

Mrs. MAGUIRE'S STRATEGY

By M. Louise Cullinan

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Mrs. Maguire had been absent from her regular duties for several hours to attend a christening.

It was almost her usual time for leaving when she returned and, dismissing the girl who had filled her places, took a survey of the surroundings.

The waiting room was nearly empty. At Mrs. Maguire's feet lay a bundle of rugs and umbrellas near a leather portmanteau.

While she still speculated as to their owner a girl entered with slow, weary step. The rough material of her close-fitting suit, the heavy shoes and plain sailor hat proclaimed her English nationality. The expression of the wide gray eyes puzzled Mrs. Maguire.

"Tisn't trouble, exactly," she soothed while the girl sank into a chair.

Whatever it was, a sudden radiance swept it away. She sprang up. In its sure the flash of joy was killed by some inner thought.

Mrs. Maguire, turning to ascertain the cause of the swift changes, uttered a low "H-m-m" of gratification. "A fine, clean boy," she murmured, "summary of the tall, advancing figure. The young man took the girl's outstretched hand.

"There's another train from the west due in an hour," he said hurriedly. "Shall you wait for it?"

"I must. There is nothing else for me to do."

"Do you—may I remain with you?" "I think you had better not."

Her chin quivered like a child's. At sight of it the man's square jaws were locked. His fingers tightened over hers until the knuckles showed white.

"Anyway—I'll come back." He jerked the words out. "If I don't find you here—I know that it is all right."

Mrs. Maguire looked from one white, tense face to the other.

"H-m-m," she thought. "He'll come back, and if he don't find her 'tis all wrong 'twill be for both of them."

"I"—The girl slowly raised her eyes. When they reached his, her voice stopped as if broken.

"What?" The words rushed from him. "Why need it be goodby? Why?"

"Oh."

There was no mistaking her expression now. A slow, shamed red rose to her temples. His hand unclasped hers, and, as if it had been her only support, she fell back into the chair. Mrs. Maguire rose and, bringing a glass of water, held it to her lips.

The man threw her a grateful look. "Will you take care of her?" he asked huskily, and Mrs. Maguire nodded.

She stooped to pick up the girl's baggage when he turned away.

"There's a sofa over there behind that screen," she said quietly.

The girl rose and stumbled after her. With the abandon of utter weariness she threw herself on the horsehair couch. Mrs. Maguire gently stroked the hand nearest to her.

"There now," she said soothingly, "sure 'twill all come right, whatever 'tis, with the help of God."

"If I might tell you?" Her face worked pitifully in the effort at self control. "Maybe you would know what I ought to do. In all this great country I have not a woman friend."

"The Lord help ye?"

"I came out from England—to be married."

Mrs. Maguire waited, bewildered, growing in her face.

"But if that was himself"—she hazarded at last.

"Oh, no! That was a friend, Dr. Thorburn, whom I met on board ship. His father had been educated abroad and was my dear father's closest friend at Oxford."

Suddenly she sat up, her whole figure stiffening, a slow red dyeing her face.

"The man I was to marry has failed to meet me or send me word," she said slowly.

"Oh, it is a just punishment for allowing myself to be persuaded"—She stopped, choking.

"By the man that was to have met ye?" Mrs. Maguire watched her closely.

She raised eyes heavy with shame and pain.

"No; by his mother. For the past year, since my father died, she has given me no peace. She said that the little money I had would give us such a good start in this country; that Phil's life would be spoiled if I failed to keep my promise. We had grown up together. I supposed that I was in honor bound to come."

Her face was dreary with despair. Mrs. Maguire rose. Removing the girl's hat, she gently lifted her head back on the pillow, lifted her feet to the couch and tucked the heavy skirt up around her.

"Take a nice little lie down there for yourself," she said soothingly. "Tis worn out ye are, and no wonder, with your journey and this trouble."

Drawing the screen completely round the couch, she went quietly away.

