Queer Miss Egerton

She Was Unintelligible to the Last

By EMMA MOREHOUSE

Miss Marcia Egerton was a peculiar girl. She seldom did anything as any one else would do it and was always doing things in a way that no one else would think of doing them. It is the purpose of this story to chronicle the roundabout way she acted in a matter that concerned herself and several other people.

In the first place, Miss Egerton, who was an orphan, inherited a large estate and came into possession of it when she was eighteen years old. The next most important thing about her was an intimate friend. Before her mother's death, when she was but twelve years old, she had conceived a violent affection for Agnes Hart, who was badly named, because she was not possessed of a heart at all. Marcia's mother opposed the intimacy and when her daughter was sixteen years old sent her off to school with no other purpose than to get her away from Agnes, but without avail. The two girls kept up an almost daily correspondence during the whole period of their separation and on Marcia's return were more intimate than before.

Mrs. Egerton died when Marcia was twenty, leaving her daughter her own mistress and in possesison of a large property. She took her friend Agnes to live with her and lavished upon her everything a girl could desire. Several young men, each of whom would have liked to win Marcia either for herself or her fortune, declared that they were unable to separate her long enough from her girl friend to do so. And it was facetiously remarked that any one who married Miss Egerton must have two wives.

Marcia became interested in a young man—Edwin Bond—who found more opportunity to court than he availed himself of. He admired Marcia; but, having no fortune himself, he objected to being tied to a woman who possessed one. He was one of those young men who feel the zest of making a place for themselves in the world and knew that to do this he must be forced on by a powerful stimulus, for the man who marries a fortune is provided for, and he pays the price, which is

TWO PERSONS ENTERED.

—in nine cases in ten—constantly being reminded that his wife holds the purse strings and—money is power.

Marcia, not making any headway with Edwin Bond, chose another lover, Cecil Baxter. Mr. Baxter was a frequent visitor at her house and divided his attentions between the two girls. His inclinations drew him rather toward Agnes than Marcia, but since Marcia possessed a fortune and Agnes was poor he accepted the encouragement of the former and proposed to her and was accepted.

When a certain scheme of Marcia Egerton's was whispered about, all who heard it wondered at her infatuation for her bosom friend. On the ground that she did not feel that she would live long she made a will leaving half her estate to a charitable institution to be named for and in memory of her mother. The other half she divided between her lover and her bosom friend

Those who were observant noticed that Baxter's inclinations were rather toward his fiancee's friend than his fiancee. They also noticed that the friend, except when the fiancee was present, did not show any disposition to compel Mr. Baxter to reserve his especial attention for his betrothed. These people said, "What a pity that Marcia should not take herself off to heaven, leaving the poor their share of her estate and the lovers the rest of it." And yet there were others who claimed that, no matter what happens out of usual and conventional lines, tongues will wag; that these three young people understood one another thoroughly, and that was all there was about it. All agreed that the bequest was very lovely in Marcia, who was just the kind of girl to look out for the happiness of others and was as simple minded as a child.

Meanwhile Marcia Egerton seemed to be slowly failing. Her physician advised her to visit other lands. Since she couldn't very well go alone it was suggested that she be married and travel with a man. But she replied that she did not propose to throw any such obloquy upon a husband as making a courier of him. Then it was announced that she would take her girl friend with her. At this everyone said: "That is exactly what was to have been expected. The society of the bosom friend is necessary; that of the fiance is not."

The two friends one day in January sailed on a Mediterranean steamer for Egypt. That is the last any one in America heard from them for several months; then one day Agnes returned, saying that she had left Marcia starting for a trip through the Holy Land. She reported her friend very much improved in health and not at all averse to traveling alone. Agnes was tired of traveling and preferred to go home. As soon as Marcia learned this, which Agnes said she had tried to keep a secret, Marcia would not hear of her remaining abroad any longer. Agnes, after refusing for a long while to return, had been literally compelled to do so by Marcia.

Since Agnes and Baxter were seen together a great deal after her return critical persons said that Agnes had come home purposely to monopolize him. The case excited more talk than any social happening that had been discussed in the place for years. Every one wondered that Marcia Egerton should be so blind. By some she was blamed for offering inducement for crime. Here were two lovers between whom she stood and who might be tempted to put her out of the way that they might be united, each with considerable means, into possession of which they would come at her death.

Then came a report that an American lady traveling in the Holy Land had been robbed and murdered. The report was confirmed, and the lady's name was given as Marcia Egerton. She had gone off on an excursion to a lonely place with a single guide where there was something curious to see, and he had returned to report that they had been set upon by thugs, the lady murdered and her money, including traveler's checks, taken. He said that he had buried the body at the place of the murder.

