THE CIRCULAR STAIRCAS

BY MARY 0 ROBERTS 40 RINEHART ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROY WALTERS

SYNOPSIS.

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CHAPTER XXIV-Continued.

"Did they go toward the club?" Gertrude asked suddenly, leaning for ward.

"No, miss. I think they came into the village. I didn't get a look at their faces, but I know every chick and child in the place, and everybody knows me. When they didn't should at me-in my uniform, you know-! took it they were strangers." So all we had for our afternoon's

work was this: Some one had been shot by the bullet that went through the door; he had not left the village, and he had not called in a physician. Also, Dr. Walker knew who Lucien Wallace was, and his very denial made me confident that, in that one direction at least, we were on the right track

"Gertrude," I said, "I have been a very seifish old woman. You are going to leave this miserable house to Annie Morton is going to Scot land next week, and you shall go right with her.'

To my surprise, she flushed pain fully

"I don't want to go, Aunt Ray," she "You are losing your health and your good looks," I said decidedly. "You should have a change."

"I shan't stir a foot." She was equally decided. Then, more lightly: "Why, you and Liddy need me to arbitrate between you every day in the week'

Perhaps I was growing suspicious of every one, but it seemed to me that Gertrude's gayety was forced and artificial. I watched her covertly during the rest of the drive, and I did not on.' like the two spots of crimson in her pale cheeks. But I said nothing more about sending her to Scotland; I knew the would not go.

CHAPTER XXV.

A Visit from Louise.

shootin' through the door-I'll never their trunks I supposed there be the same woman again." "Well, I'm glad of that—anything for a change," I said. And in came Eliza, flanked by Rosie and Mary Anne

Her story, broken with sobs and corrections from the other two, was this: At two o'clock (2:15, Rosie insisted) she had gone upstairs to get a picture from her room to show Mary Anne. (A picture of a lady, Mary Anne interposed.) She went up the servants' staircase and along the corridor to her room, which lay between the trunkroom and the unfinished ballroom. She heard a sound as she went down the corridor like some one moving furni-ture, but she was not nervous. She thought it might be men examining the house after the fire the night before, but she looked in the trunkroom and saw nobody.

She went into her room quietly. The noise had ceased and everything was subject to spells-("I told you that end, I took her. As Halsey said, when



standing at the foot of that staircase came to come up for two girls and was something doing, and as this here woman had been looking for work in the village I thought I'd bring her along."

Already I had acquired the true suburbanite ability to take servants on faith; I no longer demanded written and unimpeachable references. I, Halsey is not here. He has gone to Rachel Innes, have learned not to the station for Mr. Jamieson. What Rachel Innes, have learned not to mind if the cook sits down comfort has happened?" ably in my sitting room when she is taking the orders for the day, and I sure?" am grateful if the silver is not cleaned with scouring soap. And so that day I merely told Liddy to send the new applicant in. When she came, however, I could hardly restrain a gasp of surprise. It was the woman with the

pitted face. She stood somewhat awkwardly just heavily. inside the door, and she had an air of self-confidence that was inspiring. Yes, she could cook; was not a fancy cook, but could make good soups and quiet. Then she sat down on the side desserts if there was any one to take of her bed, and, feeling faint—she was charge of the salads. And so, in the

moments if—everything is right." We sat there, the three of us, without attempt at conversation. Both Gertrude and I recognized the futility of asking Louise any questions; her reticence was a part of a role she had assumed. Our ears were strained for the first throb of the motor as it

the whistle of the train now."

turned into the drive and commenced the climb to the house. Ten minutes passed, 15, 20. I saw Louise's hands grow rigid as they clutched the arms of her chair. I watched Gertrude's bright color slowly ebbing away, and around my own heart I seemed to feel the grasp of a giant hand.

Twenty-five minutes, and then a ound. But it was not the chug of the motor: it was the unmistakable rumble of the Casanova hack. Gertrude drew aside the curtain and peered into the darkness. "It's the hack, I am sure," she said,

evidently relieved. "Something has gone wrong with the car, and no wonder-the way Halsey went down the hill.'

It seemed a long time before the creaking vehicle came to a stop at the dcor. Louise rose and stood watching, her hand to her throat. And then Gertrude opened the door, admitting Mr. Jamieson and a stocky, middleaged man. Halsey was not with them. When the door had closed and Louise realized that Halsey had not come, her expression changed. From tense watchfulness to relief, and now again to absolute despair, her face was an open page. "Halsey?" I asked unceremoniously,

ignoring the stranger. "Did he-not meet you?" "No." Mr. Jamieson looked slightly

surprised. "I rather expected the car, but we got up all right." "You didn't see him at all?" Louise demanded breathlessly.

