"An Immortal Book":
The Publishing History of the 1912 Edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

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Introduction

> record, v.1
> [. . .]
> Etymology: [. . .] to remember (about something) . . . to remember, recall (something), to repeat, to recite, to relate, tell, bear witness to, declare, to make a record of (all 12th cent.)
> —Oxford English Dictionary

> "Ah, these Americans! These mysterious, inscrutable, incomprehensible Americans! Had I the divine right of learning I would put them into an immortal book!"
> —Mrs. Spring Fragrance, "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

Edith Maude Eaton (1865–1914) was achingly aware of the corporeality and mortality of text. In April 1907, she lost "everything save life" in a railway fire, including all her manuscripts, scrap books, and even her own photographs. With her death in 1914, her papers faded into oblivion together with her name. It is no surprise then, despite tremendous effort by generations of scholars to reconstruct her biography and bibliography, many gaps remain unfilled, questions unanswered. Eaton also understood the immortality of literary work. After the fire, she reclaimed, at least partially, her writings before 1907 by requesting copies from her periodical publishers. In 1912, with a book publisher, she procured a "more permanent form" for her works to solidify into a volume of thirty-seven stories, under the title *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. It is only through the textual evidence that scholars have been able to approach and recover her work from neglect.

In recent years, with the conscientious archival research by Annette White-Parks, Dominika Ferens, and Mary Chapman, the oeuvre of Edith Eaton has been largely expanded. Recent discoveries made by Chapman have quadrupled the opuses of Eaton's works to over 260, a number that points to Eaton's versatility, in terms of genre and subject matter, and broad reach of influence in her own times. Chapman's research on the Eaton family's history sheds even more light on Eaton's upbringing and further contextualizes the transnationalism permeating Eaton's writing. Profiting from this historical recuperation, this thesis addresses the 1912 edition

of Edith Eaton's *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, published by Chicago's A. C. McClurg and Company. The first chapter presents a survey of the context of Eaton's life and writing. Eaton's early life and semi-professional journalism career informed the literary strategies she had taken in her creative writing. Adopting the Chinese pen name Sui Sin Far, Eaton used popular periodicals as an outlet to tell the stories of the Chinese immigrants in America during the Chinese Exclusion Era (1882–1943), upon which *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is chiefly predicated. The second chapter deals with the book publishing houses that Eaton had contact with. Lucas Dietrich's 2020 book chapter "Against Benevolent Readers: *The Souls of Black Folk*, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, and A. C. McClurg" was arguably the first to bring to light McClurg's publishing activities behind *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. Informed by Dietrich's research and drawing on previously undiscovered archival sources, this chapter provides a far more detailed and accurate narrative of Eaton's book publishing history, including the rejection of two manuscripts by Houghton Mifflin Company in 1909; the acceptance, production, and marketing of the 1912 edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* by A. C. McClurg and Company; and the book's reception in the 1910s and reincarnation in recent decades. Finally, Chapter 3 looks closely at the bookmaking of the 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, with an emphasis on the binding and the paper, and shows how the aestheticization and Orientalization of the design features interact and interfere with Eaton's text. This thesis explores how Edith Eaton was perceived by and negotiated with the literary marketplace of the turn of the twentieth century, and how 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, as both a documentary text and a physical object embodying Eaton's work, was molded by editorial patronage and commercial valuation.

I have borrowed liberally from the methods of historical research and descriptive and analytical bibliography. For the thesis, I have principally consulted the following archival

resources: the correspondence between Edith Eaton and Charles Fletcher Lummis held at the Library and Archives (LAA) at the Autry Museum and at the Huntington Library, the correspondence between Francis Granger Browne and Charles Fletcher Lummis at the LAA at the Autry Museum, the Houghton Mifflin Company reader reports at the Houghton Library, and the A.C. McClurg & Co. Records at the Newberry Library. In the appendices, I present a list of original periodicals publications of reprinted stories in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* and a list of contemporary periodical reviews of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. A goal of this thesis is to encourage and to pave the way for future historical, textual, and bibliographical scholarship in regards to Edith Eaton and the 1912 edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*.

Chapter 1: "Troubled Waters:" Edith Eaton's Literary Career

Early Life

Indispensable to Edith Eaton's creative energy is her lived and embodied experiences of pain, sympathy, and "being differentiated from the ordinary by the fact that I was an Erusian [sic]" ("Sui Sin Far" 6). The second child and the oldest daughter, she was born to Edward Eaton, an English merchant and artist, and Grace "Achuen Amoy" Eaton, a Chinese servant rescued and educated by English missionaries,[1] in 1865[2] in Macclesfield, Cheshire. Embodying the "the cross of the Eurasian" ("Leaves" 127), Edith Eaton had borne the brunt of cultural and racial prejudices. Her earliest memories were replete with racial "inspection" and social ostracism she had undergone in England, and her brief school education there taught her the hierarchical and ideological antithesis within her own heritage: "China is a heathen country, being civilized by England" ("Leaves" 126). In spite of the vast size and relatively promising heterogeneity of North America, the Eaton family's permanent emigration to Montreal, Canada in 1873 did not launch them on an upward path nor spare them from racial scrutiny and oppression. As the ever-enlarging family size exacerbated their financial predicament, Edith Eaton was withdrawn from formal education around the age of ten and reduced to sharing the burden of childcare and financial support for the family.

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[1] Annette White-Parks' 1995 *Sui Sin Far/Edith Maude Eaton: A Literary Biography* lays the foundation of historical scholarship on the life of the Eaton family. For a biographical sketch of Edward Eaton, see White-Parks 12–13. Of Mary Chapman's many contributions to the recovery of Eaton's oeuvre and biography, the latest was the reconstruction of the trajectory of Grace Eaton's early life in an academic blog post, "Achuen 'Grace' Amoy Eaton (1846-1921): Mui Tsai, Acrobat, Missionary, Writer." Thanks to Chapman's discovery, I found two other archival records regarding Grace Eaton: she was registered as a naturalized British subject in the 1861 England census and baptized into the Church of England in August 1862.

[2] There are different documental readings of Eaton's birth year. The entry of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in Library of Congress' 1912 *Catalogue of Copyright Entries* records her as "Eaton, Edith Maud, 1867–," and so do several catalogs and biographies. In a letter to Lummis, Eaton claimed to have been born in 1868. These dates would contradict her autobiographical accounts and the Eaton family's biographical documents. Her gravestone shows her as born on 15 March 1865, affirmed by White-Parks' finding in her birth certificate (14).

The adolescence of Eaton coincided with the prelude to the codification of Sinophobia in North America. The 1860–70s witnessed racial militancy against Chinese laborers in California, with regional legislation of Chinese immigration control underway (Gyory 7–8). Fueled by political propaganda, the sentiment rapidly pervaded the continent, and anti-Chinese legislation was the cause that both parties vigorously campaigned on in the 1876 U.S. presidential election (Gyory 18–19). As Chapman's biographical timeline delineates, when Eaton took a position "in the composing room of the Montreal Daily Star" in 1883 (Eaton, "Sui Sin Far" 6), her first foray into the professional world of letters was bookended by passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act in the U.S. and the 1885 Chinese Immigration Act in Canada, the latter followed by the onerous levy of Chinese Head Tax. Legitimizing ethnic persecution and ostracism, these acts inaugurated an era of normalized anti-Chinese violence and bigotry, the fierce currents of which Eaton's pen would brush against.

For Eaton, the cordial, "culturally integrated and pluralistic" (White-Parks 16) domestic atmosphere was starkly measured against the "depth of the troubled waters thru which [she] wade[d]" as a "Eurasian" ("Leaves" 127). The sharp cognizance of the unique plight of the mixed-race, incomprehensible to either of her parents, roused Eaton's earliest literary calling "to write a book about half Chinese" ("Sui Sin Far" 6). Aside from conscientious performance of domestic duties, she also managed to live a "withdrawn life of thought," one that was dominated by her "impulse to create" and informed by her sensibilities, creativity, experience, sympathy, and ethnic identity (Eaton, "Sui Sin Far" 6). She recalled how her biracial subjectivity was being transfigured by frequent library visits to read up on China and the Chinese during her teenage years: "At eighteen years of age what troubles me is not that I am what I am, but that others are ignorant of my superiority" ("Leaves" 128). With this largely self-taught epistemological

development, Eaton was beginning to turn the tables on the ignorant "Other" and the stereotype of "inscrutable Oriental."

Journalism

In 1887, Eaton undertook legal stenography[3] in Montreal and dipped her toe into writing for periodicals on the side. Dealing mostly with short stories with humorous, romantic, and juvenile themes in the western tradition, her fledgling stage was followed by a semi-professional career in journalism starting in 1890. From 1894 to 1896, Eaton was granted responsibility for "most of the local Chinese reporting" (Eaton, "Sui Sin Far" 6), on a freelance basis, by two of the major English-language newspapers in Montreal, the *Daily Witness* and the *Daily Star*. This assignment instantiates the furor over the "Chinese question" in the realm of print culture during the Exclusion Era. The nineteenth-century commercial print culture, as Eden Osucha maintains, functioned as technologies of racialization and dehumanization (73). Regionally and nationally, periodicals stoked up and sustained the flames of anti-Chinese sentiment with reportage probing into and sensationalizing the debauchery of the Chinese immigrants (Lee 151–2; White-Parks 76)[4]. The virulent stereotype against Chinese as "cheap labor" and "heathen Chinee" had taken root in the North American cultural awareness in the late nineteenth century, as a result of anti-Chinese advocates' hijack and propagation of Bret Harte's 1870 poem "Plain Language from

[3] Clerical work would be the means of support Eaton relied on for over two decades. She worked as stenographer, typewriter, and/or secretary for lawyers, a legal department, newspapers, and a railway company in Canada, Jamaica, and the United States. From 1894 to 1896 she managed her own office for stenography and typewriting "in the center of Montreal's financial district" (White-Parks 29). The office was in the vicinity of Windsor Station, the port of entry in Montreal where all travelers of Chinese descent would pass and stay as they awaited paperwork (White-Parks 75).

[4] For a case study of the nineteenth-century mainstream coverage of the Chinese in America, see William E. Huntzicker's "Newspaper Representation of China and Chinese Americans" in *Outsiders in 19th-century Press History : Multicultural Perspectives*, edited by Frankie Hutton and Barbara Straus Reed, Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1995, pp.93–114.

Truthful James" (Scharnhorst 398–9). The "Yellow Peril" discourse at the turn of the century, exemplified by Jack London's 1904 essay "The Yellow Peril" and 1906 short story "The Unparallel Invasion," did more than delimit the color line between the "white" and "yellow" races, but also disturbed the long-held racial thinking of white supremacy. The "Yellow Peril," to quote Gary Okihiro, was the imagined "raced, gendered, and sexualized threat" posed by China and its people to the western civilization (104).

In the ideological battlefield, Eaton aligned herself with her mother's countrymen. Recalling her early Montreal journalism (1890–1896), she wrote:"[W]hen they get into trouble [I] am often called upon to fight their battles in the papers" ("Leaves" 128). However, as Dominika Ferens warns us, during this period, Eaton's representation of the Chinese immigrants was far from impeccable but rather "compromised" by the nature of journalism (54).[5] Herself no less a stranger to the Chinese communities, Eaton also resorted occasionally to the "ethnographical method" of "guesswork and popular stereotypes"—license that her contemporaries had abused in their representation of Chinese and Chinatown (Ferens 52–3, 58–9). Consideration for readership was unavoidable. With her contributions being mostly unsigned[6], Eaton's authorial stance in the *Witness* and the *Star* was tacitly located in the collective, exclusive first-person *we*—in the assumptions and expectations of her white Canadian editors and readers. For Eaton, the freelance newswoman "patronized" by the Montreal papers, the Chinese remained largely an othered *they*. It was in the four signed letters[7] written by Eaton

[5] Ferens contends Eaton's early journalism had a resonance in the traditions of missionary ethnography. She also pointed out that Eaton's early representations of Chinese immigrants focused primarily on mapping them onto the dominant "genteel domesticity" of the middle-class (57) – in this sense, her advocacy of the Chinese was akin to that of the mission workers.

[6] White-Parks has built a case for the nineteenth-century standard practice of authorial anonymity by periodical editors (78).

[7] They are: "Letter to the Editor: Wong Hor Ching," published on 31 August 1895; "'The Chinese Question.' Letter to the Editor," published on 16 December 1895; "A Plea for the Chinaman. A Correspondent's Argument in His Favour," published on 21 September 1896; "The Chinese Defended. 'E. E.' Replies to Her Critics of Saturday and Is

in 1895–6 to the editor of the *Star* that her voice in the choir of "we westerners" and "our own Canadians" began to crack ("The Chinese Question" 4). In her epistolary defense of the Chinese, Eaton discursively inched away from "Canadians" and "white men"—*they* who persecuted and exploited the Chinese.

For Eaton, journalism's influence was formative in molding the literary strategies that would govern and complicate her future writing.[8] News reporting facilitated her initiation into the expanding Chinese communities in Montreal (White-Parks 77). Their acquaintance would offer her an empirical exposure to and affinity with Chinese culture on a scale that neither her long-term expatriate mother nor the library books could afford. More importantly, it would provide her a rich lode of source materials—in her early mentor Judge John Sprott Archibald's words, the "necessary . . . experience of life and . . . knowledge of character"—for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* to flesh out (Eaton, "Sui Sin Far" 6).

Sui Sin Far, the "Chinese Lily"

In 1896, the year when Eaton avowed in her letter "A Plea for the Chinaman" that "[i]t needs a Chinaman to stand up for a Chinese cause," she recommenced publishing short stories in literary magazines after a four-year hiatus (5). Unlike her previous literary publications featuring western conventional subjects and signed "Edith Eaton," these stories, unfolding under the

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Supported by a Brooklyn Doctor," published on 29 September 1896. The first three letters were all signed "E.E." The last one, signed "Edith Eaton," was a response to the polemics incited by the previous "Plea." Chapman maintained that in revealing her apparently Anglo name "Edith Eaton" in the fourth letter, Eaton's public siding with the Chinese transcended "the essentialist understanding of identity" ("Introduction" xl).

[8] The modus operandi that scholars have deployed to salvage her early journalistic works from anonymity is a telling witness: both White-Parks and Chapman used the subject matter, tone, plots, and themes recurring in her later short stories to locate unsigned works in the Montreal papers. Observing that Eaton was recycling phrases and paragraphs across different works, Chapman argued that "self-plagiarism is one of her defining traits as a self-supporting writer who used journalism as raw material for later fiction or reprinted earlier writing in different publications to fill word-counts and meet deadlines" ("Introduction").

Chinese name "Sui Seen Far," unequivocally told of the lives of Chinese. As Eaton continued to make literary presence in different venues throughout her life, "Sui Seen Far" would soon evolve into "Sue Seen Far" and "Sui Sin Fah," and ultimately solidify into "Sui Sin Far" from late 1900 and onward—the one permanently stamped onto the spine of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* and carved into her gravestone.

