# THE CIRCULAR STAIRCAS

BY MARY ROBERTS 4. RINEHART MLLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

#### SYNOPSIS.

Mess have, sender and search and of<br/>fortune and the serve and search and search and<br/>serve and the serve and the serve and<br/>the serve and the serve and the serve and<br/>the serve and the serve and the serve and the serve and<br/>the serve and the serve and the serve and the serve and<br/>the serve and the serv Miss Innes, spinster and guardian of Gertrude and Halsey, established summer

### CHAPTER XIV .--- Continued.

Gertrude and Halsey went for a long walk that afternoon and Louise slept. Time hung heavy on my hands, and I did as I had fallen into a habit of doing lately—I sat down and thought things over. One result of my meditations was that I got up sud-denly and went to the telephone. I had taken the most intense dislike to this Dr. Walker, whom I had never seen, and who was being talked of in the countryside as the fiance of Louise Armstrong.

knew Sam Huston well. There had been a time, when Sam was a good deal younger than he is now, before he had married Anne Endicott, when I knew him even better. So now I felt no hesitation in calling him over the telephone. But when his office boy had given way to his confidential clerk, and that functionary had condescended to connect his employer's desk telephone, I was somewhat at a loss as to how to begin.

"Why, how are you, Rachel?" Sam id sonorously. "Going to build that said sonorously. "Goin house at Rock View?" year-old joke of his. It was a 20-

"Sometime, perhaps," I said. "Just now I want to ask you a question about something which is none of my business.

"I see you haven't changed an iota in a quarter of a century, Rachel." This was intended to be another jest. "Ask ahead: everything but my do-

mestic affairs is at your service. "Try to be serious," I said. "And tell me this: Has your firm made any Walker at Casanova?"

Where was it to be built? I have

"It was to be built: I have a reason for asking." "It was to be, I believe, on the Arm-strong place. Mr. Armstrong himself consulted me, and the inference was -in fact, I am quite certain-the house was to be occupied by Mr. Armstrong's daughter, who was engaged to marry Dr. Walker.

When the architect had inquired for and had finally rung off, I was certain

face in the shadow, and my heart fair-ly ached for him. He was so big and When I had finished he drew boyish! a long breath.

'Whatever Louise does," he said, "nothing will convince me, Aunt Ray, that she doesn't care for me. And up to two months ago, when she and her mother went west, I was the happiest follow a convertible fellow on earth. Then something made a difference; she wrote me that her people were opposed to the marriage; that her feeling for me was what it had always been, but that something had happened which had changed her ideas as to the future. I was not to write until she wrote me, and whatever occurred, I was to think the best I could of her. It sounded like a puzzle. When I saw her yesterday, it was the same thing, only, perhaps, worse.

"Halsey," I asked, "have you any idea of the nature of the interview between Louise Armstrong and Arn-old the night he was murdered?"

"It was stormy. Thomas says once or twice he almost broke into the room, he was so alarmed for Louise." "Another thing, Halsey," I said,

"have you ever heard Louise mention woman named Carrington, Nina Carrington?" "Never," he said positively.

For try as we would, our thoughts always came back to that fatal Saturday night, and the murder. Every con-versational path led to it, and we all felt that Jamieson was tightening threads of evidence around John Bailey. The detective's absence was hardly reassuring; he must have had something to work on in town or he would have returned.



The papers reported that the cash- would come through the keyhole. the different members of my family, ier of the Traders' bank was ill in his Liddy looked at the keyhole. "But it and had finally rung off, I was certain of one thing. Louise Armstrong was in love with Halsey, and the man she was going to marry was Dr. Walker. Moreover, this decision was not new; marriage had been contemplated for some time. There must certainly be apartments at the Knickerbocker-a sounds very much as though some one

tome to have a sinister appearance, but we kept that wing well lighted, and until the lights went out at midnight it was really cheerful, if one did not know its history.

On Friday night, then, I had gone to bed, resolved to go at once to sleep. Thoughts that insisted on obtruding themselves I pushed resolutely to the back of my mind, and I systematically soon, and was dreaming that Dr. Walker was building his new house immediately in front of my windows: I could hear the thump-thump of the hammers, and then I waked to a knowledge that somebody was pounding on my door.

