# THE CIRCULAR STAIRCASE

ROBERTS RINEHART MLLUSTRATIONS BY ROYWALTERS

SYNOPSIS.

Miss lances spinster and guardian of Gertrude and Halsey, established summer beadquarters at Sunnyside. Amidst numerous difficulties the servants deserted. As Miss tames locked up for the night, she was startled by a dark figure on the veranda. She passed a terrible night, which was filled with unseemly noises. In the merring Miss tames found a strange link cuff button in a clothes hamper Gertrude and Halsey arrived with Jack Balley. The house was awakened by a revolver shot. A strange man was found shot to death, in the hall. It proved to be the bedy of Arnold Armstrong, whose banker father owned the country house. Miss lines found Halsey's revolver on the lawn. He and Jack Bailey had disappeared. The link cuff button mysteriously disappeared. Deterive Jamieson and the coroner arrived. Certrude revealed that she was engaged to Jack Bailey, with whom she had taked in the billiard room a few moments before the murder. Jamieson told Miss Innex that she was holing evidence from him. He imprisoned an intruder in an ecupty room. The prisoner excaped down a banedry chure. It developed that the intruder was probably a woman, Gertrude was suspected, for the intruder left a print of a base fant. Gertrude telefurned latere with proved to be Jack Balley's cuff button. Habsey suddenly reappeared. He said be and Bailey had beft because they had received a telegram. Gertrude said that she had given Bailey of Paul Armstrong's bank, defunct, was arrested, charged with embezzlement. Habsey said Armstrong had wrecked his own bank and was able to clear Bailey. A telegram contained news that Paul Armstrong was dead. Halsey trapped Mrs. Watson, the housekeeper, while she was stealing Irom the house.

#### CHAPTER XII .- Continued.

"I recken you bettah come in Mis' Inner," he said, speaking cautiously. "It's got so I dunno what to do, and it's boun to come out some time er

He threw the door open then, and I stepped inside, Halsey close 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 bands thrust in his pockets, and watched me as I followed Thomas up the nar-

row stairs. At the top a woman was standing, and a second glance showed me it was Rosle. 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 airiest, 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 muttered 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-flushed, ill as she was, 1 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 hall-

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

"Mis' 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' hear to it. Is she very bad, Mis' Innes?

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

over the bed.

her, and caught my arm.

grow irritable when my sympathies The following morning Louise had tor," I said. "Please do not mention choke Thomas."

sciousness was recovery. He dropped essary provisions - little enough to tell her she was all right, and we secret. would bring her around in a hurry, and how beautiful she looked-only to he had been anxious to keep Louise's the reins. break down utterly and have to presence hidden for this reason. They stop. And at that I came to my

senses, and put him out. itated. "And send Rosie here."

ly, by sending him to fix up the car; her stepfather and the prospect of as a sort of ambulance, in case the the immediate return of the family, doctor would allow the sick girl to be things had become more and more ful of Turkish towels and a box of either of the deaths in the family. mustard plasters, and as the two girls had known each other somewhat bewhen she saw Gertrude.

When the doctor from Englewoodthe Casanova doctor, Dr. Walker, being away-had started for Sunnyside, and I had got Thomas to stop trying himself. I had a long talk with the old man, and this is what I learned.

arrived, and at first he was uncertain answer all these things. 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 he went to the house and brought Mrs. Watson, and they talked until trouble, and seemed frightened. Mrs. Watson made some tea and took it to the lodge, but Louise made them both and we had not even opened them. promise to keep her presence a secret. She had not known that Sunnyside

moved. He sent Gertrude down to impossible. I gathered that Thomas the lodge loaded with all manner of was as relieved as I at the turn events impossible things, including an arm- had taken. No, she did not know of

Taken all around, I had only substi tuted one mystery for another. If I fore, Louise brightened perceptibly knew now why Rosie had taken the gestion by sending them ice cream basket of dishes, I did not know who and cake on every holiday. Beyond had spoken to her and followed her that, and her reputation at bridge, along the drive. If I knew that Louise which is insufferably bad-she is the was in the lodge, I did not know why she was there. If I knew that Arnold know little of her. It was she who to explain what he did not understand Armstrong had spent some time in the had taken charge of Arnold Armlodge the night before he was murdered, I was no nearer the solution of On Saturday evening before, about the crime. Who was the midnight inten o'clock, he had been reading in truder who had so alarmed Liddy and the sitting room downstairs, when myself? Who had fallen down the some one rapped at the door. The old clothes chute? Was Gertrude's lover man was alone. Warner not having a villain or a victim? Time was to

