."

CHINESE EMPRESS.

China has always been a country which did not want to have anything to do with the rest of the world, but year after year people of civilized lands, like the English and Americans, have been forcing their way into this queer old empire and breaking down its selfish customs.

The hardest thing to do has been to see the actual rulers of China. The Chinese look upon their rulers as sacred people not to be seen by common eyes, and, least of all, by foreigners. Never in all the history of China was a man or woman of any race but the Mongolian allowed to visit the imperial court until the last birthday of the empress, when the ladies who are the wives and daughters of the great men sent to China by England to look after the rights of English people who are living in China, were allowed to call at the imperial palace.

When her visitors came into the audience chamber of the palace, which is a great room used to receive visitors they found the empress sitting on a raised platform, behind a table which was covered with chrysanthemums and apples, and her son, the emperor, sitting at her left. The ladies stood up before the platform, or dias, as it is called, and one of them, Lady McDonald, read a paper wishing from all of them a happy birthday to the empress. Then the empress thanked the ladies and shook hands with each one of them and gave each one of them a gold ring. Then she drank tea with the ladies, taking a little sip out of each one of their cups. Then she shook hands with all the ladies again and they came away.

All this means a great deal, for it is another proof that in the course of time the doors of the Chinese empire will be thrown open to the rest of the world.

The largest sewing machine in the world is in operation in Leeds. It weighs 6,000 pounds, and sews cotton belting.

(To be continued.)