

THE CIRCULAR STAIRCASE

By MARY ROBERTS RINEHART
ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROY WALKER
SYNOPSIS.

Miss Innes, speaker and guardian of Gertrude and Halsey, established summer headquarters at Sunnyside. Amidst numerous difficulties the servants deserted. As Miss Innes looked up for the night, she was startled by a dark figure on the veranda. She passed a terrible night, which was filled with unwelcome noises. In the morning Miss Innes found a strange ink and blotter in a clothes hamper. Gertrude and Halsey arrived. The house was awakened by a revolver shot. A strange man was found shot to death in the hall. It proved to be the body of Arnold Armstrong, whose father had owned the country house. Miss Innes found Halsey's revolver on the lawn. He and Jack Bailey had disappeared. The ink and blotter mysteriously disappeared. Detective Jamieson and the coroner arrived. Gertrude revealed that she was engaged to Jack Bailey, with whom she had talked in the billiard room a few moments before the murder. Jamieson told Miss Innes that she was hiding evidence from him. He impounded an intruder in an empty room. The intruder escaped down a laundry chute. It developed that the intruder was probably a woman. Gertrude was suspected for the crime. She left a print of a bare foot. Gertrude returned home with her right ankle wounded. A negro came to the door. What proved to be Jack Bailey's cuff. Halsey suddenly reappeared. He said he had come to give Mrs. Halsey's loaded weapon. Gertrude said that she had given Bailey an ink and blotter. Gertrude was arrested. Halsey's loaded weapon, which was a revolver, was found in the laundry chute. Halsey said Armstrong had worked his own back and was able to climb the stairs. A witness declared that Paul Armstrong was dead. Halsey trapped Mrs. Watson, the stepmother, while she was stealing from the intruder.

CHAPTER XIII—Continued.

"I reckon you bettah come in Miss Innes," he said, speaking cautiously. "It's not so I dunno what to do, and it's bound to come out some time or t'other."

He threw the door open then, and I stepped inside. Halsey came behind in the sitting room the old negro turned with quiet dignity to Halsey.

"You bettah sit down, sah," he said. "It's a place for a woman, sah." Things were not turning out the way Halsey expected. He sat down on the center-table, with his hands thrust in his pockets, and watched me as I followed Thomas up the narrow stairs. At the top a woman was standing, and a second glance showed me it was Rosie. She shrank back a little, but I said nothing. And then Thomas motioned to a partly open door, and I went in.

The lodge boasted of three bedrooms upstairs, all comfortably furnished. In this one, the largest and brightest, a night lamp was burning, and by its light I could make out a plain white metal bed. A girl was asleep there—or in a half stupor, for she snored something now and then. Rosie had taken her courage in her hands, and coming in had turned up the light. It was only then that I knew Fever-fused, ill as she was, I recognized Louise Armstrong.

I stood gazing down at her in a stupor of amazement. Louise here, hiding at the lodge, ill and alone? Rosie came up to the bed and smoothed the white counterpane.

"I am afraid she is worse to-night," she ventured at last. I put my hand on the sick girl's forehead. It was burning with fever, and I turned to where Thomas lingered in the hallway.

"Will you tell me what you mean, Thomas Johnson, by not telling me this before?" I demanded indignantly. Thomas quailed.

"Miss Louise wouldn't let me," he said earnestly. "I wanted to. She ought to 'a' had a doctor the night she came, but she wouldn't bear to it. It is very bad, Miss Innes."

"Bad enough," I said coldly. "Send Mr. Innes up."

Halsey came up the stairs slowly, looking rather interested and inclined to be amused. For a moment he could not see anything distinctly in the darkened room; he stopped, glanced at Rosie and at me, and then his eyes fell on the restless head on the pillow. I think he felt who it was before he really saw her. He crossed the room in a couple of strides and bent over the bed.

"Louise!" he said softly, but she did not reply, and her eyes showed no recognition. Halsey was young, and illness was new to him. He straightened himself slowly, still watching her, and caught my arm.

"She's dying, Aunt Ray," he said blankly. "Tying! Why, he doesn't know me!"