The name, with its iteration and resonance, is the subject of a cornucopia of scholarly debate. A major bone of contention is whether Sui Sin Far is to be reckoned as an essential authoritative identity or a mere pseudonym.[9] Other strands of discussion revolve around how to make sense of the name's metamorphosis and around its intricate meanings. "Sui Sin Far" is an approximate English transliteration of "水仙花" in Cantonese, which respectively stand for "water," "fairy," and "flower." When taken together they represent the white or yellow flower beloved of southeastern China from whence the majority of Chinese immigrants to North America in the nineteenth century hailed. As a symbol of purity, elegance, and dignity (Yin 112), the plant is classified as narcissus in botanical taxonomy. In the nineteenth century it was commonly known as "Chinese sacred lily" or "Chinese narcissus," but in Eaton's own writings it is invariably referred to as "Chinese lily";[10] scholars, for unknown reason, have also interpreted the name as water lily.

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[9] Ammons insists in using Sui Sin Far "out of respect for her agency" (qtd. in Chon 38); citing Eaton's signatures and autograph in her correspondences as evidence, both White-Parks and Cutter opt for Sui Sin Far as an indexical sign for her Chinese heritage (White-Parks xvi) and for her authority and authorship (Cutter 273). Howard prefers "Edith Eaton" as it governs the organic unity of her life and legacy (121); Leighton argues that "Sui Sin Far" was often read as essentialization of racial authenticity, which conflicts with the agenda of Eaton's text (5). Given the historical nature of this thesis, I primarily use "Edith Eaton" for the same reason as Howard.

[10] Her earliest references to the plant and the transliteration were in her Montreal journalism, when she reports that exchanging "shui-sin-fa" flower, or the "Chinese lily," is an important part of the customs of the Chinese New Year (Chapman, "Introduction" xlvi). In an uncollected story published in the *New York Evening Post* in 1910, Eaton starts the story with the transliterated lyrics of "Sui Sin Far," a Chinese folk song she may have transcribed by herself. "Chinese Lily" is also used to explain her pen name in her obituaries.

While Xiao-huang Yin alerts us to the different connotations of these plants in Chinese, it is notable that Eaton also leveraged the different implications these plants convey across cultures. Eaton's dismissal of the more concrete and accurate translation of "narcissus"[11] suggests that she was consciously defamiliarizing and exoticizing the name for her English-language readers. It also implies she was circumventing the flower's negative symbolism of selfishness and self-centeredness in western culture, which would easily play into the hands of the racial stereotype that portrayed Chinese as "the most stolid and insensible to feeling of all races" ("Leaves" 127). Among the variegation of Eaton's self-references in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, the most conspicuous happens in "The Chinese Lily," in which she names the heroine "Sin Far" and explains that "the meaning . . . was Pure Flower, or Chinese Lily" (181). Comparing the 1908 original periodical publication of the story in *Out West* and its 1912 reprint in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Jonathan Hsy observes that the name is shortened from "Sui Sin Far" to "Sin Far" yet the English meaning is expanded from merely "Chinese Lily" to "Pure Flower, or Chinese Lily" (94). Hsy argues that the doubled designations offer a syncretic reading of the story: while "Pure Flower" calls to mind the sacred lotus in Chinese Buddhist and Taoist iconography, "Chinese Lily" easily evokes a vision of Virgin Mary for Christian readers, and together the flower stages a queer, racialized scene of Annunciation (94–6). Hsy's interpretation of the name's affordance overlooks the concluding scene when Sin Far sacrifices her own life so that her disabled friend Mermei can be carried *down* the ladder and be rescued from the fire. With Lin John's words of comfort that "Sin Far is in the land of happy spirits," Eaton casts Sin Far's sacrifice as the Assumption of Mary and subtly upends the connotations of self-

[11] Incidental to my research is an attempt to reconstruct Eaton's reading history on Chinese culture, and there is ample evidence that Eaton was an meticulous reader of James Dryer Ball's *Things Chinese*, in which the plant is unambiguously identified as narcissus.

centeredness and selfishness of narcissus. The name thus signifies a counternarrative to western canon and western prejudice. In another self-reference, Eaton compares her imagination to "the Chinese Lily . . . unfolding a flower . . . spring[ing] from our own slime and mud – from our own unworthy selves" (qtd. in Chapman, "Introduction" xlvi). In light of this figuration, Chapman argues that the name Sui Sin Far represents Eaton's commitment to literary realism, to "transmute the realities she had encountered in her journalism . . . into realist and naturalist stories even as she also transmuted aspects of her own autobiography into her fiction" ("Introduction" xlvi–xlvii). As Ammons concludes, the versatility of the name effectively demands interrogation from readers of both cultures and serves as an index to her biography and her works. Donning the cap of Sui Sin Far and its variations,[12] Eaton created and nurtured a complicated literary persona and focalized her writing in the Chinese American experience.

In Periodicals

In 1898, Eaton migrated from Montreal to the West Coast of the United States and resided on the Pacific Coast until moving to Boston in 1910, where she remained before returning to Montreal in 1913. Her fifteen-year sojourn renders America the locus of a better half of her literary career and, especially, of the growth of Sui Sin Far and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. The American literary discourse Eaton was participating in is basically twofold. In terms of print media and genre, Eaton had been proactively composing and promoting short stories in the niche of periodical press. As to the predominant subject matter of her writing, Chinese was "growing in popularity with publishers and their readers as the century reached its conclusion and North

[12] For different subject matters Eaton was self-consciously constructing personas accordingly. Her Jamaica news reporting was all signed "Firefly," and her travel column in *the Los Angeles Express* was written in the voice of a male Chinese "Wing Sing." "The Alaska Widow," a short fiction featuring American colonial and imperial violence against the indigenous people and the Filipinos, was signed "Edith Eaton."

America's interest in 'brown people' increased, step-by-step with the annexation of Hawaii and the Philippine and Spanish-American wars" (White-Parks 85). This nexus situates Eaton in the constituency of American women writers of the nineteenth century, who, according to Cane and Alves, consciously exploited the periodical press to intellectually and politically participate in the social discourses:

> These writing women employ the periodical, both as newspaper and as magazine, concurrently in three ways: for social and political advocacy, for the critique of gender roles and social expectations, and for refashioning the periodical as a more inclusive genre that both articulates and obscures such distinctions as class, race, and gender. (Cane and Alves 1)

With previous experiences in publishing in magazines and in journalism, Eaton was alive to periodicals' affordances for her voice to be heard. The ideological strategies she exercised in periodical writing would be woven into the fabric of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*—as the inscription of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* demonstrates, the majority of the book was reprinted from a wide range of magazines and newspapers she had contributed to from 1898 to 1910.[13]

The relationship that Eaton had established with Charles Fletcher Lummis, the editor of the *Land of Sunshine*, offers a case study of the complex negotiation that had dominated Eaton's publishing history. One of the first editors to bring out Eaton's Chinese-themed stories in 1896, Lummis continued to publish her works through 1908, and kept a long-term correspondence with Eaton. A New England native and Harvard dropout, Lummis settled in California in his mid-20s in 1884 and accepted editorship at the *Land of Sunshine* (renamed *Out West* in 1902) a year later. His vision for the magazine was spelt out in a letter: "the magazine should remain specifically Western. If we become of "general literature," we shall be in ridiculous competition with the Eastern magazines. . . . The local field is literally bounded less." Despite Lummis' conscious

[13] For a list of original periodical publications of those collected in Mrs. Spring Fragrance, see Appendix A.

avoidance of competition, the *Land of Sunshine*'s promotion and advancement of the American West was in keeping with the "moral values and aesthetic of high culture, as well as the ideology of regionalism" typical of the Eastern magazines, which sought to create an exclusive "regional cultural identity for the white elite" (Ferens 84–6). Lummis' "local field" of California was also where Chinese immigration first emerged and most concentrated, and where anti-Chinese sentiment gathered most momentum. Lummis was apparently invested in the essentialization of race and racism. In a 1901 editorial on the renewal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, he analogized the Chinese immigrants as indigestible "potatoes" in a republic of "apples," who shall "[stay] foreign" (368–9). "The Chinaman does not come to stay," writes Lummis, "He comes to go as soon as he can afford to" (Lummis, "In the Lion's Den" 369).

In light of Lummis' editorial and racial advocacy, Ferens sees his pubishing Eaton's Chinese stories as benevolent yet exploitative. On one hand, the *Land of Sunshine* provided Eaton a steady trickle of creative outlet in the first years of her literary career; on the other, Lummis may have availed of the Chineseness in both her pen name and her stories to enhance the progressive, "tolerant and enlightened" image of the magazine, and, in the meantime, to "reinforce white hegemony on the West Coast" (Ferens 83–84, 86). In their correspondence, Eaton implied that her stories had undergone editing by Lummis to suit the aesthetic demands of *Land of Sunshine*. Eaton published twelve works in Lummis' *Land of Sunshine*/*Out West*, four of which were collected in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, including "The Sing Song Woman," "The Smuggling of Tie Co," "Lin John," and "The Chinese Lily."[14] The titles of these stories capitalize on the stereotypes associated with the Chinese immigrants. For example, "sing song" has been widely employed as an acoustic metonym for Chinese in western culture since the

[14] All references to and quotes from the four stories in this section are based on the 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*.

nineteenth century as a mocking reference to the tonal cadence of the Chinese language. Moreover, "sing song girls" were known as the lower class women who were trained to entertain with dance and performance, evoking the prevalent belief that Chinese women were symbols of "social decay, exploitation, and even slavery" during the exclusion era (Lee 93). Both "The Smuggling of Tie Co" and "Lin John" are reminiscent of the popularized synecdoche of "John Chinaman" by which journalistic and political discourses visualized Chinese illegal immigrants as "racially inferior, wily tricksters" since the 1880s (Lee 165). In terms of plot, both "The Smuggling of Tie Co" and "The Chinese Lily" end with the death of a Chinese protagonist and "The Sing Song Woman" with the characters returning to China. "Lin John," in particular, portrays a Chinese woman who voluntarily refuses to be released from "a humiliating and secret bondage" (220). The ending of these stories seem to resonate with Lummis' belief that the Chinese immigrants are unassimilable and "irreconcilably alien" ("In the Lion's Den" 369). Indeed, as Ferens argues, the tragic endings may well have been read as subscribing to "popular opinions about the destiny of the Chinese in America" (86).

Enmeshed in this editorial patronage is Eaton's political critique and advocacy. In the previous section I have demonstrated how religious syncretism acts as Eaton's self-referential counternarrative to western prejudice in "The Chinese Lily." In a similar vein, "The Sing Song Woman" furnishes a rejoinder to the "heathen Chinee" stereotype. The story begins with Ah Oi devoutly praying to a Chinese deity: "One does not need to be a Christian to be religious, and Ah Oi's parents had carefully instructed their daughter according to their light, and it was not their fault if their daughter was a despised actress in an American Chinatown" (236). The religious, domestic education of Ah Oi serves as the axis of symmetry between the two negations ("does not need" and "not their fault"), by which Eaton subtly pins the blame on Christian hegemony

and challenges the Christian notion of morality ("a despised actress in American Chinatown"). "The Smuggling of Tie Co" encapsulates notable themes and strategies in Eaton's writing. Chinese illegal immigration was a subject that Eaton had often taken up in her early journalism. In a one-paragraph article in the *Montreal Star*, Eaton equates Chinese smugglers and their "human freight" to "the underground railway, by which the slaves used to escape into Canada" ("Chinese Visitors" 4). By tapping into the legacies of slavery, she lashes out in recrimination at the "tariff walls" and "the wire fences of Christian civilization" ("Chinese Visitors" 4). In the same way as the workings of enslavement, Chinese illegal immigration was not a fait accompli inherent in the "Chinese problem," but a social and political construct premised by the dehumanizing Chinese exclusion. Eaton's representation of illegal immigration, as Min Song and Cutter both have observed in "The Smuggling of Tie Co," was focused on the agency and autonomy of Chinese immigrants. In Eaton's fiction writing, smuggling is often concomitant with gender crossing, and in the same vein, she contests the construction of gender binary. In "The Smuggling of Tie Co," the "young Chinaman" Tie Co, who is a secret admirer of the white smuggler Jack Fabian, asks to be smuggled into the United States and then commits suicide on the way in an attempt to save Fabian from punishment.[15] The story ends with the discovery that "the body found with Tie Co's face and dressed in Tie Co's clothes was the body of a girl—a woman" (192). As Cutter interprets, the convergence of border and gender crossings embodied by Tie Co "represents a process whereby a hidden, forbidden knowledge insinuates its way into a binary opposition, and in so doing begins to dismantle it" ("Smuggling across the Borders" 147).

[15] I should point out that there is also an element of self-referentiality in "The Smuggling of Tie Co." Eaton's letter to Lummis indicates that the character of the white smuggler Fabian, who has escaped prison at the beginning of the story, "was drawn from life" (). Mary Chapman's archival discoveries reveal that the Eaton family was significantly involved in Montreal's smuggling scenes at the turn of the century. In 1896, Eaton's father Edward was arrested for smuggling Chinese from Canada to the United States, and he later escaped from jail ("Introduction" xxvi–xxvii).

Lummis, however, set little store by Eaton's literary ingenuity and critical agency. In his biographical sketch of Eaton in the November 1900 issue of *Land of Sunshine*, Lummis describes Eaton as "the delicate little Sui Sin Fah, a 'discovery' of this magazine" ("In Western Letters" [Nov. 1900] 336). As Ferens points out, Lummis' emphasis on Eaton's physical and literary slightness ("a wee, spiritual body, too frail to retain much strength for literature") is grounded in racial rhetoric ("with the breeding that is a step beyond our strenuous Saxon blood") (87). Cutter's analysis of the correspondence between Lummis and Eaton further demonstrates that Lummis was unconvinced Eaton's literary artistry and sought to wedge her in the confines of "an amusing contributor of exotic sketches" ("Sui Sin Far's Letters" 268–271). In 1911, when Eaton confided to Lummis that her next ambition was to write a novel, Lummis voiced patronizing reservations about her capability: "I shall be interested about that novel --- but have an idea you had better stick to short stories for a while" (31 July 1911).

Cutter reads the relationship between Eaton and Lummis as an illustration of how editors attempted to "shape concepts of ethnic identity through their editing, marketing, packaging, and mentoring of writer" ("Sui Sin Far's Letters" 273). Another case in point for Eaton is Frederick W. Burrows, editor of the *New England Magazine* who had published five stories by Eaton. In his recommendation of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Burrows describes the author in aestheticized and Orientalized language: "Miss Eaton is gifted with a fine sense of humor that is as dainty and delicate as the grotesqueries of a Chinese fan;" he also glosses over and downplays Eaton's subversive social critique: "There is but small hint of a possible dark and tragic side of the story, and it is well that is so" (191). This shaping—and Eaton's negotiation and resistance thereof—would constantly accompany her literary career and be embodied in the making of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*.

