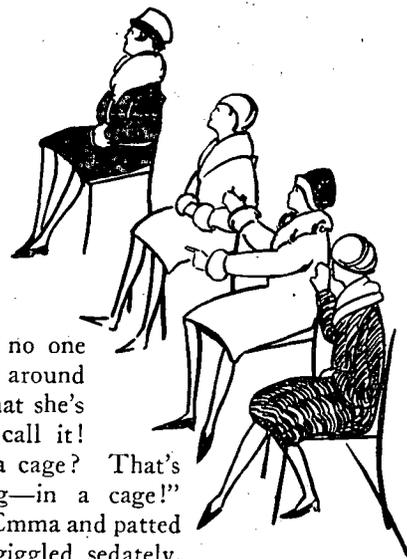


Mother's Day

By ELEANOR R. WEMBRIDGE

Drawings by Helen B. Phelps



THE four girls were undeniably good-looking, but hardly of impartial mind or judicial temper. Far from it. They sat in a row, ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-five, all very handsome, and all very angry. They were wrapped in fur coats to fashion

which innumerable rabbits and small rodents had been sacrificed. Four platinum wedding rings adorned their hands. They made a formidable array of youth, vigor, brave drapery, and red rage.

Emma, the oldest and relatively the mildest in temper, sat at the end in gray squirrel, her jaw set, but her blue eyes not quite so snapping as the black ones of Rose, the firebrand next her, who evidently was the commanding line officer, while Emma was chief of staff. Elsie was similar to Rose in temperament, when Rose gave her a chance to show it, while Gert was scarcely more than a gay shy school-girl. The latter's coat was the least expensive, for naturally the bank account of Gert and George was seven years behind that of Emma and Neil. The sisters represented not only steps of age, but an increasing scale of expenditure upon their persons, up to Emma, a model of serene elegance.

"We may as well hurry this thing up," snapped Rose. "I got all kinds of work waiting for me. And I shan't come again. It sounds so good in an office to ask to get off because your sister's pinched! I'm about through." She threw up her chin and tapped the floor with her neatly buckled slipper.

"We've talked it over and decided that I'd better take her," suggested Emma more quietly. "But they got to let me alone. I just can't bother with her unless I have complete charge. I'm too nervous to put up with interference, and Neil wouldn't stand for it either."

Elsie shrugged her shoulders. "Neil is one saint, I'll say. Luke wouldn't bother with her at all, and I don't mind saying so. He says Ma wouldn't keep out, and you know she won't. She likes butting in too well."

"Nobody's asking Luke to take her," retorted Rose. "Em is the only one she'll listen to, Em or me. But I'm away all day and

so are you. There is no one but Em who can stick around at home and watch what she's up to. Great job, I call it! Why not put her in a cage? That's where monkeys belong—in a cage!"

"Sh—Sh," warned Emma and patted her arm, while Gert giggled sedately.

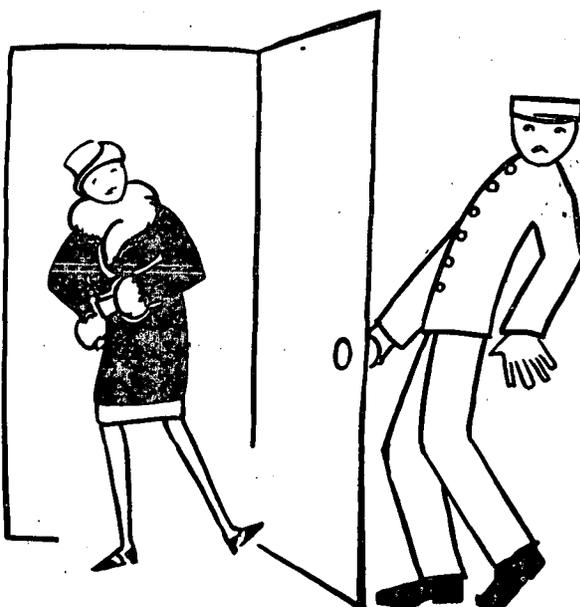
"If that is what you've decided, we may as well have them in and tell them so," ventured the Court. "Whom shall we have first?"

The girls conferred in whispers, then Rose announced, "Leave the kid till last. There is no use giving her the satisfaction of listening in. She'll have to do what we say or get locked up. Let's see the others and get it over with"—at which the bailiff stuck his head out of the door and shouted "Glukens!"

At the sound of this proclamation, the gaze of the four girls became rigidly directed to the ceiling. They scorned to glance at anything so base as the elder Glukenses who presently hesitated upon the threshold, peering in. The newcomers tried unsuccessfully to catch the stony eyes of the girls, which shot past them as if they were not there. Failing in this, they sought two chairs on which they sat in some discomfort.