"Fudge!" I snapped, being apt to grow irritable when my sympathies are aroused. "She's doing nothing of the sort—and don't pinch my arm. If you want something to do, go and choke Thomas."

But at that moment Louise roused from her stupor to cough, and at the end of the paroxysm, as Rosie laid her back, exhausted, she knew us. There was all Halsey wanted; to his consciousness was recovery. He dropped on his knees beside the bed, and tried to tell her she was all right, and we would bring her around in a hurry, and how beautiful she looked—only to break down utterly and have to stop. And at that I came to my senses, and put him out.

"This instant!" I ordered, as he hesitated. "And send Rosie here."

He did not go far. He sat on the top step of the stairs, only leaving to telephone for a doctor, and getting in everybody's way in his eagerness to fetch and carry. I got him away finally, by sending him to fix up the car as a sort of ambulance, in case the doctor would allow the sick girl to be moved. He sent Gertrude down to the lodge loaded with all manner of impossible things, including an armful of Turkish towels and a box of mustard plasters, and as the two girls had known each other somewhat before, Louise brightened perceptibly when she saw Gertrude.

When the doctor from Englewood—the Casanova doctor, Dr. Walker, being away—had started for Sunnyside, and I had got Thomas to stop trying to explain what he did not understand

himself, I had a long talk with the old man, and this is what I learned.

On Saturday evening before, about ten o'clock, he had been reading in the sitting room downstairs, when some one rapped at the door. The old man was alone, Warner not having arrived, and at first he was uncertain about opening the door. He did so finally, and was amazed at being confronted by Louise Armstrong. Thomas was an old family servant, having been with the present Mrs. Armstrong since she was a child, and he was overwhelmed at seeing Louise. He saw that she was excited and tired, and he drew her into the sitting room and made her sit down. After a while Mrs. Watson, and they talked until late. The old man said Louise was in trouble, and seemed frightened. Mrs. Watson made some tea and took it to the lodge, but Louise made them both promise to keep her presence a secret. She had not known that Sunnyside was rented, and whatever her trouble was, she seemed puzzled. Her stepfather and her mother were still in California—that was all she would say about them. Why she had run away no one could imagine. Mr. Arnold Armstrong was at the Greenwood club, and at last Thomas, not knowing what else to do, went over there along the path. It was almost midnight. Part way over he met Armstrong himself and brought him to the lodge. Mrs. Watson had gone to the house for some bed linen. It having been arranged that under the circumstances Louise would be better at the lodge until

blankets and pillows, and Gertrude was opening and airing Louise's own rooms at the house. Her private sitting room, bedroom and dressing room were as they had been when we came. They occupied the end of the east wing, beyond the circular staircase, and we had not even opened them.

The girl herself was too ill to notice what was being done. When, with the help of the doctor, who was a fatherly man with a family of girls at home, we got her to the house and up the stairs into bed, she dropped into a feverish sleep, which lasted until morning. Dr. Stewart—that was the Englewood doctor—stayed almost all night, giving the medicine himself, and watching her closely. Afterward he told me that she had had a narrow escape from pneumonia, and that the cerebral symptoms had been rather alarming. I said I was glad it wasn't an "his" of some kind, anyhow, and he smiled solemnly.

He left after breakfast, saying that he thought the worst of the danger was over, and that she must be kept very quiet.

"The shock of two deaths, I suppose, has done this," he remarked, picking up his case. "It has been very deplorable."

I hastened to set him right. "She does not know of either, doctor," I said. "Please do not mention them to her."

He looked as surprised as a medical man ever does.

"I do not know the family," he said, preparing to get into his top buggy. "Young Walker, down in Casanova,



strong's funeral, however, and I went at once to the telephone.

"Yes," I said, "this is Miss Innes." "Miss Innes," she said volubly, "I have just received a very strange telegram from my cousin, Mrs. Armstrong. Her husband died yesterday in California and—wait, I will read you the message."