Baxter cabled and wrote to United States consuls nearest the scene of the tragedy asking for information. Nothing was adduced except the statement of Miss Egerton's guide, which was taken down in writing and sworn to. After waiting six months for the girl to turn up, nothing having been heard from her, the will was admitted to probate.

The evidence of the testator's death being deficient, the case dragged. Certain relatives who had hoped to benefit by the will opposed a settlement of the estate under the plea that there was not sufficient evidence that Miss Egerton was dead. It was six months after the reported death that the chancery court agreed to pay over to beneficiaries the three parts into which the estate was divided by the will.

About this time the announcement was made of the engagement of Cecil Baxter and Agnes Hart. A statement went forth that Marcia Egerton had had a presentiment that she would be summarily cut off and had requested in the event of her being so that the lover was to marry her friend. With angelic unselfishness she had provided in her will for their comfort. This satisfied every one except certain persons who had been watching Mr. Baxter and Miss Hart. They averred that though they might state truly Miss Egerton's part of the transaction it left much to be explained on the part of the two who were about to be married and inherit a fortune from her who was to have been the bride.

Baxter and Miss Hart were finally able to count on a date when their inheritance would be paid over to them, and they arranged to be married the day after receiving it. They agreed that they would place a stained glass window in the church they attended to the memory of the noble girl who had left each of them a comfortable fortune. The plan was laid, but the order for the work was not to be given until their property had been turned over to them. For a wedding trip they were to go to the Holy Land to gather information of the woman they loved and, if possible, bring the body home for burial.

One day they received a notice from their attorney that the papers in the case of their inheritance would be executed the next morning at 11 o'clock. They were all packed to go away as soon as the marriage ceremony had been performed the day after coming into possession of their property. All other matters, including the order for the memorial window, had received attention.

On the appointed morning they called on their lawyer and were taken by him to the office where the transfer was to be made. While they were sitting there two persons entered, one of whom especially they had not expected to see. They were Edwin Bond and Marcia Egerton, now Mrs. Bond.

There is no record of what was said between the testator, who had returned to life, and her expected heirs. All that is known about the sequel to the meeting is that Mr. Baxter and Miss Hart were never married. As to the memorial window, it was not required.

Many blamed Mrs. Bond for her action in deceiving her two friends, especially for going abroad and hiring a native to report her murdered. How she made it up with Bond she never told, but it was known that he went abroad while she was there and they were married there.

It has been said at the beginning of this story that Miss Egerton was a peculiar girl. What she meant by her performance, at what point she discovered the truth about Baxter and Agnes, she never told any one. She certainly went far out of her way to punish them, and punished them very severely. Whether they received more than they deserved is a question.

REMOVING SNOW FROM SIDEWALKS

How It Is Done In Lacrosse, Wis., Explained.

BEST METHODS TO EMPLOY

In Cleaning Streets and Walks Snow Shovelers Should Be Instructed In the Special Importance of Keeping Free Mail, Police, Fire Boxes, Etc.

The proper cleaning of snow from sidewalks offers considerable difficulty to officials for its proper solution Where the law requires the authorities to take charge of the cleaning of all walks snowplows can be used to advantage at least once or twice in the season. After this the snow will pack on the sides and roll back on to the walk. Hand labor must then be installed if the walk is to be cleaned full width. Where it is a question of cleaning walks which property owners are required to clean, but do not, it is not generally practicable to use plows since the walks which are to be cleaned by the city are widely scattered, and in such cases also hand cleaning must be resorted to.

Where there are sodded strips snow should be removed at least one foot beyond each edge of the sidewalk paving, especially where the lots adjoining are higher than the walks, as this will prevent ice from accumulating after thawing begins.

Immediately after a snowfall all public walks, street corners and street and alley crossings should be cleaned in a systematic way. The work is laid out in routes, with from two to four men on each route, depending upon the depth of snowfall When possible the men selected are those living nearest to the respective stations.

It is sometimes difficult to judge correctly as to what constitutes a compliance with the requirements of a clean sidewalk. Some property owners appear to think that a path along the center of the walk is sufficient, while others wait until the snow has been tramped hard and then remove the loose snow on either side. Neither of these should be tolerated by the authorities, as the first thaw will cause ice to form and make a most dangerous condition.

The length of routes and sizes of crews for shoveling private sidewalks should be increased over those for the regular public shoveling. About eight men and one foreman for a crew have been found to be the most desirable. The foreman should locate, measure and describe the work. For the measurements he may use a ten foot stick and locate the work by giving the distance of its beginning from the nearest corner and the number of front feet shoveled—for example, "northwest corner Sixth and State; commence north 100 feet; 50 feet; skip 100 feet; 50 feet," this being interpreted as meaning, beginning on the northwest corner of Sixth and State streets, the first 100 feet running north were shoveled by the owner, the next 50 feet shoveled by the city, the following 100 feet shoveled by the owner and the last 50 feet by the city.