Chapter 2: "The Merchandising of Literature:" Edith Eaton and the Publishing Houses

Sometime between December 1909 and January 1910, Edith Eaton relocated from Seattle to Boston with the purpose of "planting a few Eurasian thoughts in Western literature" and "publishing a book of Chinese-American stories" (Eaton, "Sui Sin Far" 6), and she had achieved both before ill health forced her to return to her parental home in Montreal in 1913. Scholars have generally regarded Eaton's Boston years as the high tide of her writing, during which her authorial voice matured and her works emerged in major, widely-circulated periodicals, speaking to "the largest and most far-reaching audience of her writing career" (White-Parks 146, 149). The climax, both of this period and her career, was undoubtedly A. C. McClurg & Co.'s publication of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in June 1912, at which time the firm was also considering publication of another book manuscript of hers. With newly discovered evidences from the archives, this chapter presents a more accurate and detailed narrative of how *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* came into being.

Houghton Mifflin Company's Rejection

In situating the publication of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in the context of Edith Eaton's Boston period, several peculiarities have stood out but gone untreated by scholars. Firstly, granted, her relocation to the East Coast in search of a publisher was commonsensical: the East Coast—New York, Boston, and Philadelphia—was still indisputably the center of literature and publishing in North America and promised convenient access to publishing houses and "to national literary markets" (White-Parks 148). However, as a slight deviation from Eaton's strategic geographical shift, her publisher was neither a Bostonian nor a New Yorker, but Chicago's A. C. McClurg & Co. A more curious point lies in the turnaround time. For a

dauntless and prolific writer at her professional apex, it took Eaton more than two years after setting her mind to landing a publisher before she found favor in Midwest, not to mention that she had "conceived the ambition to write a book about half Chinese" at the age of eight (Eaton, "Sui Sin Far" 6). The delay is even more striking when compared to her younger sister Winifred Eaton's success: by 1910, under the faux-Japanese name Onoto Watanna, Winifred had published at least six novels with major New York houses. In this connection, my recent archival discovery of two Houghton Mifflin Company's reader reports of Edith Eaton's manuscript submission serves to furnish an episode of her publishing history hitherto unknown[16].

In 1909, Edith Eaton mailed two sets of manuscripts[17] from Seattle to Boston for the consideration of Houghton Mifflin Company. On both readers' reports,[18] the author's name was recorded as "Edith Eaton," with her Chinese pen name "Sui Sin Far" in brackets. Submitted on August 11, her first manuscript was a collection of seventeen short stories of Chinese children,

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[16] This discovery also challenges the present biographical knowledge of Eaton's Boston years. For her time of arrival in Boston, past scholarship has only been able to make rough estimates as either 1909 or 1910, based on her autobiographical account of May 1912 that she had "resided in Boston now for about two years." In addition, White-Parks has concluded from Eaton's correspondence that she had one "single address" in Boston, that is, 146 Concord Street West (47), even though in a 1911 autobiographical essay Eaton hinted that she had moved out of her first residence in Boston due to hostilities of the landlady and lodgers once they learned of her ethnicity ("Persecution and Oppression"). The second report shows that Houghton Mifflin made two attempts to return the manuscript to Eaton. On 6 December 1909, the manuscript was first returned apparently to the Seattle address where she had sent both manuscripts from. The first record was crossed out and replaced by "ret'd to author at 13 Concord Sq. Boston . . . 25 Jan" 1910. These entries significantly narrow down the time range for her arrival between December 1909 and January 1910. Two-minute walk from the only address White-Parks has located, 13 Concord Square was likely Eaton's first settlement in Boston, where she had suffered "petty . . . Eastern prejudice" ("Persecution and Oppression").

[17] Other than the titular stories, "The Tangled Kites" and "The Sing Song Woman," it is not clear from the reports what exactly were included in either manuscript, rendering reconstruction of their contents impossible. The second report did leave some clues. According to the jotting of Herbert R. Gibbs, the second manuscript contained stories previously printed in the *Century* and the *Independent*. Eaton's only *Century* publication was "A Chinese Boy-Girl." By the time of the submission, she had made two appearances in the *Independent*: the autobiographical "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian" and the story "In the Land of the Free," but the imprecision in Gibbs' account made me suspect the inclusion of "A White Woman Who Married A Chinaman" and its sequel "Her Chinese Husband," which were to see print in the *Independent* shortly.

[18] For clarity, these reports are referred to in the works cited list by their titles in Houghton Library's collection inventory, without mention of readers' names. However, according to my research, it is demonstrable that both reports were co-authored: the first by Herbert R. Gibbs and Susan M. Francis and the second by Gibbs and Frank H. Allen.

grouped under the title "The Tangled Kites & Other Stories."[19] Eaton had been contributing regularly stories of Chinese children to women's magazines and children's magazines since 1908, and this submission was perhaps a tentative curation catering to the taste of Houghton Mifflin, a firm that had brought out many titles for the young readers, including those of Hans Christian Andersen, Helen Campbell Weeks, and Frank Stockton. The first two decades of the century, in particular, saw the house at full throttle en route to the ranks of the country's biggest educational publishers. Till this day still known and active as a major publisher of textbooks, Houghton Mifflin has long been invested in children's literature and educational publishing since its inception, an investment deeply rooted in a concern for the American national character. When the firm started as Hurd & Houghton in mid-1860s, Henry Oscar Houghton was disgruntled at its own import of English journals and textbooks for juveniles, whose shoddy workmanship, irrelevance to the scenes of American life, and "namby-pamby" embodiment of the social class system so incongruous with American democracy he found unwholesome and distasteful (Ballou 112). Engaging the dedicated service of Horace E. Scudder, the firm published its own juvenile periodical, *Riverside Magazine for Young People*, in 1866. Like Houghton, Scudder firmly believed in the role American letters should play in the cultivation of American character and that "a study of American classics would give young people a reasoned patriotism" (Ballou 336). In 1882, Scudder, by then editor-in-chief at Houghton Mifflin and acknowledged "authority on literature and education" (Ballou 335), launched "The Riverside Literature Series," a popular and ever-growing "series of small volumes consisting of selections from the works of the most eminent American writers, with special reference to the needs and

[19] "The Tangled Kites" was first published in *Good Housekeeping* in 1908. It was later reprinted in several periodicals and anthologized, together with "The Heart's Desire" and "The Deceptive Mat," in Kate Louise Brown's *A Third Reader* in 1911 (being part of the "Metcalf-Call Readers" intended for school use). Unlike the latter two, "The Tangled Kites" is not collected in the 1912 *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*.

interests of young people, particularly in school" (*Fifty Years of Publishing* 6). The same year saw the establishment of the Educational Department venturing into the textbook market with the visionary educator-turned-editor Henry Nathan Wheeler at the helm.

Around the time when Edith Eaton submitted her first manuscript in 1909, Houghton Mifflin was vigorously expanding and upgrading its educational publishing, keen in the belief in education as "the greatest of all the American adventures of the twentieth century" (*Fifty Years of Publishing* 20). However, the firm's Susan M. Francis and Herbert R. Gibbs—two readers who reviewed Eaton's first manuscript—failed to see how her "slight" stories of Chinese children would fit into this grand picture. Francis nodded to Eaton's craftsmanship as a children's writer, reporting that "prettily told, & each with a moral[, the] tales, after their kind, can be well-spoken of & respectfully treated." Francis may have presumed from Eaton's biography that she "has a rather unusual knowledge of life in the empire [of China]," an assumption echoed by Gibbs, who acknowledged Eaton's "unusual advantage" in her "Chinese and American (or English) instincts and perceptions" ("Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far)"). Both readers, however, rejected the manuscript on the grounds of its slender portion: "they are very short — would not make more than from two to four printed pages each;" "it is very slight material for a book, & would require much illustrating of a graceful sort – & then it would be hardly worth while" ("Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far)"). By Gibbs' estimation, the body text of "The Tangled Kites & Other Stories" would make a printed volume of sixty-eight pages at the very most, a paltry sum in contrast to the contemporary juvenile publications of Houghton Mifflin easily counting more than two-hundred pages. One exception is Kate Douglas Wiggin's 1902 *The Diary of a Goose Girl*, whose body text amounted to 117 pages, peppered with nearly sixty in-text illustrations by British artist Claud A. Shepperson. Brought to the house by way of

Scudder, Wiggin was a faithful and beloved juvenile writer at Houghton Mifflin, proving prolific and profitable since the firm's first success with her *Bird's Christmas Carol* in 1888. If Wiggin's reputation and sales potential found favor with the firm and warranted the wherewithal to perfect and promote her thin volume, the "slight[ness]," prima facie of Eaton's manuscript, but perhaps more of her literary status and of her marginal, un-American subject-matter, foreclosed the firm's venturing into the same investment.

Less than two weeks after its receipt, the first manuscript was returned to Eaton with a letter on August 24, 1909. The tone of the letter, as suggested by Gibbs' recommendation in the report, "to decline encouragingly," might have spurred her on to attempt consideration by the firm with another collection of twenty-two stories, and before long the new manuscript arrived at Park Street on October 13. Whereas in the first report her bibliography was remarked by Francis as "pleasant little articles written for minor magazines" ("Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far)"), for this submission, Eaton may have learned to revamp and validate her literary presence by invoking names of more renowned periodicals where her works had emerged. In this connection, the *Century* and the *Independent* stood out to Gibbs, followed by a sweeping mention of "Western papers and magazines" ("Miss Edith Eaton"). As demonstrated in my previous chapter, up to this point, Eaton had been residing in the West Coast for ten years, and therefore the majority of her non-juvenile creative writings had been published in regional periodicals in the American West, such as the *Land of Sunshine/Out West*, the *Overland Monthly*, and the *Westerner*. According to Edward Chielens, in this time period, regional magazines in the West were eclipsed by "the so-called 'quality' monthlies" in the East that were starting to take a "monopolistic role," among which was Houghton Mifflin's own *Atlantic Monthly* (x). Since he jotted down only the two Eastern magazines, Gibbs was presumably unimpressed by Eaton's literary status.

In lieu of enlarging the previous collection of children's stories, Eaton dispensed with her juvenile audience in the second submission, with her title now being "The Sing Song Woman and Other Stories of the Chinese in America." The first manuscript, albeit telling the stories of Chinese children, makes no mention of nationality and ethnicity in the title, and thus demands her readers to infer "Chineseness" from her stories, whereas in the new title, racial tensions between "the Chinese" and "America" come to the fore. To bolster the significance of race as an incentive in the consideration of Houghton Mifflin's editors, Eaton also confided in a fuller account of her biographical background and literary (or even, political) mission. Refashioning herself as a mixed-race writer engaged in the Chinese American subject matter, Eaton was strategically appealing to Houghton Mifflin's emerging interest in publishing non-white and/or mixed-race authors. The turn of the century saw Houghton Mifflin divesting itself of its long-standing cautious conservatism and coming out from the New England elitist "high-culture niche" (Sedgwick 235). The emblematic locus of the change was the editorial shift at the *Atlantic*.[20] In 1895, Walter Hines Page, born and educated in the South, joined the firm with the task of rejuvenating the *Atlantic* and steering the magazine into the new century. As "a modern believer in social progress," Page reoriented the magazine to a younger and more diverse readership and reformed its style and focus to engage strenuously in contemporary American life (Sedgwick 248, 255–6). During Page's brief reign, Houghton Mifflin welcomed an increasing number of "ethnic writers advocating reform and affirming the value of ethnic identity" to the stable, including Abraham Cahan, Israel Zangwill, John S. Durham, Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. DuBois, and it was thanks to Page's genuine appreciation and persevering instigation

[20] From 1890 to 1908, the firm's general publications and the *Atlantic* largely shared the same editorial supervision. Scudder was wearing two hats from 1890 and 1898, and after he passed away in 1902, Bliss Perry divided his time between leading the magazine and the Trade Department. Editorial staff also overlapped.

that the hesitant Scudder and Mifflin finally agreed to publish African American realist Charles W. Chesnutt's first two books (Sedgwick 259, 267). Vested with his progressive editorial legacy, Page's successor Bliss Perry continued publishing ethnic writers and kept abreast of the surge in immigration in the first decade of the new century (Sedgwick 309). A "liberal humanist," as Ellery Sedgwick[21] has defined him, Perry openly denounced racism and racial violence and suppression at home and abroad (307). Beginning with a trio of autobiographical essays by Yankton Dakota writer Zitkala-Ša, Perry's *Atlantic* would present an array of advocates for ethnic pluralism and racial justice (Sedgwick 307–10), among which was former diplomat John W. Foster's condemnation of the shameful treatment and exclusion of Chinese immigrants by the American people and, most "disgrace[fully]," "by the officials of Federal and local governments" (Foster 125).

As a precursory feeder of the house's publication list (Ballou 475–480), the *Atlantic*'s embrace of ethnic diversity in the 1900s may have encouraged Edith Eaton that her stories of Chinese in America would aptly find standing in the shelves of Houghton Mifflin. The readers of her work, Herbert R. Gibbs and Francis H. Allen, however, were not so persuaded. Gibbs identified the dramatis personae of the second manuscript as "full-blood or half-blood Chinese in America" and described Eaton as having "the keenest sympathy with her mother's people, has herself felt the obloquy that is so often the lot of the half-breed" ("Miss Edith Eaton"). To what extent Gibbs' account was his own judgment instead of quoting straight from Eaton's covering letter is unknowable. His terse rendition of Eaton's literary mission was nevertheless telling: "Most of them . . . are intended to interpret the Chinese and win for them more human

[21] Note that the Ellery Sedgwick referenced by this thesis was not the long-time editor and publisher of *Atlantic Monthly*, but his grandson Ellery Sedgwick III, a retired literary scholar of Longwood University who authored a history of the magazine up to Sedgwick's time.

consideration on the part of Caucasians" ("Miss Edith Eaton"). Gibbs's rhetoric endorses and participates in the Orientalist discourse of Chinese inscrutability, and frames Eaton's agenda as exacting a moral levy on Eurocentric American subjectivity. Again complimentary of Eaton's capability of "real skill and power," Gibbs rejected the second manuscript for its lack of consistency of that same skill and power. As a collection, "the stories are very unequal," wrote Gibbs, declaring the book a lost cause ("Miss Edith Eaton").

If Gibbs' tone could be excused as dispassionate, the report of Allen, to whom the manuscript was recorded submitted to, was scathing. With strong interests in science and nature writing, Allen held a half-century tenure as the naturalist editor at Houghton Mifflin. In his report, Allen started by convention with an eye on the literary artistry of the manuscript, which he found subpar: "[The stories] are simply and unaffectedly told in a style that is respectable and without distinction. They are for the most part very short and slight, containing little in the way of plot" ("Miss Edith Eaton"). For Allen, the value of Eaton's stories was probably more scientific than literary, which hinged on their expository illumination of the "character and ways" of the obscure Chinese. This merit was limited at best, and was outstripped by its fatal flaw: "Too many of them have to do with the mixed bloods, children generally of Chinese fathers and white mothers" ("Miss Edith Eaton"). Although he downplayed Eaton's manuscript as "containing little that is striking," the "too many" mixed-race characters in the manuscript nevertheless stood out and compelled his attention and alert. Allen's comment on the parentage of Eaton's mixed-race characters is strongly reminiscent of the sexual and eugenicist anxieties embedded in "Yellow Peril" discourse, wherewith, born to Chinese father and white mothers, Eaton's "children" would embody the predation and contamination of white female purity by

Chinese men and prefigure the loss of exclusive white male subjugation of their female counterparts (Okihiro 104–8).