I knew what was coming, and I made up my mind at once. If Louise Armstrong had a good and sufficient reason for leaving her people and coming home, a reason, moreover, that kept her from going at once to Mrs. Ogden Fitzhugh, and brought her to the lodge at Sunnyside instead, it was not my intention to betray her. Louise herself must notify her people. I do not justify myself now, but remember, I was in a peculiar position toward the Armstrong family. I was connected most unpleasantly with a cold-blooded crime, and my niece and nephew were practically begared, either directly or indirectly, through the head of the family.

Mrs. Fitzhugh had found the message. "Paul died yesterday. Heart disease," she read. "Wire at once if Louise is with you. You see, Miss Innes, Louise must have started east, and Fanny is alarmed about her."

"Yes," I said. "Louise is not here." Mrs. Fitzhugh went on, "and none of her friends—the few who are still in town—have seen her. I called you because Sunnyside was not rented when she went away, and Louise might have gone there."

"I am sorry, Mrs. Fitzhugh, but I cannot help you," I said, and was immediately filled with compunction. Suppose Louise grew worse? Who was I to play Providence in this case? The anxious mother certainly had a right to know that her daughter was in good hands. So I broke in on Mrs. Fitzhugh's voluble excuses for disturbing me.

"Mrs. Fitzhugh," I said, "I was going to let you think I knew nothing about Louise Armstrong, but I have changed my mind. Louise is here, with me." There was a clatter of ejaculations at the other end of the wire. "She is ill, and not able to be moved. Moreover, she is unable to see any one. I wish you would wire her mother that she is with me, and tell her not to worry. No, I do not know why she came east."

"But my dear Miss Innes!" Mrs. Fitzhugh began. I cut in ruthlessly. "I will send for you as soon as she can see you," I said. "No, she is not in a critical state now, but the doctor says she must have absolute quiet."

When I had hung up the receiver, I sat down to think. So Louise had fled from her people in California, and had come east alone! It occurred to me that Dr. Walker might be concerned in it, might possibly have bothered her with unwelcome attentions; but it seemed to me that Louise was hardly a girl to take refuge in flight under such circumstances. She had always been high-spirited, with the well-poised head and buoyant step of the outdoors girl. It must have been much more in keeping with Louise's character, as I knew it, to resent vigorously any unwelcome attentions from Dr. Walker. It was the sutor whom I should have expected to see in head-long flight, not the lady in the case.

The puzzle was no clearer at the end of the half hour. I picked up the morning papers, which were still full of the looting of the Traders' bank, the interest at fever height again, on account of Paul Armstrong's death. The bank examiners were working on the books, and said nothing for publication; John Bailey had been released on bond. The body of Paul Armstrong would arrive Sunday and would be buried from the Armstrong town house. There were rumors that the dead man's estate had been a comparatively small one. The last paragraph was the important one.

Walter P. Broadhurst of the Marine bank had produced 200 American Traction bonds, which had been placed as security with the Marine bank for a loan of \$100,000, made to Paul Armstrong, just before his California trip. The bonds were a part of the missing traction bonds from the Traders' bank! While this involved the late president of the wrecked bank, to my mind it by no means cleared its cashier.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



Amazed at Being Confronted by Louise Armstrong.

morning. Arnold Armstrong and Louise had a long conference, during which he was heard to storm and become very violent. When he left it was after two. He had gone up to the house—Thomas did not know why—and at three o'clock he was shot at the foot of the circular staircase.

The following morning Louise had been ill. She had asked for Arnold, and was told he had left town. Thomas had not the moral courage to tell her of the crime. She refused a doctor, and shrank morbidly from having her presence known. Mrs. Watson and Thomas had had their hands full, and at last Rosie had been enlisted to help them. She carried necessary provisions—little enough—to the lodge, and helped to keep the secret.

Thomas told me quite frankly that he had been anxious to keep Louise's presence hidden for this reason: They had all seen Arnold Armstrong that night, and he, himself, for one, was known to Louise, and very friendly feeling for the dead man. As to the reason for Louise's flight from California, or why she had not gone to the Fitzhughs, or to some of her people in town, he had no more information than I had. With the death of her stepfather and the prospect of the immediate return of the family, things had become more and more impossible. I gathered that Thomas was as relieved as I at the turn events had taken. No, she did not know of either of the deaths in the family.