Mr. Jamieson knew her at once, al-though he had not seen her before. She had kept to her rooms until the morning she left.

morning she left. "No, Miss Armstrong," he said. "I saw nothing of him. What is wrong?" "Then we shall have to find him," she asserted. "Every instant is precious. Mr. Jamieson, I have reason for believing that he is in danger, but I don't know what it is. Only-he must be found."

The stocky man had said nothing. however, he went quickly to

"I'll catch the hack down the road and hold it," he said. "Is the gentleman down in the town?" "Mr. Jamieson," Louise said impul-

sively, "I can use the hack. Take my horse and trap outside and drive like mad. Try to find the Dragon Fly-it ought to be easy to trace. I can think of no other way. Only, don't lose a moment."



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His Luck. "I know a man who is always up against it." "Who is he?"

"The paper hanger when he has to fix a new wall."

AWFUL BURNING ITCH CURED IN A DAY

"In the middle of the night of March 30th I woke up with a burning itch in my two hands and I felt as if I could pull them apart. In the morning the itching had gone to my chest and dur-ing that day it spread all over my body. I was red and raw from the top of my head to the soles of my feet and I was in continual agony from the itching. I could neither lie down nor sit up. I happened to see about Cuti-cura Remedies, and I thought I would give them a trial. I took a good bath with the Cuticura Soap and used the Cuticura Ointment. I put it on from my head down to my feet and then went to bed. On the first of April I felt like a new man. The itching was almost gone. I continued with the Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment and during that day the itching com-pletely left me. Frank Gridley, 325 East 43rd Street, New York City, Apr. 27, 1909." Cuticura Remedies are sold throughout the world; Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Props, Boston, Mass.

The Key to Germany. Capt. Charle's King, the author, praised, at the Milwaukee club, the German element in Milwaukee's population.

"I know a soldier," said Capt. King, who met the kaiser last year in Ber

lin. "You have a thorough knowledge of our best thought and customs,' said the kaiser. 'Have you ever been to

Germany before?' "'O, yes, sir,' said the soldier. "'What citles have you visited? Berlin and Hamburg?' asked the kal-

ser. -"'No, sir,' said the soldier. 'Mil-

What About Him?

The talk had gone back and fro, and the youthful socialist had been an-nouncing that no man ought to get his living by cheating, and we all listened to him, and agreed that it was dreadful when men and women did not tell the truth, but tried to make their living by deceiving people. Millionaires. landowners, financiers, we scarified all of them who cheat the public. "No one should make a living by decep-tion," said the young man. Then a quiet voice from a woman came from the corner of the sofa. "What about the conjurer?"-London Chronicle

> Laying the Foundation "Why are you always so careful to

ask advice about what you are going to do?" "So that if things go wrong I can

say 'I told you so.'

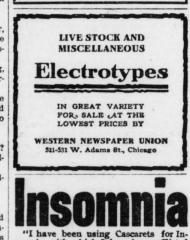


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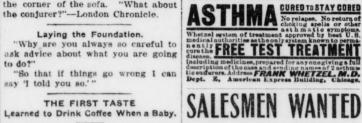
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"Took a nap. All right!" I said. "Go "When I came to, Miss Innes, sure as I'm sittin' here, I thought I'd die. Somethin' hit me in the face, and I might meet Louise driving over the set up, sudden. And then I seen the plaster drop, droppin' from a little hole in the wall. And the first thing I knew, an iron bar that long (fully

two yards by her measure) "shot

Struggling Down-Stairs with a Heavy Trunk

when I came, didn't I, Rosie?" "Yes'm, | we told him, it didn't matter much indeed she did!")-she put her head down on her pillow and-I have spoken of Halsey's restless. I have spoken of Halsey's restless-ness. On that day it seemed to be

more than ever a resistless impulse that kept him out until after luncheon. hills in her runabout; possibly he did meet her occasionally, but from his continued gloom I felt sure the situa-tion between them was unchanged.

Part of the afternoon I believe he

Now. ward the door.

mad



trude burst out, "tell us what is wrong.

"To the station, Gertrude? You are

"Yes," I said. "Listen. There is

She relaxed a little at our matter-

"Perhaps I was wrong," she said eavily. "He-will be here in a few

of fact tone, and allowed herself to sink into a chair.

ghost had been walking again, and this time in daylight.

Eliza was in a frenzy of fear. She close to her, and refused to let go re until she had told her story. Coming it just after the fire, the household was demoralized, and it was no surprise to me to find Alex and the under gardener struggling downstairs with a heavy trunk between them.

"I didn't want to do it, Miss Innes Alex said. "But she was so excited I was afraid she would do as she said -drag it down herself, and scratch the staircase.