To complete his argument, Allen used rhetoric that clumsily camouflages racial scrutiny and eugenicist/anti-miscegenation misgivings with genteel aesthetic condescension. In a Kantian vein, he indicted the manuscript for falling short on taste, basing his judgment on the subjective feeling of displeasure (qualified, perhaps out of courtesy, as "not particularly pleasant") evoked by Eaton's mixed-race subject—a feeling universally shared in the moralized and legitimized exclusion and racism of the day and tacitly validated by the quadrumvirate vetoes, signed in the report, of Allen, Gibbs, editor-in-chief Ferris Greenslet, and president George H. Mifflin. In parenthesis, Allen colligated—in fact essentialized—the judgment of (dis)taste with a subtle reference to Eaton's own mixed racial heritage. "The author's treatment [of the mixed bloods] is entirely unexceptionable," he writes, "—except possibly on the score of good taste, she herself belonging to that class [of mixed bloods]" ("Miss Edith Eaton"). Much as Allen attempted to operate his verdict on a literary-aesthetic footing, his aesthetics was heavily informed by white masculinist preoccupation with racial essentialism. In a few months' time Allen would see himself in decades' endorsement and supervision of the firm's best-selling "The Twins Series" by Lucy Fitch Perkins, whose inaugural purpose was "to instruct American children in their common humanity with those of other lands" and to nurture in them compassion for their good "foreign born companions" (Ballou 504). In practice, however, Perkins' seemingly pluralist banner was flown in tandem with racial prejudices, as "in the case of racialized twins she does not allow them to transcend their status as quasi-imperial subjects" and bars them from the white-only access to "autonomy and citizenship in the United States" (Dillon 87). Whereas the nativist and racially exclusive "Twins" earned meticulous nurture from Allen, it is little wonder

that Eaton's half-white "children," fathered by Chinese, found his neglect. The book "could hardly know a success in any sense of the word," as Allen emphatically excoriated.

By 1909, Houghton Mifflin was braving the new century with expanded focus on educational publishing, re-equipment with a liberal or even radical editorial voice, and incorporation to assure financial and organizational stability. In this renewal, its editorial staff, who shouldered the tasks of sifting out new authors for publication from submissions, were rather lagging behind. Francis, Gibbs, and Allen (who, even for the conservative Scudder, lacked creative and aggressive sensibilities) upheld the Victorian ideals of Thoreau, Longfellow, and Tennyson. They preferred fictions with "a pleasant theme" to realism's crudities, and "novels with 'unwelcome episodes of illegitimacy' were better left unpublished" (Ballou 550). When Eaton's two manuscripts reached Houghton Mifflin, Perry had just departed for full-time professorship. In his place was Ferris Greenslet, whose conduct of publication combined "high literary convention and commercial prudence" (Sedgwick 280; Ballou 547), and under whose directorship the firm would regain a reputation for conservatism among young writers in 1920s (Ballou 549). In his profit-oriented consideration of a manuscript, Perry prioritized commercial attractiveness to the intended audience (Sedgwick 287; Ballou 551). For Houghton Mifflin's editorial lineup of 1909, Eaton's "slight" renown and her "not particularly pleasant" mixed-race subjectivity failed to measure up to their literary standards and had little commercial potential.

A. C. McClurg & Co.'s Acceptance

From her periodical oeuvre and her correspondence with Charles Lummis and the *Century*'s editor R. U. Johnson, it is evident that Eaton was tenacious and single-minded about her ambition to make herself "useful, known, heard and admired by the wise and the brave"

(Eaton, "Persecution and Oppression" 426). According to Eaton's autobiographical account, Boston's proximity to her family in Montreal provided her a strong social support system so that she could devote herself to writing and to publishing her book, unencumbered by anxiety over subsistence ("Sui Sin Far" 6). The two reader reports suggest that she was actively and determinedly exploring opportunities in the leading centers of publishing on the East Coast. Soon after Houghton Mifflin's rejection, Eaton welcomed a particularly prolific period in 1910, with thirty works published throughout the year. During this time she might have been trying other eastern publishers aside from Houghton Mifflin, but, before further archival evidence is available, we would have to make do with guesswork.[22] What is certain is the fact that *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* dropped anchor in Midwest, in Chicago's A. C. McClurg and Company.

A pivotal contribution of Lucas Dietrich's historical research is his delineation of the literary publishing history of A. C. McClurg & Co. and discovery of the role of Francis Browne in the acceptance of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. With origins in the city's oldest book and stationary store, W. W. Barlow and Company, A. C. McClurg and Company was the leading forerunner of the numerous book-trade firms springing up in Chicago in the nineteenth century (Tanselle 9).[23] A crucial figure that would set the tone for the house's early publishing business is the eponymous Alexander Caldwell McClurg. While the firm was famed for distribution, wholesale, and retail, McClurg was preoccupied with the literary side of the business. The rare book section he carefully developed rendered the firm's bookstore a "literary landmark" in Chicago and

[22] For example, it is possible that she may have tried the houses that published her sister's Japanese tales, such as Harper & Brothers, the Macmillan Company, and Dodd, Mead & Company. And it is all too tempting to speculate that the geographical shift of the imprint of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is a result of a categorical, unanimous rejection by the east.

[23] Despite Tanselle's 1965 exhortation calling for detailed historiography of individual American imprints, critical scholarship on the firm is still limited. In Tanselle's *Guide to the Study of United States Imprints* he lists a 1941 master's thesis by Jack C. Morris of U of Illinois Urbana on the firm's history up to 1900 (539), but I have not been able to access this work. My discussion of A. C. McClurg & Co. is primarily based on Dietrich's 2020 book and my own visit to the A. C. McClurg & Co. records at the Newberry Library.

bolstered the firm's literary reputation (Dietrich, ch. 4). As the president, McClurg placed the publishing department directly under his supervision and enlisted the editor of the *Lakeside Monthly* Francis Fisher Browne as the house's literary adviser (Fleming 514). Both McClurg and Browne were dedicated to elevating the status of the American West in the nation's literary publishing and criticism, and in 1880, they established the house magazine *Dial*, a journal of literary criticism welcomed as "a symbol of the growing metropolitan independence of criticism in Chicago" (Fleming 516) and hailed for many years as "one of the nation's best literary magazines" (Tebbel 449). After General McClurg had passed away in 1901, Browne's eldest son Francis Granger Browne was appointed as head of the publishing department. Under his father's influence, F. G. Browne had a life-long involvement with literary business. Browne was "educated in *The Dial* . . . beg[inning] at 12 to assist his father in literary work" (Lummis, "In Western Letters" [Aug.–Sept. 1901] 139), and, upon graduating high school with a thesis "The Yankee in Literature" in 1888, he entered A. C. McClurg & Co. and worked under his father at the *Dial*, first as its treasurer and secretary and later as full business manager when the magazine became independent in 1892. Browne served as McClurg's head of publishing for ten years, before venturing into his own publishing business, F. G. Browne & Co., in 1912.[24]

In her July 13, 1911 letter to Charles F. Lummis, Eaton announced that "A. C. McClurg of Chicago are to bring out a book of my Chinese stories this spring . . . They say they like my work and believe they have a good field for it." McClurg's "good field" for Eaton's "Chinese stories" can be mapped onto the distinctive array of the firm's other titles. Both Dietrich and White-Parks have noted that McClurg had a tradition of publishing women and/or multiethnic literature. The first publication under the imprint of A. C. McClurg & Co. was George P.

[24] My biographical account of Browne is based on archival research. Sources include the *Annual Report* of the Board of Education, McClurg's corporate report, and historical newspapers.

Upton's *Women in Music* (1886), and in 1892 McClurg published "arguably the first Jewish American novel from a mainstream press" (Dietrich ch. 4). This sensitivity was carried forward during F. G. Browne's directorship. Among the first books he published was Rosa Belle Holt's *Rugs Oriental and Occidental, Antique & Modern* (1901), and Dietrich's research shows that W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) was the outcome of Browne's solicitation (Dietrich ch. 4). In the immediate years preceding *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Browne directed the publication of several books dealing with East Asian subject matter, including Sara Pike Conger's *Letters from China* (1909), Robert Ames Bennet's *The Shogun's Daughter* (1910), Joseph King Goodrich's *The Coming China* (1911). After Eaton and McClurg, in 1913, under his own imprints Browne would bring out Byron E. Veatch's *The Two Samurai*, Conger's *Old China and Young America*, and Goodrich's *Our Neighbors Series* on the Japanese, the Filipinos, and the Chinese.

Of this list of multiethnic publications by McClurg, Eaton would at least have been aware of Conger's *Letters from China*, subtitled *With Particular Reference to the Empress Dowager and the Women in China*. First published in April 1909, the book is a collection of letters written by the wife of an American diplomat to her American family during her sojourn in imperial China from 1898 to 1904. According to Dietrich, Eaton was evidently alluding to Conger and *Letters* in her 1910 story "The Inferior Woman," which features Mrs. Carman, an upper-middle-class white woman whose had lived in China with her customs officer husband (ch. 4). By the time Eaton approached McClurg in 1911, three editions of Conger's *Letters* had been released. The success[25] of *Letters* may have inspired Eaton to pitch her own Chinese stories to its

[25] The April 1909 first edition sold out quickly, followed by an October 1909 second edition. The third edition was released in September 1910. The royalty statements indicate that in *Letters'* first year, 1350 copies of the book were sold. At a net price of $2.75, twice as expensive as *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Conger's *Letters* would have proved a successful investment for McClurg.

publisher, and, in turn, convinced Browne of the prospects of the "good field" of Chinese-themed publications.

Another factor in Browne's consideration of Eaton is more subtle, which relates my discussion back to the last chapter. Charles F. Lummis, in his replies of congratulations to Eaton for securing a publisher, remarks that McClurg is "a very reliable house," "a good publisher for your maturer [*sic*] book" that "will treat you nicely" (Letters to Edith Eaton, 31 July and 6 Sept. 1911). Lummis succinct comment reveals that he was familiar with the house. While Dietrich's research was informed by the correspondence between Lummis and Eaton, he did not detect Lummis' relationship with A. C. McClurg & Co. and F. G. Browne. Aside from the fact that several of Lummis' own books had born McClurg's imprint, my archival research has further indicated that Lummis and F. G. Browne were in close communication on both personal and professional bases. Their correspondence traces back to Browne's managerial years at the *Dial*, in which he exchanged business matters and solicited Lummis' works for inclusion in the *Dial*. During Browne's years as a publisher, they frequently exchanged on editorial and publishing matters. Lummis drew up or recommended book proposals for Browne's consideration; Browne, in turn, solicited Lummis' works for publication or reviews of the firm's titles for marketing. More importantly, Browne actively sought Lummis' advice on manuscripts he had received. The collections of Browne–Lummis letters[26] I have accessed are not inclusive of their correspondence in the years of 1911 and 1912, when Eaton was being considered and published by the firm. However, several letters demonstrate that when Browne became aware that a prospective author was associated with Lummis, he would sound out Lummis' opinion. Given that Lummis was one of the major periodical publishers of Eaton's works and that four stories in

[26] These letters are available at the Library and Archives of the Autry Museum of the American West and the Western History Collections of the University of Oklahoma Libraries.

Mrs. Spring Fragrance were collected from *Land of Sunshine*/*Out West*, it is likely that Browne had consulted Lummis about Eaton's manuscript and received his endorsement.[27] Lummis' perception of Eaton's works as little exotic sketches and treatment of Eaton as a "little unknown contributor" who needs his "protection and patronage" (Cutter, "Sui Sin Far's Letters" 268) correspond with McClurg's marketing of Eaton and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, which I will discuss below. Indeed, even the narrative of McClurg's advertisements for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is redolent of Lummis' 1900 sketch of Eaton.

To understand McClurg's design for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, I want to return to Eaton's 1909 submissions to Houghton Mifflin. Eaton's proposed titles for the 1909 manuscripts are "The Tangled Kites & Other Stories" and "The Sing Song Woman[28] and Other Stories of the Chinese in America" respectively. Both titles include a wordy subtitle spelling out the genre. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, "The Sing Song Woman" in the second title is sexually provocative, and the subtitle further contextualizes the book's racialized subject matter and highlights the antithesis between "Chinese" and "America." In comparison, the 1912 title has left out the genre reference, allowing the book to disguise as a novel at first glance, which, as Cutter's analysis of Eaton's editorial relationship with Lummis reminds us, would be considered more indicative of literary artistry than short stories during this time period ("Sui Sin Far's Letters" 271–2). The title may have been thus engineered to elevate the book's literary status and attract readers' attention. For the readers of the 1910s, "Mrs. Spring Fragrance" would also be

[27] This may offer clues about Eaton's unpublished novel. Whereas Dietrich takes Browne's resignation from McClurg in 1912 as a deciding factor in the novel not being accepted and published (), the validity of his assumption is easily contested by the fact that Browne continued publishing Chinese-themed books by Conger and Goodrich under his own imprints. In this connection, Lummis' skepticism about Eaton's capability as a novelist may have weighed against Browne's consideration of her novel.

[28] The title story centers on two Eurasian actresses who hold opposite inclinations towards their mixed racial and cultural heritage. Whereas Eaton used "The Sing Song Woman" as the title for her book manuscript in 1909, in McClurg's *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, "The Sing Song Woman" would be relegated to the bottom of the first section.

reminiscent of John Luther Long's 1898 *Madame Butterfly*, a tragic romance featuring a Japanese woman and an American naval officer made famous by Giacomo Puccini's 1904 opera adaption. In a similar syntactic and semantic structure, the title would have helped readers recognize and expect a feminized, oriental setting for the book. Following the honorific prefix "Mrs," "Spring Fragrance" encodes the book's Chinese subject matter into a literally "American" frame, and the "cultural oxymoron" of the title (White-Parks 205) thereby circumvents the racial antithesis and sexualized connotations in Eaton's previous "The Sing Song Woman and Other Stories of the Chinese in America." While we do not know if Eaton herself had a say in choosing "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," McClurg clearly capitalized on the title as a marketing technique, claiming in one advertisement that the stories in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* "make as delightful reading as the title suggests."