As Mrs. Maguire reached the doorway a young man, scarcely more than a boy, his hat pushed back on a flushed, damp face, came swiftly toward her through the wide hall beyond.

Mrs. Maguire's eyes fastened on him, her lids narrowing behind his glasses until their grayness between showed keen as points of steel. Probably never before in all the twenty-three years of his weakly, dissipated life had he been measured as that shrewd glance measured him. Ere he had traversed half the intervening distance Mrs. Maguire's lips were closed in a straight line. When he reached her, the vague and vacant look which a Celt can put on or off at will had descended like a veil over her features.

"Was there any one ye was looking for, sir?"

He threw a glance at the elderly face apparently so lacking in intelligence.

"Yes, lady, a young lady," he replied impudently, peering into the room beyond.

Mrs. Maguire turned to aid him in his search. "Confound it!" He ground one heel into the tiled floor. "If those fellows had not come east when I did not insist on celebrating my last batch of evening."

"Politely oblivious of the thickly muttered soliloquy and apparently satisfied that the ladies' waiting room was empty," Mrs. Maguire untied and absently fiddled a large apron, evidently prepared to depart for the night.

The strings shook in the hands which a moment later slowly unrolled and retied it, her fascinated gaze remaining fixed on the still swinging doors through which her late companion had passed. A gasping breath rose in her throat as she saw them

open.

"Was there any one ye was looking for, sir?"

Impudently pushed wide again and Dr. Thorburn entered. The knowledge that the young men must have brushed elbows outside sent the blood in a tide to her heart. She went directly to meet him.

"Maybe 'tis the worst day's work I ever done I done this night," she said, trembling, "but I saved that little girl for ye?"

His eyes contracted. She saw the blood leap to his face.

"Oh, he was here all right enough—the other fella," she went on. "God forgive me! Even though she was promised to him, is it let her go with that 'they boy no older than herself I would?"

"Where?"

"Oh, he's gone!"

He took an impetuous step forward toward the door of the inner room.

Holding it partly closed, Mrs. Maguire laid a hand which still shook on her companion's arm.

"Don't ye ever let me be sorry for what I done this night, don't ye?" she pleaded so fully.

He took the hand in his. Mrs. Maguire, looking deep into keen blue eyes, saw the same steadfastness with which centuries before his forefathers had faced death when they fought, overcame and died among their heathen claid hills. Her heart grew warm with comfort.

"You need have no fear," he said quietly. "If only my sister had not been away at her summer home, I—"

Mrs. Maguire released the strong hand, to which she had clung as to an anchor, and almost pushed him from her.

"Go for her!" she begged with quickening breath. "If ye have a sister—a married one—for the love of heaven go for her. And don't ye see the little girl again till ye've got her with ye?"

She was forced to open the door wide to make way for some belated women travelers. His eyes went longingly to the room beyond.

Mrs. Maguire drew him outside, calming her tone to deal with masculine density.

"Don't ye see," she said slowly, "that 'tisn't easy all this is goin' to be for the little girl—at first? Oh, 'tis the light of yer eyes ye are to want another, didn't I see that? But 'tisn't with sorrow ye nor me'll want her to look back on this day. Man, don't ye fear. She's as sane as a sane was in heaven with Maggie Maguire till ye come."

"Again?"

The depot master looked at Mrs. Maguire over his glasses with assumed severity.

"Well, sir, ye see—"

"Last time it was a christening; now 'tis a wedding. Evidently these young people can't get along without your aid."

Mrs. Maguire looked her superior fixedly in the eyes for a moment.

"Mr. Fletcher, sir," she said at last slowly, "that's the truest word ye ever spoke!"

S. E. Hill in Harper's Weekly.

The Mountain Monarch.