#### CHAPTER XIII.

Louise The doctor from Englewood came very soon, and I went up to see the sick girl with him. Halsey had gone blankets and pillows, and Gertrude was opening and airing Louise's own rooms at the house. Her private sitting room, bedroom and dressing room late. The old man said Louise was in were as they had been when we came. They occupied the end of the east wing, beyond the circular staircase,

The girl herself was too ill to notice what was being done. When, with either directly or indirectly, through was rented, and whatever her trouble the help of the doctor, who was a fa-



Amazed at Being Confronted by Louise Armstrong.

Halsey came up the stairs slowly, that was all she would say about into a feverish sleep, which lasted looking rather interested and inclined them. Why she had run away no one until morning. Dr. Stewart-that was to be amused. For a moment he could could imagine. Mr. Arnold Armstrong the Englewood doctor-stayed almost not see anything distinctly in the was at the Greenwood club, and at last all night, giving the medicine himself, darkened room; he stopped, glanced Thomas, not knowing what else to do, and watching her closely. Afterward morning papers, which were still full at Rosic and at me, and then his eyes | went over there along the path. It | he told me that she had had a narrow fell on the restless head on the pil- was almost midnight. Part way over escape from penumonia, and that the low. I think he felt who it was before be met Armstrong himself and cerebral symptoms had been rather he really saw her; he crossed the brought him to the lodge. Mrs. Wat- alarming. I said I was glad it wasn't room in a couple of strides and bent son had gone to the house for some an "itis" of some kind, anyhow, and bed linen, it having been arranged he smiled solemnly. "Louise!" he said softly; but she that under the circumstances Louise did not reply, and her eyes showed no would be better at the lodge until he thought the worst of the danger recognition. Halsey was young, and morning. Arnold Armstrong and illness was new to him. He straight. Louise had a long conference, during very quiet. ened himself slowly, still watching which he was heard to storm and become very violent. When he left it "She's dying, Aunt Ray!" he said was after two. He had gone up to huskity. "Dying! Why, she doesn't the house-Thomas did not know why deplorable. -and at three o'clock he was shot at "Fudge!" I snapped, being apt to the foot of the circular staircase.

are aroused. "She's doing nothing of been ill. She had asked for Arnold, them to her. the sort-and don't pinch my arm. If and was told he had left town. you want something to do, go and Thomas had not the moral courage to man ever does. tell her of the crime. She refused a But at that moment Louise roused doctor, and shrank morbidly from havfrom her stuper to cough, and at the ing her presence known. Mrs. Watend of the paroxysm, as Rosie laid her son and Thomas had had their hands back, exhausted, she knew us. That full, and at last Rosie had been enwas all Halsey wanted; to him con-listed to help them. She carried necon his knees beside the bed, and tried to the lodge, and helped to keep the

Thomas told me quite frankly that had all seen Arnold Armstrong that feeling for the dead man. As to the He did not go far. He sat on the reason for Louise's flight from Calitop step of the stairs, only leaving to fornia, or why she had not gone to Wednesday, Mrs. Ogden Fitzhugh teletelephone for a doctor, and getting in the Fitzhughs', or to some of her peo- phoned me. I have the barest ac-

was, this complicated things. She | therly man with a family of girls at seemed puzzled. Her stepfather and home, we got her to the house and her mother were still in California- up the stairs into bed, she dropped

He left after breakfast, saying that was over, and that she must be kept

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

I hastened to set him right. "She does not know of either, doc-

He looked as surprised as a medical "I do not know the family," he said,

preparing to get into his top buggy. Young Walker, down in Casanova, 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 of her six-year-old son.

"Young ladies are changeable these days," he said. "We thought the wednight, and he, himself, for one, was ding was to occur soon. Well, I will "This instant!" I ordered, as he hese known to have had no very friendly stop in this afternoon to see how my you once out of politeness but really patient is getting along."

Some time about noon of that day, everybody's way in his eagerness to ple in town, he had no more information quaintance with her—she managed to 23,000, is the largest city in the Azores fetch and carry. I got him away finaltion that I had. With the death of be put on the governing board of the islands.



Old Ladies' home and ruins their diworst player at the bridge club-1 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 to supervise the fitting of the car with Mrs. Ogden Fitghugh, 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 nepbew were practically beggared the head of the family.