Another point of interest resides in the contents of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. Eaton's submissions to Houghton Mifflin suggest that she had intended for her Chinatown stories and children's stories to be published in separate volumes tailored for audiences of different age groups. By contrast, the 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* sutures Eaton's demarcation into one volume of two parts. Scholars have mostly taken the grouping for granted. White-Parks observes that the motif of children runs through Eaton's opus and "binds the entirety of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*" and reads heavily into Eaton's metaphorical "children" in the inscription as the birth of a genre (206–7). Cutter argues that the combination of complex narratives with simple stories enables Eaton to create multiple audiences and move her actual audience to her authorial ideal ("Empire and the Mind" 37). Admittedly, both engage with Chinese subject matter, but a strain of dissonance apparently straddles the two parts. Firstly, as Amy Ling observes, the first part deals with "contemporaneous political and social issues"

whereas the second consists generally of "timeless parables shaped around a moral" ("Introduction" 14–5). One of Eaton's contemporary reviewers also commented that "[it] surely would have been better to have divided them into two books making different appeal" ("Department of Oriental Reviews" 181). Secondly, there is little coherence between the two headings. "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," again, heads the first part, despite the fact that the title character only features in the first two stories; the second part, by contrast, is simply titled "Tales of Chinese Children" as an adumbration of content and genre. Last but not least, in terms of proportion, there is a lack of balance between the two parts. Two thirds of the volume is taken up by the first part of seventeen Chinatown stories, and the other third by twenty children's stories in the second part. With this internal incongruity, the body text of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* amounts to 347 pages. According to William Dana Orcutt, who supervised the presswork for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* at the Plimpton Press, the normal range of page count for novels at the time is between 320 to 400 pages (69). By this standard, for a collection of short stories and for a book marketed as "exquisite" by its publisher, the size of *Mrs.f Spring Fragrance* is rather bulky.

From the perspective of publishing history, this is likely attributable to McClurg's cost considerations. In a 1913 article in the *Chicago Tribune* expounding on the duties of a publisher, F. G. Browne writes that literary publication, fiction in particular, "has developed into a commercial proposition . . . treated from a merchandise standpoint" and specifically explains the correlation of the manufacturing cost with the size of the book and the number of copies of an edition (2W). In this "merchandising of literature," collections of short stories, as White-Parks points out, were risky ventures compared to novels (202). To bring out the two parts of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in separate volumes of short stories would have increased the cost of manufacturing and distribution, and thence diminished the margin of profit. Indeed, in their

newspaper advertisements, McClurg promoted *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* solely on the basis of the Chinatown stories in the first part, without mention of the children's stories or appealing to children audiences. This further suggests that, for McClurg, the second part of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was rather incidental to the first, and the two parts were bundled so as to bring down the cost per copy.

A year after Lummis presented the biographical sketch of "Sui Sin Fah" in the November 1900 number of *Land of Sunshine*, he introduced his readers to Browne in like fashion when he first undertook the head of publishing at McClurg: "Mr. Browne is formulating a broad and progressive policy . . . He looks especially to make A. C. McClurg & Co. an outlet for Western books and a rallying-point for Western literature" ("In Western Letters" [Nov. 1901] 141). Browne's literary and managerial aspirations for McClurg's publishing is an extension of Alexander C. McClurg's national ambitions for promoting "high" literature of the American West. Yet, as Dietrich's historical research shows, Browne's directorship coincided with the firm's directorate's waning business interest in literary publishing. In the same vein as Lummis, Browne may have seen the "Chinese" in Eaton and her works as part of the making of American West, and previous commercial success of titles engaging in the same subject matter likely persuaded him into publishing *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. The demands for profit, in turn, informed the textual make-up of the book. McClurg's acceptance and production of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is thus grounded in the imbrication of literary ideals and business imperatives.

Life and Afterlife of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

Compared to Houghton Mifflin's meticulous preservation of business documents, the extant archives of A. C. McClurg & Co. are decidedly incomprehensive, and records regarding

Edith Eaton and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* are even scarcer. An examination of Eaton's bibliography, correspondence, legal documents, and other archival records will provide insight into the publication timeline of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. As Eaton's acknowledgement indicates, most of the contents of the book were reprinted from periodicals. Based on Chapman's chronological bibliography of Eaton's oeuvre and my own archival research, nine of the thirty-seven stories in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* had either not been previously published or not located, and of the reprinted works, the latest periodical publication of the twenty-nine reprinted works was in November 1910. Eaton had received McClurg's acceptance by July 23, 1911, and that year she did not publish much in periodicals, which suggests that she was occupied with preparation for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* throughout the year. On March 23, 1912, Eaton wrote in a letter to Lummis, "My book is being printed at Norwood, Mass.,"—as the printer's device shows, the book was printed by the Plimpton Press. An update was sent forth on April 19: "The [book] will be on the market end of May or beginning of June. They are busy manufacturing it now." The Library of Congress' *Catalogue of Copy Entries* shows that *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was copyrighted on May 29, indicating that the first (and only) printing had been completed in May. The boilerplate contract of A. C. McClurg & Co. stipulates that a standard quantity of twelve copies of the book would be given free of charge to the author upon publication, and based on Eaton's correspondence, she had received these copies by June 22. This indicates that the distribution of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* commenced in mid to late June, as can be corroborated by the inclusion of the book in the "Weekly Record of New Publications" in June 29 number of *Publishers' Weekly*.

By the time *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* went to print in March 1912, Browne had just resigned from A. C. McClurg & Co. to start his own publishing firm. Nonetheless, McClurg's

distribution and marketing of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* nevertheless largely corresponds to Browne's delineation in his 1913 *Chicago Tribune* article. As a standard practice of marketing, between the finished printing and distribution of the book, copies would be sent ahead of time to "trade journals that circulate chiefly among book dealers and librarians," newspapers, and magazines, for both advertising announcements and reviews (Browne2W).[29] My own research has found twenty-four listings of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in the notices for new books in 1912, the earliest one appearing on June 20, and I have also located thirty-three reviews of the book between 1912 and 1913.[30] Besides, I have located at least six instances of special advertisements for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* that McClurg placed in major newspapers during the summer of 1912, including the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Times*, the *New York Evening Post*, and the *Boston Globe*. Taken together, this demonstrates that McClurg was enthusiastically promoting *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in trade journals and popular periodicals of wide circulation, and the book enjoyed regional and (trans)national exposure. In this time period, publishers still shared in the consensus that periodicals were "a most potent force in the commercial success of a book . . . introduc[ing] to the reader more readily, and command[ing] a more respectful attention, than a regular advertisement" (qtd. in Tebbel 153). Before *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* would have hit the bookstore shelves, the first review of the book appeared in the *Montreal Witness* on June 18, followed by another in the *Pittsburg Gazette Times* on June 21. Eaton mentioned the *Witness*' review in her June 22 letter to Lummis, which she humbly described as "good to read." This favorable review proved to be the longest and the most thorough Eaton would have ever received

[29] Browne claims that for books of fiction, an average of 500 copies would be forwarded ahead.
[30] I have primarily utilized digitized historical newspapers and periodicals to locate these materials. While I was aware of the limitations of digitized sources, I could not afford the time and resources to venture into paper archives for this thesis. For a list of contemporary reviews of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, see Appendix B.

in her lifetime, of the kind which publishers would regard as "competently and seriously written" and count on to boost the sales of the book (Tebbel 153).

The reviews in periodicals continued to be chiefly commendatory and Chicago's *Inter Ocean* even named *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* as one of the best books of short stories of 1912. The sales, however, were far from ideal. Lucas Dietrich's research has located two entries in McClurg's business records in reference to Eaton and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, one in a list of publications showing that the book had a one-time print run of 2500 copies, the other in royalty statements indicating that by January 1913 the sales of the book had returned $89.46 worth of royalties. Based on these figures, Dietrich estimates that only 639 copies of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in total had been sold and the book "significantly underperformed" (ch. 4). My own research has found two more instances: one in an undated file titled "Out-of-Print Titles, Copyright Status,"[31] and the other being an indirect reference to the book in a list of McClurg publication, registered as "Chinese Fairy Tales, Chinese Stories, 1912" without any mention of Eaton's name(s).[32] It is clear from McClurg's limited records that Eaton held a minor status in the firm's stable and that the book's sales performance fell short of expectations. Despite initial attention and clever marketing, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was at best a flash in the pan in the literary marketplace of the early twentieth century. Starting 1913, the book appeared mostly in library notices of acquisitions, and within two years of its publication, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was marked down by 75 per cent by a book store in Buffalo.[33] Following Eaton's death in 1914, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was rather mistakenly remembered in a 1916 booklet, *A Hundred and*

[31] Copyright status, undated. A. C. McClurg & Co. Records, The Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, Box 14, Folder 387.
[32] McClurg publications notebook. A. C. McClurg & Co. Records, The Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, Box 25, Folder 516.
[33] Advertisement for Adam, Meldrum & Anderson Co. *Buffalo News*, 16 Dec. 1914, p. 3.

Sixty Books by Washington Authors,[34] under the juvenile category. In 1918, when Thomas Shaughnessy presented a curation of books by Canadian authors to the Canadian Club at New York, the news report mentioned that *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was not included only because it had been out of print by this time. This might have led to two booksellers listing *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in the "Books Wanted" section in that year's *Publishers' Weekly*.

Mrs. Spring Fragrance had thus been consigned to oblivion for more than half a century before the critical recovery of Edith Eaton in the early 1980s. In 1995, Amy Ling and Annette White-Parks edited a collection of Eaton's works, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings* published by the University of Illinois Press. This edition includes twenty-four stories reprinted from the 1912 McClurg edition, selected as "thematically the most significant and structurally the best developed" (Ling, "Introduction" 1). In 2013, Dover Publications reprinted the first part of the 1912 McClurg edition under the title *Mrs. Spring Fragrance: a Collection of Chinese American Short Stories*. Similarly, in 2021, Random House's Modern Library reprinted the same part under the title *Mrs. Spring Fragrance and Other Writings*, together with Eaton's 1909 autobiographical essay "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian" and an introduction by C Pam Zhang. To my knowledge, besides partial reprints, there have been two complete reproductions of the 1912 McClurg edition. The first reproduction was published by the Broadview Press in 2011 as part of a series which, according to the copyright page, "represents the ever-changing canon of literature in English by bringing together texts long regarded as classics with valuable lesser-known works." This edition is edited by Hsuan L. Hsu and supplemented with materials in the front matter and appendices in order to establish the historical and discursive contexts of Eaton's life and work. The second reproduction was released in 2020

[34] Eaton had lived in Seattle for about a decade, and several stories in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* are set in Seattle. The booklet is edited by Susan Whitcomb Hassell.

by the Project Gutenberg in the form of a digital quasi-facsimile transcription, produced by volunteers.[35]

These reproductions demonstrate that, in the recent decades of her recuperation, attention to Edith Eaton has expanded from mainly scholarly to popular. However, as both a text and a physical object, the 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in its own right deserves thorough critical examination using the methodology of bibliography and textual criticism. Both the 2011 Broadview reprint and 2020 Project Gutenberg quasi-facsimile have dealt with textual issues in the 1912 McClurg edition, yet their apparatuses need scrutiny.[36] Thanks to the conscientious scholarly efforts to recover Eaton's oeuvre, we have more textual witnesses to those in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* that had been previously published in periodicals. Arguably, the textual history of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is an integral constituent of its publishing history, but establishing such a history is beyond the capacity of this thesis. In this connection, I furnish one observation in the hope of encouraging future historical and textual scholarship. When Eaton first published children's stories in periodicals, her authorship was disguised from time to time. Several stories were qualified with a subtitle indicating a Chinese original text behind the story. For example, both "The Wild Man and the Gentle Boy" and "The Puppet Show" were subtitled "Chinese Folk Lore" in their periodical publications. In the by-lines too, Eaton would be fashioned as the transcriber, translator, or interpreter of Chinese folk tales or anecdotes. With these stories, she would be promoted in a syndicated full-page advertisement for children's stories and writers as an author who "has made the mythology and legends of China her own

[35] The credit line shows that this edition is produced by KD Weeks, Mary Glenn Krause and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at https://www.pgdp.net.

[36] For example, both editions claim that "typographical errors" in the 1912 edition have been corrected, but the Broadview edition offers no textual apparatus, and the Project Gutenberg has introduced at least one substantive emendation. The Broadview edition has also largely expanded the footnotes—or rather, endnotes, as they are attached to the end of each story—to furnish historical information. Eaton's own footnote in the title story "Mrs. Spring Fragrance" is also relocated to the end of the story in the Broadview edition.

province" and thereby attracted "a large and fascinated public" ("$50,000 for the Children"). In this double masquerade, Eaton's authorial agency was compromised so that the stories of her creation would take on the semblance of ethnic authenticity and cater to her periodical audience's imagination. In the reprint of the stories in the 1912 McClurg edition, both the subtitles and bylines are omitted, with the heading "Tales of Chinese Children" governing the part as the running title on the verso. While White-Parks rightfully reads the preposition *of* in the heading as inclusive of tales *for* and *about* Chinese children, I want to point out that *of* also obfuscates, like the original subtitles and bylines, Eaton's authorial agency—though it could also be argued that the equivocation partially reinstates her authorship. In this regard, the reviewer of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in Chicago's *Inter Ocean* claims that he has initially wondered if Eaton's tales of Chinese children were her own original rather than "adaptations of Chinese folklores," and upon being confirmed that the stories "are indeed Miss Eaton's own children of her imagination," he can finally assert without reserve that Eaton deserves "to rank with the greatest of fairy tale writers" ("Lates Books and Literary News" 5). This textual development, then, complicates our weighing between authenticity and artistry in Eaton's writing.

Chapter 3: "A Most Unique Book?": *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* as a Physical Object

On June 22, 1912, Edith Eaton mailed an autographed presentation copy from Boston to Los Angeles for Lummis' keeping[37]: "I hope you will enjoy [the book] through whoever is eyes for you -perhaps [*sic*] I should have said IT [*sic*]." Upon receipt, Lummis comments that Eaton's "little book . . . is said to be very handsome and attractive; and as soon as possible I shall have some of it read to me" (Letter to Edith Eaton, 9 July 1912). This seemingly odd correspondence needs to be read in the context that Lummis was known to have been blind for a year. Nevertheless, both Eaton's synecdoche ("whoever is eyes for . . . it") and Lummis' proxy sensory impression of the book ("handsome and attractive") point to the corporeality of reading. As an artifact, the book is for the eyes to look at and for the fingers to leaf through, and to read a book is to read into the interplay of the textual codes and the material conditions.