I was up at once, and with the sound of my footstep on the floor the low knocking ceased, to be followed immediately by sibilant whispering through the keyhole. "Miss Rachel! Miss Rachel!" some-

body was saying, over and over. "Is that you, Liddy?" I asked, my

hand on the knob. "For the love of mercy, let me in!

she said in a low tone. She was leaning against the door, for when I opened it, she fell in. She was greenish-white, and she had a red and black barred flannel petticoat over her shoulders.

"Listen," she said, standing in, the middle of the floor and holding on to me. "Oh, Miss Rachel, it's the ghost of that dead man hammering to get in!"

Sure enought, there was a dull thud -thud-thud-it came apparently from the wall.

"It's not a ghost," I said decidedly. "If it was a ghost it wouldn't rap; it



him. He saw Liddy there and divined at once that Louise was alone.

"You let me attend to this fellow, whoever it is, Aunt Ray, and go to Louise, will you? She may be awake and alarmed."

and alarmed." So in spite of her protests, I left Liddy alone and went back to the east wing. Perhaps I went a little faster past the yawning blackness of the circular staircase; and I could hear Halsey creaking cautiously down the main staircase. The rapping, or pounding, had ceased, and the silence was almost painful. And then sudwas almost painful. And then sud-denly, from apparently under my very feet, there rose a woman's scream, a cry of terror that broke off as suddenly as it came. I stood frozen and still. Every drop of blood in my body seemed to leave the surface and gath-er around my heart. In the dead silence that followed it throbbed as if it would burst. More dead than alive,

## was not there! CHAPTER XVI.

In the Early Morning.

I stumbled into Louise's bedroom. She

I stood looking at the empty bed. The coverings had been thrown back, and Louise's pink silk dressing-gown was gone from the foot, where it had lain. The night lamp burned dimly revealing the emptiness of the place. I picked it up, but my hand shook so that I put it down again, and got somehow to the door.

There were voices in the hall and Gertrude came running toward me.

"What is it?" she cried. "What was that sound? Where is Louise?" "She is not in her room," I said stupidly. "I think—It was she—who screamed."

Liddy had joined us now, carrying a light. We stood huddled together at the head of the circular staircase, looking down into its shadows. There was nothing to be seen, and it was absolutely quiet down there. Then we heard Halsey running up the main staircase. He came quickly down the hall to where we were standing.

"There's no one trying to get in. I thought I heard some one shriek. Who was it?" Our stricken faces told him the

truth. "Some one screamed down there," I said. "And—and Louise is not in

her room.' With a jerk Halsey took the light

from Liddy and ran down the circular staircase. I followed 1.1m, more slowly. My nerves seemed to be in a state of paralysis; I could scarcely step. At the foot of the stairs Halsey gave an exclamation and put down the light.

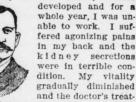
"Aunt Ray," he called sharply. At the foot of the staircase, huddled in a heap, her head on the lower stair, was Louise Armstrong. She lay limp and white, her dressing-gown dragging loose from one sleeve of her night-dress, and the heavy braid of her dark hair stretching its length a couple of steps above her head, as if she had slipped down.

She was not dead; Halsey put her down on the floor and began to rub her cold hands, while Gertrude and Liddy ran for stimulants. As for me, I sat there at the foot of that ghostly staircase-sat, because my knees wouldn't hold me-and wondered where it would all end. Louise was

### INJURED IN WRECK.

Conductor Thrown Down 25 Foot Embankment.

George Hahn, C. & N. W. conductor. Arbor Ave., West Chicago, Ill., says: "I was thrown from a car down a 25 foot embankment and my kidneys were badly bruised. Kidney trouble



ment failed to help. When in despair I-began with Doan's Kidney Pills and soon improved. Continued use cured me and at present my health is excellent."

Remember the name-Doan's. For sale by all dealers. 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Unfair. Senator John H. Bankhead, discussing a political move, said with a smile

"Oh, it's too coldly calculated. It's almost unfair. In fact, it's like Mrs. Blank.

"Mrs. Blank is a leader of Bar Harbor society. Her husband said to her, one afternoon, as she made a very elaborate toilet for a garden party that she was giving to some members of the British legation: "'Why did you write to all our guests

that this party was to be absolutely informal? "Mrs. Blank laughed.

'So as to be the best-dressed wom-

an present, of course,' she said.'