Mrs. Fitzhugh had found the mas-

"'Paul died yesterday. Heart disease," " she read. ""Wire at once if Louise is with you. You see, Miss lnnes, Louise must have started east, and Fanny is alarmed about her,

"Louise is not here," Mrs. Fitzhugh went on, "and none of her friendsthe 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 go ing 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 hardiy a girl to take refuge in flight under such circumstances. She bad always been high-spirited, with the wellpolsed 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 vigorous

ly any unwelcome attentions from Dr.

Walker. It was the suitor whom I

should have expected to see in headlong flight, not the lady in the case. The puzzle was no clearer at the end of the half hour. I picked up the 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 \$160,000, 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

(TO BE CONTINUED.) 4

Why He Did Not Come. "Why didn't you come, Bobby, when first called to you?" asked a mother

"Because you told me last week, mamma," replied Bobby shrewdly, "never to accept an invitation unless it was repeated. So many people invite don't want you to come."

Metropolis of the Azores. Ponta Delgada, with a population of

#### **GOT PHOTOGRAPH OF PANTHER**

Exciting Experience Which Few Members of the Party Care to Go Through Again.

A pancher is not easily killed, and will often revive with very unpleasant results, as on a certain occasion in the Decean. He appeared to be quite dead, and one of the spectators rushed up with a camera on a stand to obtain a picture of the supreme moment. He got his photograph, and, strange to say, it survived what followed; but no sooner had he taken it than the panthere revived, tore himself loose, and went for the photographer. Somehow the man escaped, but the camera was sent flying, and, disconcerted by his encounter with it, the panther turned and made for the nearest tree, up which he went as quickly as a monkey. Now, the tree was crowded with interested spectators, and for three or four strengous seconds (until the panther was shot) we enjoyed a spectacle of natives dropping to earth with loud thuds like ripe plums from a jungle tree as the panther approached them.-Wide World Magazine,

#### Unflattering Truth.

A Chicago physician gleefully tells a child story at his own expense. The five children of some faithful patients had measles, and during their rather long stay in the improvised home hospital they never failed to greet his daily visit with pleased acclamation. The good doctor felt duly flattered, but rashly pressed the children, in the days of convalescense, for the reason of this sudden affection. At last the youngest and most indiscreet let slip the better truth.

"We felt so sick that we wanted awfully to do something naughty, but we were afraid to be bad for fear you and the nurse would give us more horrid medicine. So we were awfully glad to see you, always, 'cause you made us stick out our tongues. We stuck 'em out awful far!"

#### What's the Answer?

We're ready to quit! After sending two perfectly rhymed, carefully scanned, pleasurably sentimental pieces of poetic junk to seventeen magazines and having them returned seventeen times, we turn to the current issue of a new monthy and find a "pome" modeled after Kipling's "Vampire." and in which home is supposed to rhyme with alone, run on page eleven with all the swell curlycues ordinarily surrounding a - piece of real art. If poetizing is a gift we are convinced that this poet's must have been. As for us, we are on our way to the woodshed to study the psychology of the ax cr any other old thing that hasn't to do with selling poetry to maga-

## TAKE A FOOT-BATH TO-NIGHT

After dissolving one or two Allen's Foot-Tabs (Antiseptic tablets for the foot-bath) in the water. It will take out all soreness, smarting and tenderness, remove foot odors and freshen the feet. Allen's Foot-Tabs instantly relieve weariness and sweating or inflamed feet and hot nerv-ousness of the feet at night. Then for comfort throughout the day shake Allen's Foot-Ease the antiseptic powder into your shoes. Sold everywhere 25c. Avoid sub-stitutes. Samples of Allen's Foot-Tabs mailed FREE or our regular size sent by mail for 25c. Address Allen S. Olmsted. Leiloy, N. Y.

"Foot-Tabs for Foot-Tubs."

"Foot. Tabs for Foot. Tubs."

Tactful.

A woman with a pronounced squint went to a fashionable photographer. He looked at her and she looked at him and both were embarrassed. He spoke first.

"Won't you permit me," he said, "to take your portrait in profile? There is a certain shyness about one of your eyes which is as difficult in art as it is fascinating in nature."Beacon.

Trying to Satisfy Him. Squeamish Guest (as waiter places

water before him)-Waiter, are you sure this is boiled distilled water? Waiter-I am positive, sir.