Taken all around, I had only substituted one mystery for another. If I knew now why Rosie had taken the basket of dishes, I did not know who had spoken to her and followed her along the drive. If I knew that Louise was in the lodge, I did not know why she was there. If I knew that Arnold Armstrong had spent some time in the lodge the night before he was murdered, I was no nearer the solution of the crime. Who was the midnight intruder who had so alarmed Liddy and myself? Who had fallen down the clothes chute? Was Gertrude's lover a villain or a victim? Time was to answer all these things.

CHAPTER XIII.

Louise.

The doctor from Englewood came very soon, and I went up to see the sick girl with him. Halsey had gone to supervise the fitting of the car with

has been attending them. I understand he is going to marry this young lady."

"You have been misinformed," I said stiffly. "Miss Armstrong is going to marry my nephew."

The doctor smiled as he picked up the reins. "Young ladies are changeable these days," he said. "We thought the wedding was to occur soon. Well, I will stop in this afternoon to see how my patient is getting along."

Some time about noon of that day, Wednesday, Mrs. Ogden Fitzhugh telephoned me. I have the barest acquaintance with her—she managed to be put on the governing board of the Old Ladies' home and ruins their digestion by sending them ice cream and cake on every holiday. "Beyond that, and her reputation at bridge, which is insufferably bad—she is the worst player at the bridge club—I know little of her. It was she who had taken charge of Arnold Arm-



CLOTHES A BUSINESS ASSET

Self-Supporting Woman Who Would Succeed Should Be Well Dressed.

Any woman who has her way to make in the world, whether in social or business circles, must recognize that dress is one of her chief assets, a writer in the Delineator says. The efficiency of a saleswoman, a stenographer, a teacher—in fact of any woman who works—is judged by her dress. Shabbiness is almost always taken as a sign of ill-success and it is a popular if somewhat fallacious theory that real merit and ability always succeed. Carelessness is quite as blighting to one's prospects as shabbiness. It may not be altogether just or fair, but it is true that wherever you go your social position, your income, success or failure, your ability and character are appraised by the clothes you wear. If I were starting in business—I don't care in what capacity—and had only a very little money to invest, I would put it into clothes—clothes that were suitable, attractive and well made. It is what financiers call "a good risk"

—an investment that is almost certain to turn out well.

I don't for a moment advocate extravagance in dress except for women of large means. With them extravagance is more than excusable—it is justifiable. It keeps money in circulation that would otherwise be idle. It gives legitimate employment, which is the wisest and most beneficent form of charity, to women who need work.

But for women in moderate circumstances a parsimonious attitude toward dress is a false and often fatal economy. If you want to succeed in anything, look successful, able, competent. Otherwise you can never inspire confidence in others, and to look successful, prosperous, assured, you must be well dressed.

St. Bernard Monastery. At present the monastery of St. Bernard costs \$9,000 a year to keep up. This money is partly collected in Switzerland and partly derived from the revenue of the monastic order.

Summer Finery



THE happy possessor of a touring car, or the happier occupant of one, who regularly takes the air in someone's else touring car, presents herself these days in a bonnet and a protecting coat which fastens into a "coat-dress." This garment is of pongee or linen, very practical, dainty and a protection against the dust from collar to hem. It is shaped in such a variety of ways that one may choose from among the pattern books the most becoming style. The simplest lines remain the best and the coat-dress should be plain. Brilliantine, of the washable variety, is another choice in fabric, where the wearer has reason to wish to get something other than pongee or linen.

The bonnet is made of Madagascar cloth on a supporting veil frame and does not crush the hair. The crown is made of an oblong piece folded in and the bonnet is finished about the face with shirred taffeta silk. Ties of the taffeta, made from piece-silk, are fringed out at the ends and hemmed at the sides. The frames which support these bonnets hardly deserve the name, for there is so little to them. The cloth is a wiry fabric which needs little help to retain its place. But the bonnet is designed to be cool and the wire supports are made to that end. It must not set too close to the head. These pretty head pieces look very simple and they are—as simple as a sunbonnet—which is not so easy to make successfully, as its appearance might indicate. Wash silk or suede-lisle gloves enable the autoist to be always daintily gloved; if several pairs are provided clean gloves are always on call, for they may be washed and dried overnight.