The physical design of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* has received limited scholarly treatment since the critical recovery of Edith Eaton in the early 1980s. Amy Ling was the first to bring attention to design elements of the book in a 1983 article and strengthened her argument in a 1990 book. Identifying several visual elements in the cover and the paper, she argued in a brief paragraph that the florid delicateness of the book's cover and paper engages "in a tug of war" with the layers of irony, tragedy, and bitterness in the stories ("Edith Eaton" 291 *Between Worlds* 41). Drawing upon Ling, in 1992, Elizabeth Ammons wondered if and how Eaton responded to the "insistently 'Orientalized,' hyper-feminized" design of the paper, on which her stories "have

[37] This copy is part of the Charles Lummis Collection at the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles and photographical facsimiles of selected pages are available at http://binder.theautry.org/archive/view/813_E14em_1912. The top edges of this copy bear Lummis' signature, "Chas. F. Lummis," made by fire-heated branding iron. The branding was Lummis' peculiar method of theft prevention (James 89) which he carried over to the Los Angeles Public Library when serving as the head librarian (Blitz 29–30). At the center of the front endpaper is Lummis' ex libris, and on the opposite flyleaf is Eaton's inscription, written diagonally across the page: "Chas F. Lummis | With the sincere regard of | Edith Eaton | Sui Sin Far." To my knowledge this is the only extant copy that bears Eaton's autograph and attests to her provenance.

to compete . . . with the background noise of stereotypic Orientalization" (118–9). White-Parks' 1995 examination of the physical features was conducted in much greater detail than that of Ling and would thence serve as an authoritative clearing house on which most subsequent discussion of the physicality of the book was based. In general, the present scholarship on the physical design of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* lacks thoroughness and accuracy. This chapter deconstructs the salient aspects of the physical design—the binding and the paper—of the 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, and explicates the dialogic relationship between the text and the design.

The Presswork

As a literary publisher, A. C. McClurg & Co. valued the unity of beauty and readability in bookmaking. In an 1885 article in the *Dial*, Alexander Caldwell McClurg inveighed against the "demon of Cheapness" in bookmaking and argued for "the proper form" of "workmanlike type-setting and careful presswork" (8–9). McClurg's publishing philosophy was echoed in F. G. Browne's 1906 paper, titled "The Essentials of a Well-Made Book," in which he argued for the trinity of the book "as an article of manufacture, a tool for the use of intellectual workers, and as a work of art" (qtd. in "Illinois Library Association" 390). During Browne's directorship from 1901 to 1912, A. C. McClurg established partnership with two Massachusetts printers, first with the University Press of Cambridge from 1902 to 1910, and later with the Plimpton Press of Norwood from 1910 to 1912. The switch from the former to latter, and the cessation of partnership between McClurg and Plimpton after 1912 (when Browne resigned), point to Browne's personal and professional partnership with William Dana Orcutt, who had served as director of the University Press until joining the Plimpton Press in 1910. As a book designer and

typeface designer, Orcutt was devoted to promoting printing as an art. He joined the Plimpton Press in order to "introduce several radical innovations into bookmaking as a profession," one of which was the adoption of the "complete manufacture" method (*Harvard College Records* 126). By taking control over all aspects of bookmaking, including paper, cover design, illustrations, composition, binding, etc., it is claimed that this method would elevate the standards of bookmaking as "harmonious in conception and perfect in manufacture," and in the meantime reduce the cost for both the printer and the publisher (*Plimpton Press Year Book* 84). With Orcutt, the Plimpton Press adopted "Perfect Bookmaking in its Entirety" as its motto.

From the printer's device "THE·PLIMPTON·PRESS | [W·D·O] | NORWOOD·MASS·U·S·A" on the copyright page, it is clear that *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was printed by the Plimpton Press under the supervision of Orcutt, although the exact designer(s) for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* cannot be identified. According to my research, several McClurg titles printed by the University Press and the Plimpton Press had to do with ethnic themes, among which are Robert Ames Bennet's *The Shogun's Daughter* (1910) and Joseph King Goodrich's *The Coming China* (1911). Under Orcutt, the two printers were also responsible for Edward S. Curtis' monumental *The North American Indian*. In light of the facts, it may be argued that the commission of the presswork to the Plimpton Press performs the aesthetic and material work of Orientalizing *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. The aestheticization and Orientalization is manifest in McClurg's special newspaper advertisements (see figs. 3.1 and 3.2). According to Browne, putting advertisements in "cosmopolitan newspapers of wide circulation" was relied upon to "attract the buyer personally" (2W). Captioned "At All Book Stores" and "At Your Bookseller's," McClurg's newspaper advertisements speak directly to potential individual buyers of the book with an affective appeal: "our ignorance and prejudice giving way to sympathy and

understanding as we realize that they, too, possess real tenderness and nobility." The binary between the white English-reading public as "we" and the "Chinese folks" in the book as "they" is visualized by juxtaposition of images of Chinese script, birds, and flowers with the English text. Despite the claim that "they are surprisingly human," the advertisements, studded with visual and verbal aesthetic language, enact the objectification of the book and its Chinese subject

Fig. 3.1.
Advertisement for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, *Boston Globe*, 6 July 1912, p.7.

Fig. 3.2.
Advertisement for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, *New York Times*, 28 July 1912, p. 430.

matter with terms like "quaint," "lovable," "picturesque," "likable," "exquisite," and "unusual and delightful." The advertisements provide a glimpse into how McClurg projected and identified its target audience for the book and into the principles for the physical design of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*.

The Binding

The only instance Eaton herself referred to the physical features of the book was in her March 23, 1912 letter to Lummis: "[My book] will have a red[38] cover and will be entitled 'Mrs. Spring Fragrance.'" As Chris Horrocks argues, color is not merely a socio-cultural construction but also a performative act of that construction (2–3). As the Chinese emblem of joy and auspiciousness[39], red is a long-established visual and aesthetic metonym of China in the western perception. Echoing the red blocks on both covers and the red frames throughout the book, the frontispiece of Charles Warren Stoddard's 1912 *A Bit of Old China* writes, "Here little China flaunts her scarlet streamers overhead, and flanks her doors with legends in saffron and gold." The red motif is generously replicated in the design of Chinese-themed books published around the turn of the twentieth century, and both A. C. McClurg & Co. and Browne were on this bandwagon. All three editions of Sara Pike Conger's *Letters from China* are bound in red. The 1911 edition of Joseph King Goodrich's *The Coming China* has its title, author, and publisher printed in red on the cover and the spine, enhanced with images of a Chinese gateway and a sailboat both painted in red. F. G. Browne & Co.'s 1913 edition of Sarah Pike Conger's *Old China and Young America* has a monotone cover design of brownish yellow and dark blue, with the glaring exception of the initial letter "O" of the title painted in bright red, encompassing a sketch of Chinese dragon and contrasting with the unassuming shield of star-spangled banner to the right. For popular literature, despite the common, gender-neutral usage of red as a metonym for China on covers, the bright red binding cloth was typically applied for books written by or

[38] Amy Ling refined the description as "vermilion" to capture the brightness of the color. In the terms of the Inter-Society Color Council-National Bureau of Standards, which G. Thomas Tanselle recommended for descriptive bibliography, the color of the cover of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is vivid red. In the discussion that follows, I would use the basic color category "red" for convenience.

[39] The bright red is also the staple of Chinese festival decors and bridal gowns.

about women, such as Mary E. Bamford's *Ti: A Story of San Francisco's Chinatown* (1899)[40], Mrs. S. L. Baldwin's translation *Instruction for Chinese Women and Girls* (1900), two books of Chinese stories for children by Jessie Juliet Knox, Conger's *Letters*, and Norman Hinsdale Pitman's *The Lady Elect: A Chinese Romance* (1913).

From Eaton's constative it is hard to infer whether she intended for or approved of the color. Saturated with pigmented material culture, the text of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* evidences that Eaton was not only well conversant with but also consciously mobilizing the cross-cultural connotations of color. The most striking performance of color is in "The Americanizing of Pau Tsu," where (dis)coloration inhabits the story as an index for the tragedy of the forced and failed assimilation of a Chinese immigrant. Red is embodied in the self-contained Chinese femininity of Pau Tsu as the color of "good-luck," vitality, and beauty. Her arrival in ruddiness and "peach and plum colored robes" impresses "a bit of Eastern coloring amidst the Western lights and shades" (147–8). Through the "Americanizing" initiatives imposed on her, red is usurped by white, with her complexion turning "pale" and "transparent" as her health deteriorates. In lament, Pau Tsu invokes the classical Chinese verse that tropes an unbeloved lover as an untimely fan made "Of fresh new silk,/All snowy white" (155). In Eaton's spectrum, the color line of the era between white supremacy and "Yellow Peril" is disrupted: red sits at the opposite end of white, which signifies despondency, debilitation, and death. One may argue that Eaton's red, just like the color of the binding cloth, is also feminized and Orientalized. However, Eaton's subversive red imagery clashes violently with the flattening, formulaic red binding cloth: the latter disempowers the former.

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[40] In *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Eaton may have been alluding to Bamford's *Ti* in "The Wisdom of New" with the character Adah Carlton: "Adah . . . sketched him in many different poses for a book on Chinese children which she was illustrating." *Ti* was densely illustrated with sketches of Chinese children and scenes of Chinatown. By the artist monogram I suspect that the illustrator was likely Joseph P. Birren.

Fig. 3.3.
Cover of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, A. C. McClurg, 1912.

Fig. 3.4.
Cover of *Letters from China*, 3rd ed. A. C. McClurg, 1910.

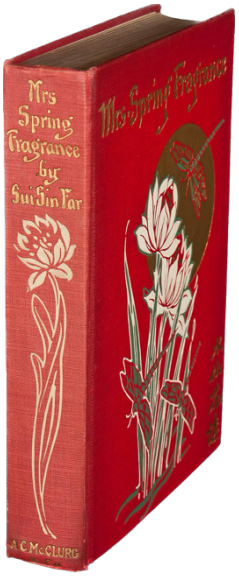

Fig. 3.5.
Spine of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, A. C. McClurg, 1912.

The palette of the cover of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is identical to that of Conger's *Letters from China* (see figs. 3.3 and 3.4), which further indicates that McClurg was following a racialized and feminized pattern. Stamped against the red background is a tricolored naturalistic scene occupying most of the front cover. Three wavy lines in green at the bottom indicate a stream flowing by, from which stems two white flowers with anthers glistening in gold, among

long, slender, and pointy green leaves. Onto the leaves are obliquely superimposed two dragonflies, with another flitting over the flowers and overlaying a full, golden moon almost half concealed by the white blossoms. A stalk of the flower recurs in white on the spine of the book, rooted in the publisher "A. C. McClurg | & Co." at the bottom and blossoming under the author "Sui Sin Far" at the top (see fig. 3.5). Unlike the geometric, bilateral symmetry of *Letters*, the lines of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* are slanting and undulating, implying motion and liveliness. The imagery is a pastiche of the classic *huaniao*, i.e. bird-and-flower style of traditional Chinese painting dealing with subjects from nature (Cahill 184–5), and fits with the "flower and moon" ideal of Chinese aesthetics. The dragonfly is a popular motif in traditional Chinese literature and painting, usually coupled with lotus or water lilies as a sign of summertime.[41] The identification of the flower has been mostly glossed in passing in scholarly discussion, ranging from lotus, water lily, Chinese lily, to narcissus. The morphology of the flower is a curious graftage: the gigantic, cup-shaped blossom with multiple petals imbricated is not in accordance with the small flower of narcissus, comprising of six radiating petals, but resembles that of lotus or water lily; the lance-shaped upstanding leaf is a feature of the narcissus, in contradistinction with the broad peltate leaf of lotus or water lilies. This floral amalgam speaks to my previous discussion of the complex meanings of "Sui Sin Far" and indicates that these flowers were deliberately designed as "a visual translation of Sui Sin Far's name" (White-Parks 198). However, what results from the vagueness of the translation "Chinese lily" and the designer's botanic unfamiliarity with the flower in question is an imagined concoction.

[41] Unlike its name in English, the dragonfly has no association with "dragon" in Chinese but is rather a symbol for female delicacy.

The visual translation finds a literal reiteration at the bottom right corner, where is stamped four Chinese characters lined vertically, reading "水 | 仙 | 花 | 誌." Citing an interview with Jinqi Ling, White-Parks interprets the characters as "signed by Sui Sin Far" (197), which is accurate in recognizing the first three characters as the Chinese script for Sui Sin Far. In these three Chinese characters, the literary persona that Edith Eaton adopted is literally Sinicized, but her authorial performance is dictated by the curious fourth character "誌" on which Ling and White-Parks erred. The closest English equivalent of "誌" is "record" and, likewise, it operates both as a verb and a noun. It has etymological roots in classical Chinese historiography, and is commonly applied in classical Chinese literary and bibliographical practices, but its usage here generates syntactic and semantic ambiguities. To read it as a verb, as Jinqi Ling and White-Parks have done, is to invoke the Chinese bibliographical tradition. On the cover or the title page of a Chinese book, a verb may be appended after contributors' names to denote the functions they perform in making the book (the syntactic structure being "noun + verb"), but "誌" as a transitive verb is never among the lexicon for these functional performance. While "recorded by Sui Sin Far" can be semantically correct as a statement of authorship, the phrase is ungrammatical or at least unidiomatic in Chinese. As a noun, "誌" is often seen in the titles of classical Chinese books. It indicates the genre and syntactically follows the noun phrase that stands for the subject matter of the book. In historiography, "誌" is a monograph or treatise on the historical evolution of social institutions or on historical geography (Wilkinson 152–162, 502); in popular literature, "誌" suggests that the book is a (usually anecdotal) record or study of a particular subject. To read it as a noun, the Chinese text would serve as the title of the book and literally mean "the record of Sui Sin Far," or even, "the study of narcissus," unfitting for a collection of short stories.

The calligraphic dexterity[42] displayed by these four Chinese characters suggests that the calligrapher was highly likely a Chinese immigrant, but the awkward phrasing implies the calligrapher might have been inadequately apprised of the genre and agenda of the book to the basic effect of "record." In a sense, the historiographical etymology of "誌" inadvertently captures Eaton's writing habitus and techniques informed by stenography and journalism, but at the same time it also equivocates Eaton's authorial agency and originality. These anomalies have generally gone unnoticed by contemporary scholars and in all likelihood by Eaton's English-speaking publishers and readers. The morphology of the flower, the imagery as a whole, and the meaning of the Chinese script are merely symbolic, or, in Said's words, "as representations, not as 'natural' depictions" (21). As supporting visual elements, their function is to invite the reader to look at the book's otherness, not at "the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (Said 21).

