1018-14-55   **Katherine F. Stevenson*** (`katherine.stevenson@csun.edu`), Department of Mathematics, California State University, 18111 Nordhoff St, Northridge, CA 91330, and **David Harbater** (`harbater@math.upenn.edu`), Department of Mathematics, Univ. of Penn, 209 S. 33rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. *Local Galois theory in dimension two.*

This paper proves a generalization of Shafarevich's Conjecture, for fields of Laurent series in two variables over an arbitrary field. This result says that the absolute Galois group G_K of such a field K is *quasi-free* of rank equal to the cardinality of K, i.e. every non-trivial finite split embedding problem for G_K has exactly card K proper solutions. We also strengthen a result of Pop and Haran-Jarden on the existence of proper regular solutions to split embedding problems for curves over large fields; our strengthening concerns integral models of curves, which are two-dimensional. (Received February 20, 2006)