Unlike the Jungfrau, the Rigi or other European mountains, including Vesuvius, which have been conquered by the modern engineers and now wear the harness of a railway to or near their summits, Mont Blanc is an absolute monarch, and no mortal may set the limit of its reign. The Goths and Vandals of old, the armies, the crusades of today or tomorrow may pour down through the Alpine defiles, but Mont Blanc through all such changes is monarch still, its snow capped peaks rising far above all else and the avalanches down its sides, more to be feared than any of its other dangers, defying the skill and courage of many a climber.—S. E. Hill in Harper's Weekly.

To Work is Honorable.

There has existed and still exists to some extent a false sentiment that labor is degrading or belittling. The contrary is true. An ideal condition of society can come only when every member of it recognizes that he is bound to exercise whatever skill or strength or faculty he possesses to its full capacity not selfishly or for the sake of gain merely, but for his own happiness and development and for the benefit of all. And there should be no restriction on any one, either legal or social or through association, in regard to his labor or his fruits. If by patient application or natural endowment a man possesses more skill than his fellow or if he chooses to be more industrious he is entitled to the full benefit of it.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

WASHINGTON LETTER

(Special Correspondence.)

The president has practically established a rule that will interest members of the cabinet who are in demand for speaking at public gatherings.

Senator Cullom recently presented to the president a committee of the Union League of Chicago, who came to secure the oratorical services of Secretary Hay on Washington's birthday.

Not receiving an affirmative response from Mr. Hay, the committee sought to enlist the good offices of the president in the matter.

The president frankly informed the committee that Mr. Hay's health was not sufficiently established to warrant him in undertaking at this time labor of the character involved in the invitation of the Union League and said that the secretary should not be asked to undertake it. The president improved the occasion to say that it was his desire that members of the cabinet should not be called upon to deliver addresses except on occasions where they might properly appear as public officers.

Knocked Out by President.

It is reported that President Roosevelt proved his right to the title of exponent of the many art of boxing by knocking down and out an army officer in a boxing contest at the White House recently.

Lieutenant Granville R. Fortescue is the officer in question. He is a cousin of Mrs. Roosevelt. President Roosevelt is gaining flesh at a rate not to his liking, and he invited Lieutenant Fortescue to put the gloves on. The young army officer accepted the invitation promptly, and the president and his companion began punching each other with great vigor.

The contest was entirely friendly, but the president became so earnest in his work that he dealt the army officer a stiff right hand punch which landed squarely on the left cheek and knocked Lieutenant Fortescue down and out.

The blow caused a slight discoloration about the left eye, but the injury was slight and was a source of much amusement to Lieutenant Fortescue as well as to the president.

Cabinet Dinners.

Each cabinet officer has been informed by the president that he is not expected to confine invitations for dinners in honor of the president and Mrs. Roosevelt to the cabinet circle alone. The guest list will, as usual, be sent to the president and Mrs. Roosevelt for approval.

The matter of precedence in cabinet dinners will be cast to the winds. Heretofore the secretary of the treasury would not give his dinner for the president and Mrs. Roosevelt until after that of the secretary of state had been held, and the secretary of commerce and labor always was the last to entertain the president. Hereafter these dinners will be held in such order as best suits the convenience of all members of the cabinet. The old custom of limiting invitations to the cabinet circle brought the president face to face with nine dining parties with the same persons each season.

Proposed Memorial Bridge.

General Humphrey, quartermaster general of the army, is a strong advocate of the construction of the proposed memorial bridge across the Potomac and the improvement of the national cemetery at Arlington, Va. Referring to these subjects in a report to the secretary of war, he says:

"The necessity and value, from a military point of view, of a bridge at this place are most apparent, and therefore it is earnestly recommended that an appropriation be asked from congress for its construction at or about the terminus of the Washington and Annapolis railway, which bridge would connect and will not only furnish a direct route to the national cemetery, but also be the means of direct and rapid communication between the capital and the important military post of Fort Myer, Va., adjoining the cemetery."

Washington's Trees.