To correct any mistakes made by the city force a postal card printed for this purpose should be sent to each owner of the properties cleaned, giving information of location, amount of work done and cost; the owner having the option of paying this cost at once or having the same charged to taxes These cards are very much appreciated by owners whose leases call for their tenants to clean the sidewalks The card used in La Crosse is as follows:

La Crosse, Wis., —, 191—

Dear Sir—You are hereby notified that snow has been removed — by direction of the board of public works, in accordance with provisions of city charter and ordinances governing the same, from your walk abutting lot —, block —, — addition, the charge for such work amounting to $—.

Unless this is paid by —, 191—, a special assessment will be made against the property and charged to taxes.

All snow and ice ridges as well as loose snow must be removed from sidewalks (full width) at once after each and every snowfall. Sand or salt must be used on icy sidewalks. Respectfully,

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

After the cleaning of all walks gutters should be opened for a width of at least twenty-four inches. Generally large banks of snow have accumulated from sidewalks or street car tracks Where there is a street car track or the snow is being removed from the roadway these banks of snow should, of course, be hauled away, while on streets having no tracks or where the snow is not removed they may be scattered in the center of the roadway. The saving in cost of removing loose snow from gutters rather than removing ice by use of picks is an item not to be overlooked. Where gutters are kept open sudden thaws will find a good outlet, but if the gutter is not opened ice is apt to form to a greater or less depth.

In cleaning streets and sidewalks snow shovelers should be instructed in the special importance of keeping free all catch basin openings, hydrants and mail, police and fire alarm boxes.

If improperly cooked beef kidneys are a coarse dish, but when carefully prepared they make an excellent stew. Remove all superfluous fat, trim them and cut them into chunks. Let them soak in cold salted water for about an hour. Rinse them very thoroughly and then set them over the fire in fresh cold water. When they come almost to the boiling point and begin to show scum on the surface pour off the water and add fresh cold water. A better way, if one has time, is to remove the kidneys, put them in a new pot or lay them aside a moment until the pot they were cooked in has been thoroughly washed out. Then put them back. In order to get the strong flavor out of this meat it is necessary to remove as much scum and blood from it as possible. Let them reheat in water a second time. Then pour off this second water and treat as before. It may be necessary to do it a third and a fourth time also. When the stage is reached in which the water is quite clear and free from scum cut up one or two onions—a good sized one for every kidney—one or two small carrots and one or two potatoes. Put them into the water around the meat and cook slowly for about two hours or until a gravy is formed. Some cooks add a little lemon juice or part of the yellow peel of a lemon to the stew. The carrots and onions may be left out and the kidneys stewed by themselves, the gravy being flavored only with a tiny glass of wine and lemon juice.

Potato Cake.

Two cupfuls of sugar, two cupfuls of flour, one cupful of butter, one large cupful of English walnuts, one cupful of potatoes, mashed and seasoned, ready to serve; one and one half cupfuls of chocolate, grated; one-half cupful of milk, five eggs, using all the yolks and whites of three, keeping two whites for boiled frosting; two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one each of cloves, cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg, one each of lemon and vanilla. Bake either in loaf or layers. Cream butter and sugar. Add milk, then yolks of eggs, beaten high; then potatoes, soft spices, chocolate and baking powder in flour, and add to eggs and butter. Then add beaten whites and lastly the nuts. Will keep fresh for a week or ten days.

Split Pea Soup.

For split pea soup, so good in this cold weather, soak a quart of split peas overnight. In the morning put them on the stove in plenty of fresh cold water, about four times as much water as peas. Add a large piece of salt pork, half a good sized carrot, a good sized leek, two potatoes of medium size, one root of parsley, one teaspoonful of thyme, one large turnip, a bunch of celery tips, a large slice of bread and salt and pepper to taste. Let the soup boil all day, adding fresh water as it boils down. Strain before serving.

A Fine Sauce.

Apples and cranberries are very good cooked together, about half and half. Let a quart of the mixture cook with about a cupful of water or just enough to prevent burning. At the end of twenty minutes add two cupfuls of granulated sugar and let the mixture cook for about ten minutes more. Turn into molds and serve when cold. The apples seem to mellow the berries, and the sauce will be preferred to one entirely of berries by those who do not like the sharpness of the latter when cooked alone.

Tea Wafers.

