

## UNDER THE STARS

By S. E. Kiser.

(Copyright, by W. G. Chapman.)

For three hours Helen Sibley had been waiting at Northport Junction. Luckily the evening was pleasant, so that she was not compelled to sit in the stuffy, dingy little station. There was just one pretty thing about Northport Junction, and that was



She Was Thinking of Tom Harlow.

Helen. If the train for which she was waiting ever came and ever departed again, Northport Junction would resume its habit of being about as unlovely a spot as one might find within the temperate zone.

While Helen remained the place would possess one attraction that would have lent distinction to a far more important and a far more splendid center of activity than the Junction was ever likely to become.

The operator in the bay window that jutted out into the point of land between the branching tracks evidently had an eye for beauty as well an ear for Morse. As Helen walked up and down the platform he watched her and became thoughtful. He wondered why it was that nature bestowed her gifts so lavishly upon some girls and treated others so shabbily. The beauty that Helen possessed might have made a dozen plain girls fair if it had been distributed among them. Such was the operator's reasoning. The operator at Northport Junction was a philosopher.

But Helen was not thinking of philosophy, and if she had noticed that the operator was eagerly watching her the fact neither added to her pleasure nor caused her annoyance. For some reason she was thinking of Tom Harlow. Perhaps it was because of the loneliness of her surroundings. It was nearly a year since she had refused to listen when Tom has said that he could "explain everything in good 'time," and for months she had thought that she was never going to have any interest in him again.

Thinking of Tom naturally caused her to think of Mrs. Danforth, the pretty, young grass widow who had come between,