Two thousand four hundred and seven trees were planted on the streets during the past year, and 1,750 trees were removed, leaving the total number of trees now on the streets of the District of Columbia about 88,005, an increase of only 648 over last year.

The appropriation for the parking commission, which is practically all expended in the planting and care of trees, was \$25,000. For the present fiscal year \$30,000 was appropriated. While the commissioners were much gratified at the increase, they believe that a larger amount should be appropriated for this purpose.

District Buildings.

There are at present in the District of Columbia 46,648 brick buildings, 20,901 frame buildings and 14,301 sheds.

The building inspector recommends legislation toward providing a bond for every contractor and license builders and architects. He also recommends that the present fire escape law be amended. It is the intention of the commissioners to recommend this latter legislation to congress.

Army War College.

Regarding the improvements in progress at the Washington barracks reservation, General Mackenzie, chief of engineers, says the present limit of cost of the Army War college, \$700,000, will be sufficient, though none too large. Unexpected financial difficulties were encountered in the buildings for the engineer school. The working season of 1903, General Mackenzie says, was very disastrous so far as market prices of labor and material were concerned, and it was also found impossible to utilize the old buildings to the extent figured on in the original project.

CARL SCHOFFIELD.

Slippers.

It is said that the woman who wants to have beautiful feet should never wear slippers. The moment the foot merely, but for his own happiness and development and for the benefit of all. And there should be no restriction on any one, either legal or social or through association, in regard to his labor or his fruits. If by patient application or natural endowment a man possesses more skill than his fellow or if he chooses to be more industrious he is entitled to the full benefit of it.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

HUMOR OF THE HOUR

An In-law Relation.

There is a certain small lady in Washington who has distinct and original ideas of her own. Not long ago the governess who presides over the nursery destinies of this young lady and her even younger sister informed them that their parents were soon to celebrate their tenth wedding anniversary, and the tots accordingly began to "save up" for a present. When the auspicious morning arrived Mistress Margaret walked solemnly into the room where her mother and father were sitting and laid first on one lap and then on the other the small packages that brought their love and congratulations.

"This," said she to her father, "cost 75 cents, and this," she added to her mother, "cost a dollar."

"But," the mother asked, "you don't love mamma better than papa, do you?"

"Well, mamma, it's this way," explained Margy. "You see, papa's our papa only by marriage, while your mamma by bormation."—Lippincott's Magazine.

The House of Lords Upheld.

"Say, pa," said little Henry, who had been listening to his mother and the minister as they had discussed one of the great questions that are always up for the consideration of the English people, "do you think it's wrong to marry a deceased wife's sister?"

"I do, my child, I do," replied Mr. Housheer. "Even if there were no legal complications to be risked, I'd advise trying some other family."—Chicago Record-Herald.

At the Fancy Ball.

Polly—The way that man looked at me was positively insulting.

Dolly—Did he stare at you long and insolently?

Polly—No. He gave one glance and then looked at something else.

Candor.

"I understand that you went to Bilgins to borrow money?"

"Yes," answered the amiable but impudulous man.

"What's the trouble? Have I ever refused you anything?"

"Then why didn't you come to me?"

"Well, the truth is you're so easy that there's no sport in it."—Washington Star.

Just Like a Woman.

She (sentimentally)—Would you dare anything for me, dear?

He (passionately)—Anything, dear.

She (patronizingly)—Oh, what for, instance?

He hesitated a moment and then—

Kissed her!

She (angrily)—How dare you?—Brooklyn Life.

Something New.

"Of course the novel isn't much, but the heroine is quite a remarkable young person."

"Indeed?"

"Oh, quite out of the ordinary. She doesn't once appear in a gown of some soft clinging material that accentuated rather than concealed," etc.—Philadelphia Press.

Feminine Amenities.

Visitor—Your governess seems very good natured.

Lady of the House—Yes, poor thing, her father lost a lot of money, so I took her as governess for the children.

Visitor—Poor, poor thing. Isn't it terrible how unfortunate some people are!—London Punch.