It takes a very great beauty indeed to appear at once charming and "blowsy." This summer's auto clothes

are the most practical we have had. The roomy coat-dress is complete and covers up a multitude of well-protected finery, or maybe a kimono—no one can tell which, until the garment is taken off.

Every one who possesses a lace coat or a scarf or a shawl is making the most of many opportunities. What with tunics, stoles, overskirts and all sorts of draperies, and the universal use of lace, every good old piece is having an airing. This is likely to continue for, if the shadows that are cast before are in any way authoritative, the silhouette of the Empress Josephine seems to be lengthening across the land abroad, and has already arrived over seas to us. Skirts are narrow to inconvenience at the bottom and figures suggest that the corset is about to be forgotten—in effect—but not of course in reality. American women have ceased to accept everything Paris chooses to hand out to them, however, and it remains to be seen just how the banded skirts and coats will be received. But there is no doubt about the liking for soft draperies, and old classic models never fall of some degree of wear. The manner of draping fine bits of old Chantilly is shown in the picture just as a suggestion to some one who may own a mantle or shawl or a long scarf. There are any number of ways by which it may be used to become a part of the costume. Shawls are arranged with the point fastened to the bodice at the bust line, plaited in at the waist on each side of the front, but hanging free at this point, and tucked to the skirt at the sides. This is not the only manner of placing them. With trained gowns the fine shawl of old lace may play the most important part of the composition.

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

COAT FOR YOUNG GIRL



Serge or cloth would make up prettily like our sketch, which has a panel front; the sides of the upper part are plain, while those at lower part are pleated, the two are connected by a material waistband which has the right end pointed, and fastened over on the left; cord ornaments and buttons form the fastening. Velvet or satin might be used to face collar and cuffs.

Hat of fine straw, trimmed with velvet or roses.

Materials required: 3 yards 48 inches wide, 1/2 dozen buttons, 1/4 yard silk or velvet.

PRETTY DESIGN IN HOSIERY

Elaborate Patterns Are in Order, and in Colors to Match Any Gown.

The latest hosiery shows more elaborate patterns in the higher-priced designs and many beautiful innovations. Those beaded across the instep and up the ankle are perhaps the most novel, while others embroidered in vinelike designs appear more graceful than those with the decoration scattered indiscriminately in an all-over or loose pattern.

A design accentuating a circle just above the instep is new, and there are innumerable drop-stitch effects in the weave that will have ready sale than for several past seasons.

The colors are unusually varied, and can be found to match any gown. Some are of a most beautiful changeable silk, while others are so closely embroidered that they have the two-toned effect without being actually woven in that way.

INGENIOUS COAT HANGERS

Good Substitute for a Regular Article When Such Is Not at Hand.

A coat or jacket of any description should be kept on a coat hanger—when not being worn. If a regular hanger does not chance to be on hand a good substitute can be evolved by making a tight roll of wrapping paper or newspaper and tying about the center a string with loops left to hang on the hook.

The paper roll if sufficiently thick will keep a coat in shape nicely. Most waists are also better hung up than laid in a drawer. In traveling it is especially convenient to be able to fashion good hangers with only a few old papers, a bit of string and just a moment's time and work.

For traveling the small cases of extension hangers are delightfully compact and a great convenience. These hangers can also be bought separately and a bag of silk or dimité made for them to be carried in.

Chamois Cushions. With a pattern cut out as for stencil work, the chamois cover of a cushion is lined with rich brown satin or velvet and finished round the edge with a brown silk cord. A second cushion top of chamois has its conventional design burnt upon it—very delicately because this leather is too delicate for careless work.

To Insert Ribbon. When removing ribbon from soiled corset covers fasten a piece of twine on one end and pull through, take off the ribbon, leaving the string in the corset cover while it is being laundered. Then by tying the ribbon on one end again it is easily pulled back into place.