Governing the summer imagery and the Chinese characters is the title of the book, "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," compressed in one line. White-Parks observes that the letters are "slightly slanted . . . in a calligraphic style" (197). In his survey of the history of ethnic typefaces, design historian Paul Shaw traced the earliest American typographical design in emulation of Chinese characters back to Cleveland Type Foundry's 1883 patented "Chinese" typeface, "characterized by curved and pointed wedge strokes that superficially resemble . . . basic strokes of Chinese calligraphy" (110). Cleveland's "Chinese" would anticipate various conjugations and labels, in

[42] I am grateful to Prof. Wang Jinmin of Peking University for identifying the calligraphy style as *weibei* (literally, the stele of Wei). As a prototype of the Chinese Regular Script *kaishu*, *weibei* was characteristic of Northern Wei (A.D. 4th–6th centuries) stelae and tombstone inscriptions (Tseng 153). It had been out of vogue for a long time before it was revived and promoted by literati of the Qing dynasty (A.D. 1636–1911) (Yen 182). In Eaton's lifetime, the renowned political reformer Kang Youwei was a famous advocate of *weibei* (Tseng 160). The Chinese characters inlaying the text pages of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* are also written in this style, but they bear more vestiges of the Chinese Clerical Script *lishu*. *Weibei* is also adopted for the Chinese characters on the cover of Arthur Waley's *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*, published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1919.

which “the strokes, forced onto the armature of Roman letters, are assembled in a manner that completely ignores a calligraphic emphasis on structural balance and harmony” (Shaw 110). Since the end of the nineteenth century, a multitude of books with Chinese themes readily displayed the faux-Chinese typefaces on their cover to evoke a sense of ethnicity. In 1883, A. C. McClurg & Co.’s predecessor Jansen, McClurg and Company published *The Miseries of Fo Hi: A Celestial Functionary*, a translation of a Chinese mythology, whose cover employed a face highly similar to Cleveland’s “Chinese.” Beggarstaff Brothers’ widely-celebrated 1896 poster “A Trip to Chinatown,” though to their own eyes is “mutilated by some idiotic imitation of Chinese lettering placed around it to form a border” as a result of the printer’s tampering, nevertheless boosted the popularization of the faux-Chinese typefaces (“Arcades Ambo” 524; Shaw 110). Eaton would not be unfamiliar with this style, as several of her periodical publications under the name Sui Sin Far were stylistically titled as such. The style recurs on the upper part of the spine of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, applied to the title and the author: “Mrs | Spring | Fragrance | by | Sui Sin Far.” The letters are all handwritten in emulation of the Chinese Regular Script, each stroke discretely brushed in bouncy movement in formation of a squarish bone structure and each instance of the same letterform self-consciously different. For the publisher “A.C. McClurg | & Co.”, however, the lettering reverts back to Roman typeface. The typographical difference demonstrates a demarcation between the author–book and the publisher, and relates back to the othering and binary between “we” and “they” in the advertisements.

The Paper

While the binding of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is largely formulaic, the book is distinguished from its contemporaries by its pages. For one thing, whereas most of the books I

have referred to in the previous section contain either photographs or drawings to complement the text—and so are many of Eaton's own works when first published in periodicals—the book is not illustrated. This lack brings my discussion back to Houghton Mifflin's comment on Eaton's first manuscript of children's stories that "it would hardly be worth while" to enhance the "short and slight" manuscript with illustrations. According to Tebbel, since the end of the nineteenth century, with the advances in printing technologies, most exemplified in the invention of the halftone, and the boom of readership of fiction, book illustrations were gaining increasing prominence. The deterrence against using illustration mainly resides in publishers' doubt about the cost-effectiveness of illustration in promoting sales (Tebbel 164–6), which further speaks for Houghton Mifflin's bleak assessment of Eaton's commercial value. The same consideration for cost and benefit was likely at play in McClurg's design for *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. The lack of illustration perhaps correlates with the choice of paper, which also suggests economic expediency. In the August 1913 issue of the *Printing Art Suggestion Book*, a monthly publication showcasing the latest examples of the constructive materials of printed matter, Boston paper manufacturer S. D. Warren & Company takes a page from *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* as a sample of its "Warren Standard Olde Style White," a paper marketed for low cost.[43] The color of the paper, as White-Parks puts it, is "lotus-toned" (19), with eggshell finish which Warren promotes as imparting "a feeling of antiquity." Warren's own suggestion book also demonstrates that the paper is not conducive to the halftone process commonly used for photographs and illustrations, but is recommended for printed matters where "elaborate detail of illustration is not essential" (49).

[43] These samples are inserted as loose leaves under the front cover of the magazine. Hence I offer no page numbers as there are none.

What substitutes for illustration, then, is a greyscale underlay of decorations which permeates the pages of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* to such an extent that "floreated paper" works as a general identifier for the edition in MARC records. From the first endpaper to the last, the images on each pair of opposing pages form a complete scene. Two sets of images are portrayed,

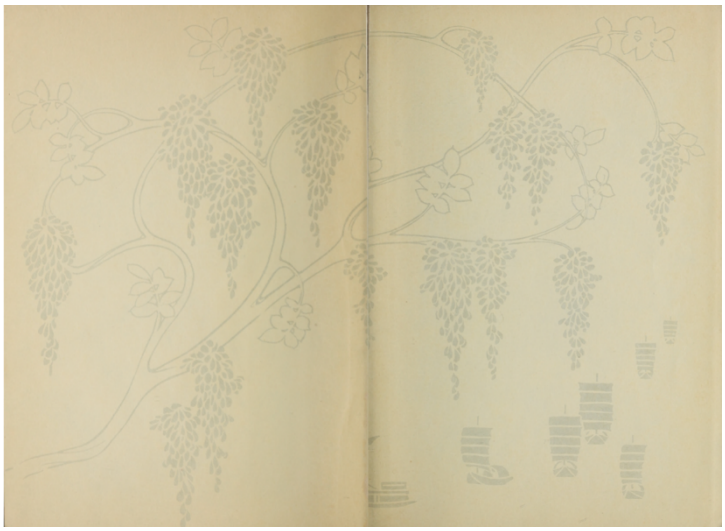

Fig. 3.6.
Endpapers of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, A. C. McClurg, 1912.

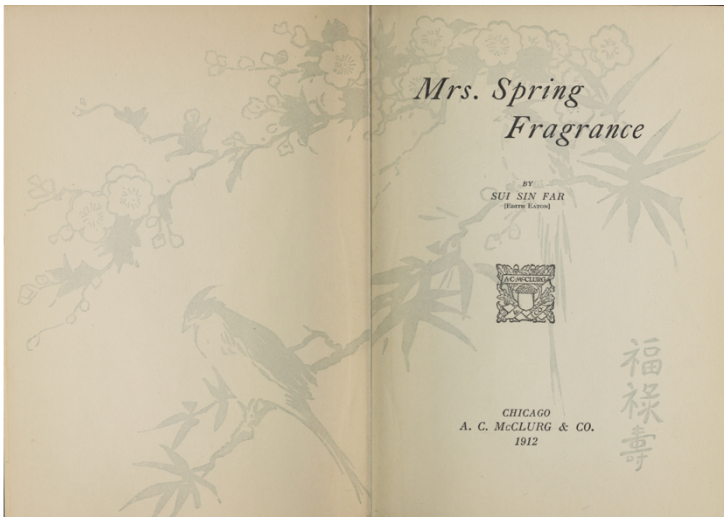

Fig. 3.7.
Text-pages of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, A. C. McClurg, 1912.

one displayed on the endpapers, the other running throughout the text pages (see figs. 3.6 and 3.7). Scholarly attention has ignored the former and scratched the surface of the latter. For the

endpapers, White-Parks has furnished a description: "etched with pale gray umbrella of a flowering tree, beneath which float tiny gray fishing boats," but she fails to identify the plant and the style of the imagery. With stems climbing from the lower left corner of the front endpaper across the opposing flyleaf and draping clusters of flowers blooming all over the pages, the plant is not a tree but a vine: a wisteria. Wisteria is not so much a motif in traditional Chinese paintings as in Japanese ukiyo-e. In fact, in traditional Chinese culture and arts, creepers are imbued with pejorative undertones as a metaphor for dependence or servility (Ye 113); wisteria is treated as the symbol for nobility in Japanese culture and figures significantly in Japanese literature and paintings. That wisteria is synonymous with Japanese is best illustrated by Winnifred Eaton's 1903 *The Wooing of Wistaria*, a "Love Story of Japan" published under the pseudonym Onoto Wantanna with two clusters of wisteria flowers on the cover. On the endpapers of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, under the arbor of wisteria is arrayed a fleet of sailboats—or rather Chinese junks. Again, this square-rigged vessel is not as much seen in Chinese traditional painting as in Japanese ukiyo-e. That the junk became, as White-Parks describes it, "the kind that westerners envision set sail from Chinese harbors" (198) was partially attributable to the voyage of the Chinese junk Keying from Hong Kong to London via the American East Coast in the late 1840s. In New York in particular, the junk was "the first major Chinese spectacle" the city had ever witnessed (Haddad 150).[44]

In the text pages, the bird-and-flower theme of the cover is reinstated. A branch of plum blossom and a branch of bamboo obliquely run in parallel and extend across two opposing pages, with two birds perching respectively on the bamboo branch respectively on the verso and the recto. The blossoming plum and the bamboo are two favorite motifs in traditional Chinese arts

[44] These sailboats also resemble the one on the spine of Goodrich's *The Coming China*.

symbolizing longevity and "the Confucian virtue of maintaining one's integrity in trying times" (Cahill 140), and the former also conveys the advent of springtime. The crested birds are paradise flycatchers, the one on the verso being female, the other on the recto being male. In Chinese, the birds are named after their long ribbon-like tail feathers as *shoudai* (literally, ribbon). The bird is a symbol for longevity and prosperity, for the name is homophonous with words for long life and generation. The auspicious message of the image is captioned with another three Chinese characters vertically lined on the lower right of the recto, "福 | 祿 | 壽" which translates as happiness, prosperity, and longevity. For a collection of thirty-seven short stories of various themes, however, the monotony of this visual imagery is almost procrustean.

The floreated paper evidences how the cross-cultural amalgam of the cover penetrates into the interior of the book. Within the text pages, the oriental-style images underlie the English text of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, or rather, to borrow Williams, these paratextual images are foregrounded as text (31). For example, as Hsu points out in the Broadview edition, the Chinese script on the text pages is also a reference to "three Chinese deities (and common household idols')," whereas the book has "frequent Christian overtones" (234). Placed by the English-language body text, the script visually and linguistically externalizes the dialogue—both antithetic and syncretic—between Chinese religion and spirituality and Christianity in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*. To take the pages as a whole, the Japanese visual elements in the endpapers bookend and counterpoint the Chinese subject matter, script, and imagery in the text pages. In fact, even the form itself suggests a Japanese influence, as *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*'s floreated paper is in imitation of that of Winifred's 1906 novel *A Japanese Novel*, whose pages are saturated with decorations by the Japanese artist Genjiro Yeto. In Warren's advertisement for the paper, the text page of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* is used for demonstrating how the paper's

deficiency of not supporting halftone can be compensated for by compositional design: "The decoration on this page shows a treatment of a solid black and white drawing reduced to half color by the engraver to secure an effect based on the Japanese smoke paper" (Advertisement for Warren). The excerpt Warren cited is from the title story "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," where Carmen's praise of American democracy is juxtaposed with Mr. Spring Fragrance's remark about Chinese exclusion practices. While Eaton's words like "high-class Chinese," "Detention Pen," and "real Americans" stand out from the sample page, the physical medium is inflected by "Japanese."

Interestingly, Eaton made a rare remark about the Japanese in the same story. While the majority of Chinese symbolisms and proper nouns are untranslated or unexplained in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, one exception occurs when Mrs. Spring Fragrance writes in a letter to her husband, "Greetings from your plum blossom." Here the flow of the letter is interrupted with an elaboration, in a footnote, on the symbolism of the plum blossom: "The plum blossom is the Chinese flower of virtue." Obviously, the footnote is an authorial intrusion of Eaton speaking directly to her Chinese-illiterate reader. In this sense, the imagery of the plum blossom on the page mnemonically illustrates the epistle and the footnote, yet Eaton's commentary extends beyond explanatory: "[The flower] has been adopted by the Japanese, just in the same way as they have adopted the Chinese national flower, the chrysanthemum[45]" (8). Eaton was keenly aware of the western preference that had "for many years manifested a much higher regard for the Japanese than for the Chinese" ("Leaves" 131), and was critical of the practice of passing as Japanese, as conducted by her sister Winnifred. If "Leaves" is a statement of "coming out" as

[45] This text in the first edition of 1912 Mrs. Spring Fragrance slightly varies from that in the original 1910 periodical publication in the *Hampton's Magazine*, which goes: "The plum blossom is the Chinese flower of virtue. It has been adopted by the Japanese, just in the same way as they have adopted the Chinese *national flower* [*sic*], the chrysanthemum, to represent their nation."

Eaton owns up to her Chinese heritage instead of "sell[ing] a birthright for momentary peace in an uncomfortable society" (Solberg 30), the commentary on the flowers suggests that she sees the exigency to establish the cultural genealogy between China and Japan and thereby to rectify the western (mis)perception and (mis)conception. In this regard, Eaton's agenda of ethnic disaggregation and reclamation of Chinese heritage is thwarted by the book's Japanese-influenced floreated paper.

(Jumping to) Conclusion(s)

The two key findings of this thesis are the Houghton Mifflin Company's rejection of Edith Eaton's manuscripts and the relationship between Charles Fletcher Lummis and Francis Granger Browne. The first finding is supported by definitive archival evidence and points to how Edith Eaton had been trying to promote herself in the literary marketplace of the early twentieth century—how an ethnic, female writer, who wrote *of* and *for* a subject matter that was helplessly unwanted, ridiculed, and demonized in political discourses and cultural awareness of the time, was undeterred by dismissal and determined to carve out a place for herself and for her people. The second finding is backed up with circumstantial evidence from personal and professional correspondence, although its pertinence to Eaton's publishing history is, frankly, still hypothetical. Notwithstanding, Eaton's relationship with her editors and McClurg's profit-driven aestheticization and Orientalization of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* may have already sufficed to make the case for the negotiation she had undergone in order to find her footing. These findings again echo June Howard's words that, "the more we learn about [Eaton], the clearer it is that in every situation she was listening hard, and working even harder to be heard."[46]

My first encounter with Edith Eaton and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was in 2018, in the course "American Literature, 1871–1945," taught by Dr. Jennie Ann Kassanoff at Barnard College, Columbia University. As a visiting international student and the only one of East Asian descent in a classroom of over forty people, I must have taken up Eaton with an extra alacrity—finally, I thought, something easier (after my tried-and-failed struggle to gain on the stride of Walt Whitman in *Democratic Vistas*), something lighter (we read the 138-page 2013 Dover

[46] I want to add that the first finding was quite fortuitous, whereas the second finding was based on a preconceived conjecture. Historical research is peppered with frustration due to all the accidents that reconcile us to speculations and hypotheses, but it is also interspersed with surprises, for the other side of the coin is serendipity.

Publications edition), and something familiar (the whole class counted on me—just for once—to "decipher" the Chinese poems left by detained immigrants on the walls of the Angel Island) for me to tackle. Little did I know, I made the same false assumption about Eaton's work as her contemporaneous editors, reviewers, and readers did—and likewise, I put *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* out of my mind after a single, careless, "delightful" read. It was not until last year, when I learned of Emily Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) from Dr. Alison Booth and then used the 1895 John Lane the Bodley Head edition of Johnson's *The White Wampum* for my descriptive bibliography project in Dr. David Vander Meulen's class, that Edith Eaton's name sprung to mind again.