A Happy Husband. "Our house used to smell soapy and steamy wash day," says a well-known man, "but since my wife began buying Easy Task laundry soap, there is no more of that. I've investigated that soap and find it is made of purest cocoanut oil, cleanest tallow, borax and naphtha, and that it not only cleans. but antisepticises clothes, cooking ves sels and everything else washed with We tried it first by buying two cakes for ten cents, with the understanding that our money would be re funded if it didn't make good. Of course, it made good."

Not Impregnable. Horace Avory, K. C., just appointed a judge, is one of the mordant wits of the British bar. One day, cross-examining a recalcitrant witness, he asked

"What are you?"

"A retired gentleman," proudly as-"Well," snarled Avery, "when you achieved the position of gentleman, why did you retiro from it?"

Does Engineering Work. Mlle. Bandurin is superintendent of an engineering firm in Russia. She was graduated from the Women's Technological Institute in St. Petersburg, and has had practical experience in engineering. She built a steel warehouse for an army co-operative society, has been assistant en-gineer in building a bridge across the Neva and has done other important work

#### Remarkable Young Lady.

From a feuilleton: "Her voice was low and soft; but once again, as Janet Fenn withdrew from the room and closed the door after her, the fiendish gleam came into her odorless eyes. "If we hear any more of Janet we will let you know."-Punch.

## A Business Transaction.

"So Mr. Penniwise married his typ-ist!" said Miss Cayenne. "Yes."

"I wonder whether she gains an al lowance or he merely saves a salary?" -Washington Star.

#### PRESSED HARD. Coffee's Weight Old Age.

The Private Citizen-A general has an easy time after the war is over The General-Not for very long. though. You soon have applications for your autograph and invitations to banquets.

## TINY BABY'S PITIFUL CASE

"Our baby when two months old was suffering with terrible eczema from head to foot, all over her body. The baby looked just like a skinned rabbit. We were unable to put clothes on her. At first it seemed to be a few mattered pimples. They would break the skin and peel off leaving the underneath skin red as though it were scalds. Then a few more pimples would appear and spread all over the body, leaving the baby all raw without skin from head to foot. On top of her head there appeared a heavy scab a quarter of an inch thick. It was awful to see so small a baby look as she did. Imagine! The doctor was afraid to put his hands to the child. We tried several doctors' remedies but all failed.

"Then we decided to try Cuticura. By using the Cuticura Ointment we softened the scab and it came off. Un-der this, where the real matter was, by washing with the Cuticura Soap and applying the Cuticura Ointment, a new skin soon appeared. We also gave baby four drops of the Cuticura Resolvent three times daily. After three days you could see the baby off and heal underneath. Now the baby is four months old. She is a fine picture of a fat little baby and all is well. We only used one cake of Cuti-cura Soap, two boxes of Cuticura Ointment and one bottle of Cuticura Re-solvent. If people would know what Cuticura is there would be few suffer-ing with eczema. Mrs. Joseph Kossmann, 7 St. John's Place, Ridgewood Heights, N. Y., Apr. 30 and May 4, '09."

## Outlining Treatment.

"I want you to take care of my practise while I am away." "But, doctor, I have just graduated. Have had little experience."

"You don't need it with my fashion-able patients. Find out what they have been eating and stop it. Find out where they have been summering and send 'em somewhere else.'

#### Resinol Is Appreciated and Highly Recommended by Intelligent People in All Parts of the World.

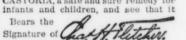
I highly recommend Resinol Ointment to all persons who are troubled with skin eruptions of any kind. I have found these preparations most useful and efficacious in many cases. M. F. Ryan, Bedford Sq., London.

#### Local Enterprise.

Tourist-Why do you call this a vol-cano? I don't believe it has had an eruption for a thousand years! Guide-Well, the hotel managers in this region club together and keep a fire going in it every year during the season.-Meggendorfer Blaetter.

#### Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bottle of



BUSY THEN.

some explanation-but what was it? collateral for large loans, and the

eemed to understand, but an unhap-der face I have never seen. She the bank had been placed under arpier looked like a criminal whose reprieve rest, and released on heavy bond. is over, and the day of execution approaching

# CHAPTER XV.

#### Liddy Gives the Alarm.

The next day, Friday, Gertrude broke the news of her stepfather's death to Louise. She did it as gently death to Louise. She did it as genuy as she could, telling her first that he was very ill, and finally that he was dead. Louise received the news in the most unexpected manner, and when Gertrude came out to tell me how she had stood it, I think she was clumet shocked. almost shocked.