Mrs. Glukens was large, vigorous and sharp-eyed. Heading her line of daughters like a huge engine attached to smaller but trimmer cars, she wore the same expression on her face that such an engine might be supposed to exhibit, if the train had suddenly reversed and were dragging the engine protestingly toward the rear. Imagine a steer in full chase hauled back by his tail; a Fourth of July enthusiast whose Roman candles are suddenly shooting out of the wrong end; a cautious gardener whose hose has unexpectedly twisted and doused him in the face, and you have Mrs. Glukens, a defendant before the bar of four daughters whom she had scolded and spanked, deprived of their pay, their beaux, their morning sleep and their evening entertainment, for twenty years of glorious dictatorship. She had made them do anything on earth, and now she could not even make them look at her.

As for Mr. Glukens, he was merely the legal background, the supposed head of the house. A thin, elderly man, he occupied a



Plump little Maisie shot into the room as if she had had her ear to the door

chair of necessity. But he had long since ceased to do anything else. The engine had pulled him backwards and sideways, had switched him on to so many tracks for so many years, that he was used to it. It was no shock to him to be in court. In fact, there lingered in his eyes a sly enjoyment of the scene. Let the battle of the ladies go on. There might be much worse entertainment.

"We have decided," we of the Court announced gently to Mrs. Glukens, "that since you do not seem able to manage Maisie, she shall live with Emma for a while. Perhaps Emma can do something with her."

Mrs. Glukens' small eyes blazed. They fairly started from her head.

"You say Emma can manage her when I can't," she snorted in amazement. "Manage *my* daughter? She shall *not* go to Emma's. She shall come home to me."

The eight cold eyes continued to gaze at the moulding. Mr. Glukens twisted slightly in his chair and peered up with some curiosity to discover what his girls found so interesting about the northeast corner of the room.

"I rather think it is all settled," we went on. "It seems to be the only way out—that or an institution."

"But I have brought up four girls. Don't I know how by this time?" demanded Mrs. Glukens fiercely, whereat all the eyes froze more contemptuously.

"Like hell you know," snorted Rose, nudged warningly by Emma. "Well, you brought us up yourself, Em. You know you did," went on Rose. "What did *she* have to do with it, but nearly drive us all where Maisie is now? If Em had been at home like she was when *we* were kids, this wouldn't have happened," she protested, accompanied by a vigorous nodding of assent from the two younger girls. "But she's so darned stubborn, so sure she's right even when there's no sense to it. She's got nothing else to do, now we're gone, but razz Maisie. Why don't she get a dog? There's not so much harm if you spoil a hound. You can shoot him. But you can't shoot Maisie any more than you could shoot us. Poor kid. Many is the time I wanted a bullet in my head, if only I could 'a got in one good shot first."

"Rose, you shouldn't talk like that," reiterated Emma, shaking her arm. "Rose don't mean it," she explained. "But the trouble is she talks too much, just like my mother does. It wears me out. It's like I say. I will take Maisie, but Ma has got to keep away. I can make Rose shut up. But my nerves won't stand handling Ma. I've served my time on that."

Ma turned to glare, but it is hard to glare at graven images. With an extraordinary adroitness of ocular speed, the girls throughout the interview succeeded in avoiding the eyes of either parent, a feat in which their father assisted them but which their mother continually tried to circumvent.

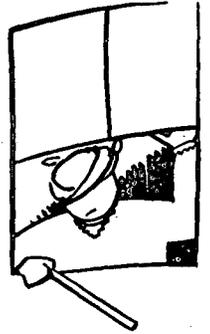
"Ma drove her to it. That's the amount of it," persisted Rose. "Of course, Maisie is the biggest fool in five states. But Ma can't be contented till she makes her worse. It

seems like Ma sics her on like a big dog a little one, so she can get something on her, and then have an excuse to make a scene."

"Drive her to it? What did I drive her to?" demanded Mrs. Glukens of the family and of the world at large.

Gert whispered to Elsie, Elsie passed it on to Rose, who looked incredulous, and whispered to Emma. Emma explained, "The girls say they don't think Ma knows really what Maisie did this time. I don't guess any one told her. I'm sure I didn't and it's a cinch Maisie wouldn't."

"Tell her and watch her rave. She thinks she's so good bringing up girls. Let's give her an earful," suggested Rose charitably, and she sniffed in high disdain.



Heinie had to hunt the fish-pole under the porch and tap three times on her bedroom window

"Maisie may as well tell it herself her own way," we suggested.