For the Virginia wafers that are served with afternoon tea and other light repasts work a couple of tablespoonfuls of butter into two cupfuls of flour and mix in enough ice water to make a stiff paste. Then put the dough on to a floured board and roll into a very thin sheet—it should be little thicker than paper—and cut in rounds with a saucer. Bake in a quick oven on a floured pan. The wafers should have an uneven, bubbly surface and be eaten cold. They are delicious with a conserve or jam.

Sandwich Filler.

White raisin bread made into sandwiches with minced nuts and cream cheese is delicious. Cut the slices very thin and spread one with cream cheese and the other with the nuts. Both should be buttered first. If they are cut in the shape of card suits for afternoon refreshments at card clubs and parties they are very sightly. The card suit cutters are kept by the house furnishers.

Soup Stock.

In mixing leftovers for soups never combine fish and meat, beef and lamb, chicken and beef. Sometimes a little bacon or pork bones can be added to soup stock for richer flavoring.

One Day's Menu.

BREAKFAST.
Steamed Rice and Apples, Sugar and Cream.
Poached Eggs on Buttered Toast.
Coffee.

LUNCHEON.
Sweet Potato and Nut Loaf.
Cream Cheese Sandwiches.
Apple Pie.
Milk or Tea.

DINNER.
Cream of Turnip Soup.
Roast Mutton, Brown Sauce.
Baked Macaroni. French Peas.
Pepper Salad. Wafers.
Coffee. Raisins.

The riddle of the sphinx may be unfathomable, but anybody can understand the coal riddle at a glance.

BRIGHTEN UP YOUR WINDOWS.

Letting Your Light Shine Is Best Way to Draw Trade.

NOTHING GOOD IN DIMNESS.

Store Which Displays Merchandise Attractively Under Bright Illumination Is the One Which Makes Money For Its Enterprising Owner.

"Let your light shine before men," the good book says in advising men to live spiritual lives. The words are written figuratively, and the advice is good considered from an ethical viewpoint. It is good also if the words are taken at their literal meaning. "Let your light shine before men" if you are a business man and desire trade. Light up your store windows, make a show, and the show will make business for you.

Have you ever watched a crowd of folks out strolling on a fine evening? They stop to look into the store windows, and the thing which attracts them and which brings them in to buy is the light displaying every piece of goods to the best advantage. The well lighted store gets the trade. The dim window attracts nobody and makes no prosperity for its unenterprising owner.

This is not an advertisement for any system of lighting. Any is good which lets the folks see what it is you have to sell. The windows of a store are like the face of a man. If they are bright and shining and happy looking they seem to radiate prosperity and good feeling and naturally tend to draw the pennies and the dollars out of the pockets of the passersby. If they are gloomy or lowering or dull or dingy or unattractive they repel customers and fail to bring into the pockets of their owner the shekels for which he is in business. Get busy, light up your windows, make a show and notice how quickly trade will brighten up. Lighting bills are a small item in comparison with the profits to be made by displaying your goods brightly and attractively.

Speaking on this subject, a magazine devoted to the interests of one method of lighting said recently:

"In these days of progress and improvement the up to date merchant must realize that to keep abreast of the times it becomes necessary for

WELL LIGHTED AND ARRANGED FRUITERER'S WINDOW.

him to use up to date methods of doing business and, if possible, to keep just ahead of his neighbor.

"The question of store lighting is of supreme importance when one considers the thousands of men and women who in the evenings take their families or stroll alone through the lighted thoroughfare making their purchases. Often they are undecided as to just what they desire, and naturally they are drawn to the store that makes it a point to present its wares most attractively.

"No one ever cares to gaze into a gloomy or dimly lighted store. It is the warm, brilliant aspect presented by a well lighted store that attracts the public and increases the purchasing power tenfold. In any large city it can be noticed that the majority of people at night patronize the stores that are located on the side of the street or avenue that is most lighted. It is a common sight to see one side of an avenue crowded while the other side is almost empty, due to the fact that the well lighted stores attract.

"Some time ago it was said that scientific salesmanship was the best asset a merchant possessed, but nowadays it is different. The interest created by well lighted goods neatly displayed is far more productive than any other method used, the object being to first interest the customer, after which the sale is assured."

Trading at home means life to a town. Sending your money elsewhere means stagnation and death.

"Please Help Clean Streets."

The board of public works of Knoxville, Tenn., has had a large number of "cleanup" placards printed for the City Beautiful league to be given to the ward chairmen for distribution. The placards read: "Will you please help make our city clean, healthful and beautiful by observing the ordinance against spitting on the sidewalks and throwing papers and other trash in the streets? By request of the women of Knoxville."

When it comes to the pinch there is something to be said for the lobster.