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ENGLISH HOMES IN INDIA.

PART I.—THE THREE LOVES.

PART II.—THE WRONG TURNING.

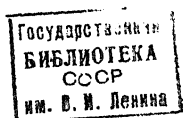
VOL. I.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.



THE writer of these volumes—an accomplished member of a family whose name is conspicuous in Indian story—being now resident in India, they have not had the benefit of her final corrections. It is hoped, however, that this inevitable drawback will detract but little from the pleasure to be afforded by the perusal of the tales, which are, indeed, what they profess to be, stories of English Homes in India, represented as such homes are, in different parts of the country and under various social and professional aspects. They endeavour fairly and without exaggeration to illustrate Anglo-Indian life as it is, in its many varying phases, and to bring upon the scene, in their every day costume, many kinds of Anglo-Indian workmen, from the Resident at a native Court, to the subaltern-officer and the railway employé ; and it is believed that all who have visited the countries described will recognise the truth of the portraiture.

ENGLISH HOMES IN INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

THE sweet, early sunshine of an English June morning (and when the sun does shine in English June, how very sweet it is !) peeped into few pleasanter spots than the grounds of a little villa on the banks of the Thames, where it fell in playful ripples through ash and lilac branches, on a velvety grass plat, jewelled with tiny flower beds, slanting more boldly across the smooth gravelled walk in front of the villa steps, and finally glanced, with a bright, loving ray, into the fairest spot of all, a neat bed-chamber, tenanted by two young girls. Very pretty and fresh was the little room, with its graceful white curtains, edged with pink, round the windows and the two little beds, and about

the old-fashioned mirror on the simple toilette table. The paper on the walls had a running pattern of rosebuds and green leaves, and against one of the windows was trained a jasmine, whose starry sprays cast moving shadows on the floor.

A true English room it was, and true English maidens they who inhabited it ; bright and pure within as without. The youngest of the two sisters sat on a low chintz-covered seat in front of the table, in a state of incomplete toilette, which indicated her having recently emerged from a corner, where, behind a half-drawn curtain, stood that array of pails and cans which then furnished the "cosmetics" of English beauty. It would not have needed a glance there, however, to tell that the roses and lilies on that soft young face, were Nature's own, any more than that the heavy, golden locks their possessor was vigorously brushing into discipline, had not come from the coiffeur's. The other sister, older by a year or so, stood at the open window under the jasmine shadows. She was already completely dressed in a simple morning costume, as fresh and soignée as if it had been the richest