Whereat the bailiff stuck his head out of another door and again roared, "Glukens."

At this invitation, a plump and pleasing little person shot into the room as if she had been listening at the keyhole. If she hadn't, she had wanted to, for what girl of sixteen could bear sitting outside while six members of her family were talking about her behind closed doors? She was pretty, like all of them, and apparently combined the high spirits of one side of the family with the quiet malice of her father, who enjoyed a family row.

Maisie, of course, had not arrived at the fur coat stage, but was dressed in the garment which Gertie had discarded when she acquired George and a trousseau. It was wrapped around her in the approved style, but her sharp eyes instantly took in the superior magnificence of her sisters, and she was feeling very sorry for herself.

"Excuse my coat, the lining's torn," she ventured into the damning silence. Her father looked at her with pity, her mother and sisters with disgust. She was evidently her father's joy, her mother's wrath, and her sisters' despair. Since the sisters said nothing, Maisie's expression became even more Puck-like. Her eyes danced, and she too looked at the northeast corner. If this was a Quaker meeting, Maisie could play the game, even if she did have to wear their cast-off clothes.

But the family wrath had accumulated too long to be held back by Maisie's impishness. Rose turned on her suddenly.

"You'll talk, young lady, and explain yourself, or to the hoosegow you go, for all me. I've other uses for my time beside watching you. One minute more of this, and I leave the room . . ." and she looked ostentatiously at her platinum wrist watch. Elsie and Gert, not to be outdone, exhibited their wrist watches and started to pick up their bags.

"I don't know what you want (Continued on page 70)

How the Living Faith of One Social Worker Grew

By MARY E. McDOWELL



At eleven, when she left dancing school

to join an old-fashioned Methodist chapel

IN response to the editor's request that some of us tell how we have "sunk our shafts deep to find living water," I found release from a long-time reticence. The words unlocked a mood of long ago when we used to speak, perhaps too readily, of our religious experiences in the Methodist chapel of my girlhood, where there were both certainty of belief and freedom of expression. When eventually, I left that "dry-dock on the way to Heaven," I felt a longing to have revealed to me whether or not I had religion—in reality. If I had, my hope was that deeds, not words, would prove it. This request seems a hint that social workers might try their case work methods on themselves from time to time. I shall therefore tell my story.

I was born and lived my childhood in my grandfather's house in Cincinnati, at the foot of Walnut Hills facing the

Ohio River, looking out over the beautiful Kentucky hills. The place and its setting offered a great variety of opportunities for play. As a child it always seemed to me a great waste of time to stop to eat or sleep because every day there was a new idea to dramatize. We played under the shade of the great beech trees and at the side of the little stream that ran down the hill or, in rainy weather, on the big porches—the whole neighborhood of children and myself. We had continuous plays that went on for days at a time, derived from the fairy tales we heard or read.

Don't imagine that my life was all play, for as the oldest sister of a family of brothers I came to take responsibilities quite seriously and was under the impression that the whole McDowell family depended upon me and what I did and the way I behaved. I must often have been a very irritating grown-up sister but somehow we kept our affection and our dependence upon each other all through our lives.

That word "thrill," so over-used by our young people today, was not known to my vocabulary. Every day was an "interesting" day and common life and creative play were thrilling enough. From that day to this I have never seemed to feel the need of the shows for diversion or rest. I got a healthy reaction from a variety of interests and the common people about me offered a continuous drama.

Where did I get my social faith? I find those two words blending so perfectly that they run together like the colors in a prism. I believe it was Emerson who said that long before the mother realizes it, the child has begun building his ideals. Labor was dignified and idealized in my earliest days, in the person of an old carpenter; the service of the city, in that of the captain of our fire department. More, the immigrant and the Negro were a part of my life and

had to do with my happiness.

It was the "laying on of hands," not by a bishop of the apostolic succession, but by a working man—that carpenter who built boats on the Ohio River—that consecrated me to social service.

My maternal grandfather was himself a boat builder in old Fulton, the east end of Cincinnati. I was born in the one big house of the community, which was my grandfather's house in which my mother had grown up. My earliest recollections were of the new people, German and Irish, and the new industries that were taking the place of the old ship and lumber yards along the Ohio. My relations with some of these immigrants were intimate, if a wee girl can be intimate with her elders.

One of my best friends was an old Irish woman whose daughter "worked out." I remember climbing up the rough stone steps to Aunty Campbell's small rooms, and there the old woman and "little Mary" visited together many an



MARY E. McDOWELL

After thirty-five years in Chicago "back of the Yards"