Squeamish Guest (putting it to his lips)-But it seems to taste pretty hard for distilled water. Walter-That's because it's hard-

boiled distilled water, sir.

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

Bears the Signature of Chart Heltehin. In Use For Over 30 Years. The Kind You Have Always Bought.

Coming Down to Earth. "Happiness," declaimed the philosopher, "is in the pursuit of something, not in the catching of it." "Have you ever," interrupted the

plain citizen, "chased the last car on a rainy night?"

Hot-Headed if You Mention It. Scott-Jones is a cool-headed chap. Mott-Naturally! He's as bald as a door knob.

The Lost Chords.

The village concert was to be a great affair. They had the singers, they had the program sellers, they had the doorkeepers and they would doubtless have the audience. All they needed was the piano, but that they lacked. Nor could they procure one

anywhere At last the village organist learned that one was possessed by Farmer Hayseed, who lived "at the top o' the "ill." Forthwith he set out with two

men and a van. "Take it, an' welcome," said Hayseed cordially "I've no objections s'long as ye put 'Pyenner by Hayseed' on the program."

They carted it away. "An' I wish 'em joy of it," murmured Mrs. Hayseed, as the van disappeared from sight.

"Wish 'em joy of it," repeated Hayseed. "What d'ye mean?"

"Well, I mean I only 'ope they'll find all the notes they want," replied the good woman. "'Cos, ye see, when I wanted a bit o' wire I allus went to the old pianner for it."

#### FINE POST CARDS FREE.

#### A Big Package Sent to All of Our Readers Who Write at Once.

To any reader of this paper who writes immediately and incloses 2-cent stamp we will mail a set of five most beautiful post cards you ever saw. Or we will send our big magazine on trial 3 months and set of eight choicest Floral Motto, Birthday and Friendship cards, all different, in exquisite colors, stik finish, beautifully em-bossed, all for only 10 cents; 3 full sets, 24 cards all different, and one year's subscription, 25 cents. Address Household Postcard Dept., 95 Capper Bldg., Topeka Kan.

#### Household Consternation.

"Charley, dear!" exclaimed young Mrs. Torkins, "the baby has swallowed a gold dollar!

"Great heavens! Something must be done. There will be no end to the cost of living if he gets habits like

For Red, Itching Eyelids, Cysts, Styes Failing Eyelashes and All Eyes That Need Care Try Murine Eye Salve, Asep-tic Tubes-Trial Size-25c, Ask Your Drug-gist or Write Murine Eye Remedy Co.,

It is a wise man who wants only what he can get, and a lucky one who gets only what he wants.

Constitution causes many serious diseases. It is thoroughly cured by Loctor Pierce's Pieasant Peliets. One a laxative, three for cathartic.

The morning after is responsible for many good resolutions.

# Makes the Weak Strong

There is no need to continue in a weak, run-down debilitated condition when Hostetter's Stomach Bitters has conclusively proven its ability to build you up and make you strong again. It acts directly on the digestive system, regulates the appetite, prevents Indigestion, Cramps, Diarrhoea or other aftereating distress. Try a bottle today. Insist on having.



# Your Liver is Clogged up

That's Why You're Tired-Out of Sorts-Have No Appetite. CARTER'S LITTLE, LIVER PILLS will put you right in a few days. They do their duty. iousness, Indigestion, and Sick Mandache. SMALL PILL, SMALL DOSE, SMALL PRICE

GENUINE must bear signature: Breutsood

## STOCKERS & FEEDERS

Choice quality; reds and roans, white faces or angus bought on orders. Tens of Thousands to select from Satisfaction Guaranteed. Correspondence Invited. Come and see for yourself.

National Live Stock Com. Co. At either Kansas City, Mo., St. Joseph, Mo., S. Omaha, Neh,

# Silence!

The instinct of modesty natural to every woman is often a great hindrance to the cure of womanly diseases. Women shrink from the personal questions of the local physician which seem indelicate. The thought of examination is abhorrent to them, and so they endure in silence a condition of disease which surely progresses from bad to worse.

It has been Dr. Pierce's privilege to cure a great many women who have found a refuge for modesty in his offer of FREE consultation by letter. All correspondence is held as sacredly confidential. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription restores and regulates the womanly functions, abolishes pain and builds up and puts the finishing touch of health on every weak woman

It Makes Weak Women Strong, Sick Women Well. You can't afford to accept a secret nostrum as a substitute for this non-alcoholic medicine or known composition.