Real News.

Blinkers—Could you lend me your racing auto for the afternoon, old chap?

Tooter—Why—er—yes.

Blinkers—Thanks awfully. And, say—er—could you lend me the price of a couple of fines or so?—Puck.

Tells Why.

Aunt Julia—Why did you break off your engagement with young Huggins?

Pretty Niece—Because he got a fool notion in his head that I intended to marry him.—Baltimore News.

Misunderstood.

Lawyer (for defense)—Now, Pete, tell the jury all you know about those chickens.

Pete—I don't reckon I will, boss. If I did that, I'd go to jail sho'.—Philadelphia North American.

But Lived to Tell It.

Upgarson—What on earth used you up like that, old fellow? Been kicked by a mule or run over by an automobile?

Atom—Both. The one kicked me in the way of the other.—Chicago Tribune.

His Hope.

Elder—So you're to be married, eh? I hope you fully realize that it's a serious step. Younger—Well, if I never realize that it was a serious mistake I'll be satisfied.—Philadelphia Press.

CHOICE MISCELLANY

Evolution of the Horse.

Thanks to the discoveries of the American naturalists, we possess now an almost complete series of links connecting the small five-toed mammal of the lowerocene rocks with the winners of the Derby. Two or three million years come between the earliest and the latest forms, and the primitive is so unlike the perfected animal that no one would ever have supposed the one to be derived from the other but for the finding of the continuous series. Fresh interest has been given to this subject by the recent researches of Professor Osborn, Professor Ewart and Professor Ridgway. One of the results of inquiry goes to show that there has been not one line of descent, but at least five, leading to as many varieties. In this tale of development the strangest feature is the gradual diminution in the number of toes until we arrive at the present one-toed animal. The so-called foot of the horse is the single remaining toe, so that, in fact, the animal walks, as the Cambridge Zoology says, on the very points of its finger and toe nails, and it possesses only one finger on each hand (or forefoot) and one toe on each foot, and yet "next to the wings of a bird the organs of locomotion in the animal kingdom."—London Telegraph.

Volunteer Chorus Girls.

"What chance have I," said a girl to me recently, "against that?" She had unconsciously glanced down at a shabby shoe and a well worn skirt. She had been "out" for a couple of months. Her savings were all gone, and, though she did not admit it, a little observation could tell that she and hunger were not on unfamiliar terms.

Certainly the most sanguine of mortals would not back her in a contest for employment against the girl she had pointed to. "That," as she so bitterly called her, "dress, pocket money and a comfortable home from an indulgent father. The only wages she asked for from a theatrical manager was to be allowed a chance of gratifying her vanity by posing on a stage. Her dress and appearance were an advertisement of prosperity for any touring company.

Can it be wondered that she and others like her are every day driving trained and hardworking actresses deeper and deeper into the slough of poverty and despair?—T. P.'s Weekly.

Steps Toward the Ideal.

The dream of the ages has been of the ideal time when nations shall learn war no longer. For the first time in human history there is an organized effort in that direction, dating from the Hague conference and the establishment of the court of arbitration. The fierce struggle in South Africa, with its ghastly death roll and its enormous financial burden, was an object lesson to the English people especially and to all civilized nations in general. The present war in the far east has intensified the popular horror of war and is building up a still stronger feeling in favor of peaceful means for settling international disputes. Probably the time is far distant when war will be but a relic of the past, but the nations are traveling the road which leads to its extinction.

Cotton Picked by Machine.

A cotton picking machine has been invented by a planter in Georgia in which a current of air is set up in a tube by means of a suitably arranged fan or blower, the same discharging into a receptacle, the suction thus produced serving to remove from the plants the open bolls of cotton which are ready for picking and to convey them through a blower mechanism into the receptacle. This apparatus is mounted on wheels and is designed to be driven down the rows of cotton plants in the field. As the end of the suction tube passes over the open bolls the cotton is separated from the plant.—American Exporter.