I was trying to get my bonnet off and to keep the maids quiet at the same time. "Now, Eliza, when you same time. have washed your face and stopped hawling," I said, "come into my sitting seen them. room and tell me what has happened."

pressed disapproval. ders

be warming up.

Sniff

this excitement. You never looked Mary Anne and Eliza left that after-better. It's my opinion all this running noon, but Rosie decided to stay. It

but I know this: wasn't; but I know this: Fye got "fye brought more feelings left, and to see you ness," he said.

"No doubt there is some natural ex-

GN

planation for it, Eliza," I said. "You may have dreamed it, in your 'faintclutched at my sleeve when I went ing'attack. But if it is true, the metal rod and the hole in the wall will show

Eliza looked a little bit sheepish. "The hole's there all right, Miss In-nes," she said. "But the bar was gone when Mary Anne and Rosie went up to pack my trunk."

That wasn't all," Liddy's voice came funereally from a corner. "Eliza said that from the hole in the wall a burning eye looked down at her!"

"The wall must be at least six inches thick," I said with asperity. Unless the person who drilled the hole carried his eyes on the ends of a stick, Eliza couldn't possibly have

But the fact remained, and a visit Liddy put away my things without to Eliza's room proved it. I might speaking. The very set of her shoul- jeer all 1 wished; some one had rs expressed disapproval. "Well,"I said, when the silence be of the ballroom, passing between the came uncomfortable, "things seem to bricks of the partition, and shooting varming up." through the unresisting plaster of Eliza's room with such force as to "If Eliza goes, I don't know where to look for another cook." More st-had gone upstairs alone, and I confess ree. "Reale is probably a good cook." the thing puzzled me: in two or three places in the wall small apertures had

Sniff. "Liddy," I said at last, "don't dare to deny that you are having the time of your life. You positively gloat in

shound, and getting jolted out of a rut, has stirred up that torpid liver of yours," "It's not myself I'm thinking about," and, to my amazement, it had an oe-cupant. Matthew Geist, the driver, asked for me, and explained his er-rand with pride.

Jamieson and the other detective were coming, and had long periods of ab-straction during which he dug his

fork into my damask cloth and did not hear when he was spoken to. He refused dessert, and left the table early, excusing himself on the ground that he wanted to see Alex.

Alex, however, was not to be found. It was after eight when Halsey or dered the car and started down the hill at a pace that, even for him, was unusually reckless. Shortly after Alex reported that he was ready to go over the house preparatory to closing it for the night. Sam Bohannon came at a quarter before nine and began his patrol of the grounds, and with the arrival of the two detectives to look forward to I was not especially appre hensive

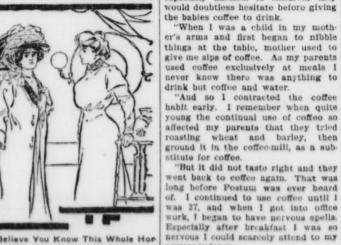
At half-past nine I heard the sound of a horse driven furiously up the drive. It came to a stop in front of the house and immediately after there were hurried steps on the veranda Our nerves were not what they should have been, and Gertrude, always apprehensive lately, was at the de most instantly. A moment later Louise had burst into the room and stood there bareheaded and breathing hard.

"Where is Halsey?" she demanded. Above her plain black gown her eyes looked big and somber, and the rapid drive had brought no color to her face. I got up and drew forward a chair.

quietly not strong enough for this kind of ther, this being her first ride with him thing."

hing." I don't think she even heard me. "He has not come back?" she chirped to his horse he asked: "What pkgs. ind with pride. "I've brought you a cock, Miss In-cas," he said. "When the message "For heaven's sake, Louise". On the said, "I'de and the said of t

Louise," she said accusingly. "I be lieve you know this whole horrible



"I Believe You Know This Whole Hor rible Thing, This Mystery."

"At night, after having coffee for supper, I could hardly sleep, and on thing, this mystery that we are strug If anything happens to gling with rising in the morning would feel weak Halsey, I shall never forgive you. and nervous. "A friend persuaded me to try Louise only raised her hands de spairingly and dropped them again. (TO BE CONTINUED.) Postum. My wife and 1 did not like it at first, but later when holied good and strong it was fine. Now we would not give up Postum for the best coffee

Prompted by Instinct. There is a certain type of femininity

which instinctively understands the we ever tasted. "He has not come back," I said proprieties of a buggy ride. Helen, aletly. "Sit down, child; you are aged three, cuddled up close to her fa-"I can now get good sleep, am free from nervousness and headaches mmend Postum to all coffee drink

> Read "The Road to Wellville," in "Woll

correspondence

"fhere's a Reason."

father," as she laid her little hand on his arm, "let's talk about loving each other."

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occasionally leads to over-indul-gence in the good things of the table. Be good to your stomach. Right it at once with





