

## DEATH MAY INVADE PALACE OF SPIRITS

Eccentric Mrs. Winchester, It  
Is Feared, Is on Her Last  
Sickbed in San Jose.

### DOCTORS CLOSE AT HAND

Neuritis, Brought on by 1906  
Disaster, May Be Fatal to  
Wealthy Recluse.

[Special Dispatch to "The Examiner."]  
SAN JOSE, June 9.—Mrs. Sarah L.  
Winchester, widow of the inventor-  
president of the Winchester Arms Com-  
pany, is seriously ill at Llanada Villa,  
her country home.

Suffering from a nervous break-  
down, brought on in the disaster of  
1906, when her handsome mansion,  
known as "the house of mystery," was  
partially destroyed, the aged woman  
has become afflicted with neuritis.

Immediate members of the family of  
this extremely rich and most eccentric  
woman fear for her recovery. Physi-  
cians are in constant attendance.

Mrs. Winchester, who is 78 years old,  
has resided in Santa Clara county for  
almost twenty years. In that time she  
has never appeared in public.

The history of her private life, as  
told by those who have been most in-  
timate with her, reads like a page of  
fiction.

### To Mourn Alone.

Mrs. Winchester came to California  
shortly after she was widowed to  
mourn the death of her husband in  
solitude. She ordered built in the  
heart of the Santa Clara valley a re-  
sidence of such magnificent architec-  
ture and costly furnishings that the  
neighbors who lived on adjoining  
farms called to visit her. But of all  
who tried to pass the portals of the  
mysterious dwelling, none succeeded.

Her country home consists of sev-  
eral hundred acres which are laid out  
in parks and orchards and surrounded  
with a high hedge.

The only glimpse which neighbors  
caught of this peculiar woman was  
when she was driving in her coupes  
and victorias through the beautiful  
grounds. Occasionally she would  
venture outside, but always with the  
curtains of her carriage drawn.

### Only Three Know Her.

Only three persons are known to  
have been on terms of intimacy with  
Mrs. Winchester—her niece and confi-  
dential adviser, Mrs. Fred Marriott of  
Menlo Park; Captain Fred Marriott, N.  
G. C., and Jesse J. Adel of San Jose,  
former first lieutenant in the United  
States army, at one time fiancé of  
Miss Merriman, niece and heir to the  
millions of Mrs. Winchester.

For years Mrs. Winchester, on her  
occasional drives through the valley,  
would order her carriage drawn up in  
front of some sanitarium and hand a  
check to her niece to be given to the  
directors, with the request that the  
name of the donor be kept secret.

### Spirits Bid Her Build.

Shortly after her arrival in San  
Jose, Mrs. Winchester is said to have  
received a message from the "spirit  
world" that she must build a mansion  
and that should the sound of hammer  
or any tools of iron ever cease she  
would die.

She brought architects and carpen-  
ters, plumbers and painters from the  
East and hired them by the year. Her  
home is now almost 600 feet in length  
and half as wide and the height of its  
highest tower is seven stories.

The entrance to the house is in the  
first story of this tower. The doors and  
windows of it are covered with white  
satin draperies and in it are couches  
upholstered in Indian silks and other  
imported fabrics.

### Prayer Room Inviolable.

This is the mysterious prayer room  
into which Mrs. Winchester has al-  
lowed no one to enter. Here she re-  
ceives messages from the spirits.

Beneath the mansion is a wine cel-  
lar in which there are rare old vint-  
ages which have not been opened for  
ten years.

Mrs. Winchester is said to have ob-  
served the imprint of a man's hand  
one day on a dusty water pipe in the  
cellar. Fearing a bomb she ordered  
the cellar closed with three separate  
locks.

Mrs. Winchester is reputed to be  
worth \$20,000,000. Upon the last trip  
of the "Bostonians" to this coast she  
offered the company \$1,000 to play a  
matinee in her conservatory.

Mrs. Winchester has never been  
known to have had a photograph taken,  
but those who know say that she is  
much like the late Queen Victoria.