Plain stockings of lisle silk or gauze still hold their popularity with the woman of conservative taste for all except most elaborate occasions or for home use with dainty house gown or lounging robe.

A Flounce Finish.

To finish the upper edge of a flounce on a delicate white frock there is suggested a new idea in a spray of silk flowers. A long and trailing tendrill made of a milliner's fold of delicate pink satin is tacked along the line of joining where the chiffon or tulle is fastened to the skirt. Hanging from this at distances of three or four inches are single rosebuds, the smallest imaginable, made of pink ribbon and each one attached to a leaf made of delicate, narrow green ribbon.

Now, at wider intervals, and reaching upward from the long tendrils there appear wandering sprays of the same pink silk fold ending with a tiny pink bud. On the same frock the sleeve is finished with a similar hand made decoration and the shoulder line below the subyoke.

A BAD THING TO NEGLECT.

Don't neglect the kidneys when you notice lack of control over the secretions. Passages become too frequent or scanty; urine is discolored and sediment appears. No medicine for such troubles like Doan's Kidney Pills. They quickly remove kidney disorders. Mrs. A. E. Fulton, 311 Skidmore St., Portland, Ore., says: My limbs swelled terribly and I was bloated over the stomach and had puffy spots beneath the eyes. My kidneys were very unhealthy and the secretions much disordered. The dropsical swellings began to abate after I began using Doan's Kidney Pills and soon I was cured."

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

Controlled Newspapers. The Atchison Globe says that no advertiser has ever tried to control its editorial policy, the remark being occasioned by the charge often made nowadays, that the big advertisers direct the editorial policy of newspapers.

The experience of the Globe is the experience of most newspapers. The merchant who does a great deal of advertising is more interested in the circulation department of a newspaper than in the editorial department. If a daily paper goes to the homes of the people, and is read by them, he is satisfied, and it may chase after any theory or fad, for all he cares. He has troubles of his own, and he isn't trying to shoulder those of the editorial brethren.

There are newspapers controlled by people outside of the editorial rooms, and a good many of them, more's the pity; but the people exercising that control are not the business men who pay their money for advertising space. The newspapers which are established for political purposes are often controlled by chronic office-seekers, whose first concern is their own interests. There are newspapers controlled by great corporations, and the voice of such newspapers is always raised in protest against any genuine reform.

The average western newspaper usually is controlled by its owner, and he is supposed to be in duty bound to make all sorts of sacrifices at all sorts of times; there are people who consider it his duty to insult his advertisers, just to show that he is free and independent. If he shows a decent respect for his patrons, who pay him their money, and make it possible for him to carry on the business, he is "subsidized" or "controlled." The newspaper owner is a business man, like the dry goods man or the grocer. The merchants are expected to have consideration for their customers, and they are not supposed to be subsidized by the man who spends five dollars with them, but the publisher is expected to demonstrate his courage by showing that he is ungrateful for the patronage of his friends. It is a funny combination when you think it over.—Emporia Gazette.

HE'D HAD SOME HARD KNOCKS.



"Fortune knocks once at every man's door."

"Fortune is a knocker, all right."

He Rose to It. "Do you know," said a little boy of five to a companion the other day, "my father and I know everything. What I don't know my father knows, and what my father doesn't know I know."

"All right! Let's see, then," replied the older child, skeptically. "Where's Asia?"

It was a stiff one, but the youngster never faltered.

"Well, that," he answered coolly, "is one of the things my father knows."—Harper's Bazaar.

Compound Interest

comes to life when the body feels the delicious glow of health, vigor and energy.

That Certain Sense

of vigor in the brain and easy poise of the nerves comes when the improper foods are cut out and predigested

Grape-Nuts

take their place.

If it has taken you years to run down don't expect one mouthful of this great food to bring you back (for it is not a stimulant but a **rebuilder**.)

Ten days trial shows such big results that one sticks to it.

"There's a Reason"

Get the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.

POSTUM CEREAL CO., LTD., Battle Creek, Mich.