Rereading *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* was not "delightful"—but in a good way. Brought up in an English-speaking household and home-educated by the standards of Victorian elite, Eaton was not a Chinese speaker without a doubt. She was, however, a voracious reader of writings about Chinese and an experienced "insider" of North American Chinatowns at the turn of the twentieth century, befriending immigrants from different parts of China who spoke disparate dialects and celebrated disparate regional cultures. *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, accordingly, was rich in cultural references, untranslated and unexplained, which she must have recorded or learnt off by heart either first hand or from secondary sources and then subtly interwoven with her own words. Taking a step further than Ferens, who has contextualized Eaton's literary career in the nineteenth-century orientalist ethnography by missionaries, I devoted much time and effort to reconstruct her reading history—to determine the sources she was citing, the Chinese dialects she had recorded, or the Chinese folk songs she transcribed verbatim in Romanization. The scope of this thesis precludes me from incorporating this part of my research, but the process has

rewardingly broadened my understanding of what Ferens tropes as the “hand-me-downs and alterations” of cultural networks available to and employed by Eaton.

In terms of the publishing history of the 1912 McClurg edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, what else is wanting in this thesis includes a comprehensive examination of the physical design elements, an analysis and interpretation of the contemporary reviews I have gathered, and, as I have mentioned at the end of Chapter two, a textual history of the reprinted works. Aware of this lack, I have to qualify my “Conclusion” as “Jumping to Conclusions.” As the scholarship on Edith Eaton and *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* continues to deepen and diversify, it is my hope that these aspects that I have not fully explored will receive due treatment in the time to come and that this thesis will be of value for future historical, textual, and/or literary scholarship.

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Appendix A
Original Periodical Publications of Stories Reprinted in the 1912 A. C. McClurg Edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

1912 McClurg Edition	Original Periodical Edition				
Title	Publisher	Location	Title	Byline	Illustration
Mrs. Spring Fragrance	*Hampton's Magazine*	Jan. 1910, pp. 137–41	Mrs. Spring Fragrance	Sui Sin Far	M. C. Perley
The Inferior Woman	*Hampton's Magazine*	May 1910, pp. 727–31	The Inferior Woman	Sui Sin Far	uncredited
The Wisdom of the New	undetermined				
"Its Wavering Image"	undetermined				
The Gift of Little Me	*Housekeeper*	Dec. 1909, pp. 9, 20	The Gift of Little Me: How a Quaint Little Chinese Almost Turned the Christmastide into a Tragedy	Sui Sin Far	undetermined
The Story of One White Woman Who Married a Chinese	*Independent*	10 Mar. 1910, pp. 518–23	A White Woman Who Married A Chinaman	Sui Sin Far	unillustrated
Her Chinese Husband: Sequel to the Story of the White Woman Who Married a Chinese	*Independent*	18 Aug. 1910, pp. 358–61	Her Chinese Husband	Sui Sin Far	uncredited
The Americanizing of Pau Tsu	undetermined				
In the Land of the Free	*Independent*	2 Sept. 1909, pp. 504–8	In the Land of the Free	Sui Sin Far	unillustrated
The Chinese Lily	*Out West*	June 1908, pp. 508–10	The Chinese Lily	Edith Eaton (Sui Sin Far)	unillustrated
The Smuggling of Tie Co	*Land of Sunshine*	July 1900, pp. 100–4	The Smuggling of Tie Co	Sui Sin Fah	uncredited
The God of Restoration	undetermined				
The Three Souls of Ah So Nan	*Traveler*	Oct. 1899, pp. 52–3	The Three Souls of Ho Kiang: A Story of the Pacific Coast	Sui Sin Far	uncredited
The Prize China Baby	*Westerner*	Aug. 1905, p. 32	The Prize China Baby	Sui Sin Far-Edith Eaton	undetermined
Lin John	*Land of Sunshine*	Jan. 1899, pp. 76–7	Lin John	Sui Sin Fah	unillustrated
Tian Shan's Kindred Spirit	undetermined				
The Sing Song Woman	*Land of Sunshine*	Oct. 1898, pp. 225–8	The Sing-Song Woman	Sui Seen Far	Mausard-Collier Eng. Co

1912 McClurg Edition	Original Periodical Edition				
Title	Publisher	Location	Title	Byline	Illustration
The Silver Leaves	*The Designer and the Woman's Magazine*	6 Oct. 1909, p. 362	The Silver Leaves	Sui Sin Far	undetermined
The Peacock Lantern	*The Designer and the Woman's Magazine*	3 Jan. 1910, p. 206	The Peacock Lantern	Sui Sin Far	undetermined
Children of Peace	*New England Magazine*	Sept. 1910, pp. 25–7	The Bird of Love	Sui Sin Far	unillustrated
The Banishment of Ming and Mai	*Housekeeper*	Sept. 1910, pp. 9, 20	The Banishment of Ming and Mai	Sui Sin Far	undetermined
The Story of a Little Chinese Seabird	*American Motherhood*	Aug. 1910, pp. 107–9	The Story of a Little Chinese Seabird	Sui Sin Far	unillustrated
What About the Cat?	*Good Housekeeping*	Mar. 1908, pp. 290–1	What About the Cat?	Transcribed by Sui Sin Far	George F. Kerr
The Wild Man and the Gentle Boy	*Good Housekeeping*	Feb. 1908, pp. 179–80	The Wild Man and the Gentle Boy: Chinese Folk Lore	Transcribed by Sui Sin Far	unillustrated
The Garments of the Fairies	undetermined				
The Dreams that Failed	undetermined				
Glad Yen	*Ladies' Home Journal*	Oct. 1909, p. 40	Glad Yen	Sui Sin Far	uncredited
The Deceptive Mat	*Children's Magazine*	undetermined			
The Heart's Desire	*Good Housekeeping*	May 1908, pp. 514–5	The Heart's Desire	Sui Sin Far	George F. Kerr
The Candy that is not Sweet	*Delineator*	July 1910, p. 76	Candy That Was Not Sweet	Sui Sin Far	Wilfred Jones
The Inferior Man	*New Idea Woman's Magazine*	Jan. 1910, p. 46	The Inferior Man	Sui Sin Far	undetermined
The Merry Blind-man	*Wilkes-Barre Times-Leader*	12 July 1910, p. 8	The Merry Blindman	Sui Sin Far	uncredited
Misunderstood	undetermined				
The Little Fat One	*New Idea Woman's Magazine*	Oct. 1909, p. 79	The Little Fat One	Sui Sin Far	undetermined
A Chinese Boy-girl	*Century Magazine*	Apr. 1904, pp. 828–31	A Chinese Boy-Girl	Sui Sin Far	Walter Jack Duncan
Pat and Pan	undetermined				
The Crocodile Pagoda	*Children's Magazine*	Feb. 1908, pp. 12–13	The Crocodile Pagoda	Sui Sin Far	undetermined

Notes on the Appendix A:

This list is largely indebted to Mary Chapman's "Appendix C: Chronological Bibliography of Works by Edith Eaton" (251–265). Most of the publications listed by Chapman have been reviewed and information has been added about whether illustrations are included. I have located the original periodical publication of "The Story of a Little Chinese Seabird," which is not included in Chapman's appendix. "Undetermined" indicates that I have not been able to locate or examine the original periodical publication of the story in question.

Appendix B
Contemporary Reviews of the 1912 A. C. McClurg Edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

Title	Publisher	Date	Location
Literary Review	*The Montreal Weekly Witness*	18 Jun. 1912	p. 15
Among the Books Made to Read	*The Pittsburg Gazette Times*	21 Jun. 1912	p. 4
Books and Authors by Jennie Irene Mix	*Pittsburg Daily Post*	26 Jun. 1912	p. 10
Latest News from the Book World	*Boston Globe*	29 Jun. 1912	p. 11
Some of the Summer Books	*San Francisco Chronicle*	30 Jun. 1912	p. 6
The Uncommercial Club by Frederick W. Burrows	*New England Magazine*	Jun. 1912	pp. 191–194
The New Books	*The Congregationalist and Christian World*	4 Jul. 1912	p. 187
News and Views of Books	*Boston Globe*	6 Jul. 1912	p. 7
A New Note in Fiction.	*The New York Times*	7 Jul. 1912	p. 17
Shorter Reviews: "Mrs. Spring Fragrance"	*San Francisco Call*	7 Jul. 1912	p. 31
Books	*The Graphic*	12 Jul. 1912	p. 14
Books of the Day	*Boston Evening Transcript*	17 Jul. 1912	p. 18
The News of the New Books	*The Kansas City Star*	20 Jul. 1912	p. 6
Around the Library Table.	*Oakland Tribune*	21 Jul. 1912	p. 8
New Books,	*The Continent*	25 Jul. 1912	pp. 1045–1046
Latest Books and Literary News	*The Inter Ocean*	27 Jul. 1912	p. 5
Reviews of New Books	*Post-Dispatch Home Readers' Magazine*	3 Aug. 1912	p. 5
Among the New Books	*The Montreal Daily Star*	3 Aug. 1912	p. 5
Chinese Life and Customs Described	*Sherbrooke Daily Record*	7 Aug. 1912	p. 1
The New Books	*The Churchman*	10 Aug. 1912	pp. 18–19
Among the Book-Smiths by Walt Mason	*The Kansas City Star*	11 Aug. 1912	p. 6C
Books of the Season	*The Indianapolis Sunday Star*	11 Aug. 1912	p. 28
Literary Notes	*The Independent*	15 Aug. 1912	p. 388
Among the New Books	*Chicago Daily Tribune*	21 Sep 1912	p. 10
Book Notices	*Education*	Sep. 1912	pp. 59–64
Recent New Books	*The Gazette, Montreal*	18 Oct. 1912	p. 8
Book Table	*Journal of Education*	31 Oct. 1912	pp. 468–469
Review of Books	*The Oriental Review*	Oct. 1912	pp. 755–759
Among the New Books	*The Montreal Daily Star*	30 Nov. 1912	p. 6
Department of Oriental Review: Book Notices	*The American Antiquarian*	Jul–Sep. 1913	pp. 181–2
Brief Notes on the Literature of the Past Year	*The American Church Almanac and Year Book for 1913*	1913	pp. 419–432
The Latest Books	*The Argonaut*	8 Mar. 1913	p. 153
Among the New Books	*Wisconsin State Journal*	13 Oct.. 1913	p. 4

Appendix C
Bibliographical Description of the 1912 A. C. McClurg Edition of *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

Mrs. Spring [10.5/8.0/5.0] | *Fragrance* [10.5/8.0/5.0] | *BY* [1.5] | *SUI SIN FAR* [2.3] | **[**EDITH EATON**]** [1.5/1.0] | [publisher's device, acorns with ribbons, 22 × 22 mm, 'A.C.McClurg | & Co.'] | *CHICAGO* [2.5] | *A. C. McCLURG & CO.* [2.9/2.0] | *1912* [2.9]

NOTE. The typeface of '*Mrs. Spring* | *Fragrance*' is Caslon, Lanston Monotype No. 337. Bodoni, Lanston Monotype No. 150 is used for all other texts on the title page.

COLLATION. *unsigned*, 1^{10} *2–22*^{8}, 178 leaves, pp. *i–iv* v–vi *vii–viii 1* 2–241 *242* 243–347 *348*.

NOTE. Since the book is unsigned, it is difficult to ascertain the format. Based on F. G. Browne's 1913 *Chicago Tribune* article and S. D. Warren & Co.'s 1913 *Printing Art Suggestion* Book advertisement for the paper, it is likely a thirty-twomo.

CONTENTS. *i* half-title '*Mrs. Spring Fragrance*'. *ii* blank. *iii* title. *iv* copyright statement 'COPYRIGHT, 1912 | A. C. MCCLURG & CO. | PUBLISHED, MAY, 1912 | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED'; printer's imprint at foot: 'THE·PLIMPTON·PRESS | [W·D·O] | NORDWOOD · MASS · U·S·A'. v–vi 'CONTENTS'. *vii* acknowledgement '*ACKNOWLEDGMENT | I have to thank the Editors of The Independent,* | [. . .] | *within this volume*. | *SUI SIN FAR'*. *viii* blank. *1–*241 "Mrs. Spring Fragrance" text. *242–*347 "Tales of Chinese Children" text. *348* blank.

PAPER. *Leaves*: at least 198 × 140 mm (p. *iv*); *Sheets*: yellowish-white wove unwatermarked, S. D. Warren & Co. Standard Olde Style; thickness .157 (p. 11), bulking .161 (pp. 13–44); total bulk 30.6.

NOTE. Based on the dimensions of the leaves and S. D. Warren & Co.'s 1913 advertisement for the paper, the size of the sheet is probably 30½ × 41 inch or 33 × 44 inch.

TYPOGRAPHY. *Text*: 29 ll. (p. 4) 140.5 (147.5) × 88.0 mm; 10 ll. leading = 48.0; face 3.9/2.9/1.9; Bodoni, Lanston Monotype No. 150. *Running titles*: 'MRS. SPRING FRAGRANCE' versos 2–240; 'TALES OF CHINESE CHILDREN' versos pp. 244–346; story titles, in full or shortened (e.g. 'SOULS OF AH SO NAN' rectos pp. 225–223), rectos pp. 3–241, 243–347; face 1.5, same style as text, all caps, dropped 19.0 from top edge, centered 4.6 above text (p. 164), with no rule beneath. *Head titles*: '*Mrs. Spring Fragrance'* p. *1*; '*Tales of Chinese Children*' p. *242*; face 8.3/6.3/4.0; Caslon, Lanston Monotype No. 337; centered 6.3 above text. *Story titles*: face 2.8, same style as text, all caps, centered 4.5 above text. *Pagination*: face 2.8, at outer margins of headlines. *Ornament*: initials on the opening of each story and of each section of a story, height 13mm, widths varying (e.g., 13.0 and 16.5 respectively for 'A' on p. 26 and for 'W' on p. 111); the Plimpton Press Studio Serlio Outline Initials.

ILLUSTRATIONS. On every verso and recto, over two-page spread, a branch of plum blossom and a branch of bamboo extending obliquely and in parallel across verso and recto, a female paradise flycatcher perching on the bamboo branch on verso, a male on the same branch on recto, and Chinese handwritten script at bottom right on verso '福 | 祿 | 壽'; planography, light gray.

BINDING. *Material*: dotted line cloth, vivid red. *Front*: 'Mrs. Spring Fragrance' [handwritten script, stamped in gold, 26 × 127 mm] | [illustration of three dragonflies, two flowers in water,

and a round moon, stamped in green, gold, and white, 163 × 99] | 水 | 仙 | 花 | 誌 [all handwritten script, stamped in gold, 51 × 19]'. *Back:* blank. *Spine*: 'Mrs | Spring | Fragrance | by | Sui Sin Far [all handwritten script, stamped in gold 48 × 30] | [illustration of a flower, stamped in white, 132 × 26] | A.C. McCLURG | & Co. [all handwritten script, stamped in gold, 10.5 ×28.5]'. *Edges*: trimmed, undecorated. *Endpapers*: same paper as text, with light-gray, planographic illustrations over two-page spread of a wisteria stem extending across verso and recto and seven Chinese junks at bottom right on recto, a binder's gathering of two leaves (one pastedown and one flyleaf), front and back, trimmed.

COPIES EXAMINED. United States. 1. ViU. PS3509.A822 M7 1912.

PUBLICATION DETAILS. May, 1912; 2500 copies; net $1.40.