The Scourge of Beriberi.

This disease, peculiar to rice eating people, was the enemy of the millions of the army in the war with China, causing the death of nearly 45 per cent of the land forces. Beriberi is a disease that is the result of nonlimination. Uric acid accumulates in the blood, and the first symptoms are distinctly rheumatic. These are followed by complete paralysis of the extremities. There is lack of sensation and the power of locomotion, and this paralysis continues toward the vital centers until it reaches the heart, and the story is ended.—Nebraska State Journal.

Finest Crown Jewels in the World.

The late king of Saxony left the richest collection of crown jewels in Europe. One glass case in the "green vaults" at Dresden contains assorted sets of the most costly gems. In one is nothing but sapphires, in another emeralds, in another rubies, in another diamonds, in another pearls. The largest rubies weigh forty-eight and fifty-nine carats. The rarest gem is a green diamond weighing forty carats. There are two of Martin Luther's rings and one of Melancthon's.

True Womanly Beauty.

Such a blow to the Englishwomen! A woman doctor has made the statement in one of her magazines that they are growing plainer. She says that what makes for what beauty there is today is the result of combined efforts of "the coiffeur, the modiste, the dressmaker and the face specialist, whereas true beauty," she declares, "lies in exquisite coloring, luxuriant hair, lustrous eyes and delicately molded features."

Nothing Doing.

"Dear," said the poet's wife, noting his abstracted look, "you are worried about something."

"Well—er—yes," replied the poet.

"Tell me. What have you on your mind?"

"Nothing. That's what worries me."—Exchange.

Liquid Quarts.

Wille—Pa, how many quarts it all takes to make a peck? Pa—It all depends, my son. Less than one quart, for instance, will sometimes make a peck of trouble.—Exchange.

NEW SHORT STORIES

Advance of Medical Science.

The late Postmaster General Henry Payne had a friend in Milwaukee who is a physician and owns an X ray machine, says the New York Times.

"The doctor," said the late postmaster general, in relating the story, "was interrupted one day by the hurried entrance of a young man. 'Doctor,' said he, 'I have swallowed my diamond pin. I wish an examination made.'"

"The doctor was not enthusiastic, for the young man already owed a large bill. However, the examination was made, but it revealed no sign of the diamond.

"I am sure that I swallowed it," protested the youth haughtily.

"As a plausible explanation the doctor suggested innocently: 'The rays reveal only solids. Perhaps the diamond was paste.'"

"I did not come here to be insulted," retorted the youth.

"Likely you came to pay that little bill," encouraged the physician.

"I'd pay you now if I had the money with me," said the caller.

"Beg pardon," observed the doctor suavely, "the X rays located a coin in your vest pocket which will at least pay for this examination."

"The bills which encircled the silver dollar were sufficient to wipe out the entire debt, and the young man left, cursing the advance made in medical science."

Light Meal in the Evening.

A Georgian tells this story of the late Alexander Stephens, says the Nashville Banner:

"Mr. Stephens was slated for a joint debate with Rance Wright during a presidential campaign. Wright by way of a tale said that Stephens had said he could eat him (Wright) for breakfast. Ben Hill for dinner and Bob Toombs for supper.

"Mr. Stephens possessed very little storage room in his stomach, and when it came his turn to reply he said that he denied that he had made any such assertion. 'If I contemplated any such feast,' said Mr. Stephens, 'I certainly would have changed the order. I would have taken Ben Hill for breakfast, Bob Toombs for dinner and my friend Rance Wright for supper. My mother taught me from early infancy to eat a light supper, and so I would have topped off with Wright.'

"The answer completely snuffed out the good impression Colonel Wright had made."

With Charity For All.

Miss Lola La Follette, the daughter of the governor of Wisconsin, has gone on the professional stage. A Madison woman said of her the other day:

"Miss La Follette has a ready and rather caustic wit."