"She just lay and stared at me. Aunt Ray," she said. "Do you know, added to the between the two men "Do you know, added to the belief that Bailey knew believe she is glad, glad! And she honest to pretend anything is too b honest to pretend anything What sort of a man was Mr. Monday lent color to the suspicion Paul Armstrong, anyhow?"

He was a bully as well as a ras- seemed to be his surrendering himsel cal, Gertrude," I said. "But I am con-vinced of one thing; Louise will send for Halsey now, and they will make

For Louise had steadily refused to meant to be convinced, one way or the see Halsey all that day, and the boy other. I took no one on faith. was franti

was frantic. We had a quiet hour, Halsey and I, that evening, and I told him several things: about the request that we give up the lease to Sunnyside, about give up the lease to Sunnyside, about the telegram to-Louise, about the rumors of an approaching marriage runors of an approaching marriage between the girl and Dr. Walker, and, last of all, my ewn interview with her the day before. He sat back in a big chair, with his

That day I repeated to Louise the telegram Mr. Harton had opened. She a million and a half dollars had been Was he alone in his guilt, or was

lief to find him there, very sour asleep, and with his door unlocked. the cashier his accomplice? Where was the money? The estate of the "Wake up, Halsey," I said, shaking him. dead man was comparatively small-

He stirred a little. Liddy was half in and half out of the door, afraid as a city house on a fashionable street, Sunnyside, a large estate largely mortgaged, an insurance of \$50,000, usual to be left alone, and not quite daring to enter. Her scruples seemed to fade, however, all at gave a suppressed yell, bolted into the room and stood tightly clutching the foot-board of the bed. Halsey was gradually waking. "Tve seen it," Liddy wailed.

"A nan in white down the hall! I paid no attention.

across to Halsey's room. I hardly know what I feared, but it was a re-

und

'Halsey," I persevered, "so is breaking into the house. Get up, won't you?

"It isn't our house," he said sleepi ly. And then he roused to the exi gency of the occasion. "All ri Aunt Ray," he said, still yawning. "All right you'll let me get into something-

It was all I could do to get Liddy out of the room. The demands of the occasion had no influence on her; she had seen the ghost, she persishe wasn't going into the hall. But I got her over to my room at last, more dead than alive, and made her down on the bed

The tappings, which seemed to have ceased for a while, had commenced again, but they were fainter. Halsey came over in a few minutes, and st

night alarm had found the electric lights gone; the hall, save for its similarity, just then the hall clock, night lamp, was in darkness, as I went far off, struck faintly three o'clock It was four before Louise was able to talk, and the first rays of dawn were coming through her windows



She Lay Limp and White.

which faced the east, before she could tell us coherently what had occurred I give it as she told it. She lay propped in bed, and Halsey sat beside unrebuffed, and hold her hand while she talked. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Good in Everything.

Whatever happens to anybody, it may be turned to beautiful results,----

When prominent men realize the injurious effects of coffee and the change in health that Postum can bring, they are glad to lend their testimony for the benefit of others.

A superintendent of public schools in a Southern state says: "My mother, since her early childhood, was an inveterate coffee drinker, had been troubled with her heart for a number of years and complained of that 'weak all over' feeling and sick stomach.

"Some time ago I was making an of-ficial visit to a distant part of the country and took dinner with one of the merchants of the place. I noticed somewhat peculiar flavor of the cofee, and asked him concerning it. He replied that it was Postum. I was so pleased with it that, after the meal was over, I bought a package to carry home with me, and had wife prepare some for the next meal; the whole family liked it so well that we discontinued coffee and used Postum entirely

"I had really been at times ver" anxious concerning my mother's con dition, but we noticed that after using Postum for a short time, she felt so much better than she did prior to its use, and had little trouble with her heart and no sick stomach; that the headaches were not so frequent, and her general condition much improved This continued until she was as well and hearty as the rest of us

"I know Postum has benefited myself and the other members of the fambut in a more marked degree in the case of my mother, as she was a detim of long standing.

Ever read the above letterf A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

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There is genius and power in persistence .- Orison Swett Marden

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Your truly great are notoriously not happy.-J. C. Snaith.

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against him.