



A HOUSE FOR SALE

The Wonderful Influence of Ideas and Red Paint

By T. R. GAINES

The brass sign read:

DENNIS CORRIGAN
IDEAS
Third Floor

"This is the place, Molly," whispered the tall, lanky man to the trim little woman who accompanied him. The couple had come to Toronto to interview Mr. Dennis Corrigan.

They pushed open a door, entered the elevator at the end of the hallway and were speedily landed on the required floor. Right opposite the elevator was the office of the man whom they had come to consult. A hurried whisper, and they were in the office of the great genius who had an idea to suit every trouble. A trim stenographer tripped over the green carpeted floor and asked how they could be served.

"We want to see Mr. Corrigan," replied the man. "All right, sir," said the stenographer. "Fill in your name and address on this card, also the nature of your business, and you can see Mr. Corrigan in a few minutes." The couple seated themselves, and the man started to fill in the blank card which the girl had given him.

Name—Carl C. Henderson.

Address—Oshawa, Ontario.

Nature of Business for Interview—Sale of a house.

"Now, my girl," said Mr. Henderson, "try to get us an audience as soon as possible."

In a few minutes the closing of a door leading from the private office to the outside hallway was heard. Almost simultaneously, with the exit of the previous client, the stenographer returned and beckoned the couple to advance, and a moment later they were ushered into the private sanctum of Mr. Dennis Corrigan. A clean-shaven, almost corpulent man was seated near a large desk. He gave a quick glance upwards when the Hendersons entered. "Be seated," he said, "and let me know briefly how I can be of service to you."

Mr. Henderson coughed once or twice and stammered something. Seeing a look of annoyance cross the face of Corrigan, he suddenly blurted out, "Mr. Corrigan, I can't tell you what we came here for, but Molly—I mean Mrs. Henderson—can."

The eyes of the idea man rested approvingly for a few seconds on the pretty face of the lady, and he said, "Go ahead, madam, I am listening."

"Well, sir, to make a long story short, my husband bought a house about two years ago in Oshawa. We paid a reasonable price for it. At the time we bought the house, my husband had a grocery store at Picton, Ont., which we have since had to dispose of owing to the illness of Mr. Henderson. Now, Mr. Corrigan, my husband is fully recovered, and has an opportunity to buy back his store for \$4,000, that's the amount he paid for his house. All our capital is entirely gone, and our only asset is the house. Since my husband's recovery—two months ago—we have spent more than \$50 advertising the house, but cannot get even a person to make us an offer."

Mrs. Henderson paused a moment in her recital and in a faltering voice continued, "And, Mr. Corrigan, I have to tell you the worst part of the whole affair. If my husband cannot sell the house by Monday next, the store will be sold to someone else, and here it is Tuesday morning, and only these few days left. Oh, Mr. Corrigan, please help us, won't you? We heard through a friend that you are a wonderful man. That's why we came here, as a last resort." Mrs. Henderson began to sob, and her husband looked mighty uncomfortable.

Mr. Corrigan rose to his full six feet of sleek manhood, and turning to Henderson, said, "Now, my good man, get your wife composed, and take her home, and you will hear from me in a few days. By the way, my fee is \$100 for every case I undertake, but as you have explained your circumstances, I will not demand payment until Monday next after I sell your house."

"Mr. Corrigan," cried Mrs. Henderson, "are you really going to sell the house?"

"Not a doubt in the world about it," was the answer. "You can expect me out next Friday to look over the property, and probably on Saturday the sale will be made."

Stammering their heartfelt thanks the Hendersons were ushered out, and Mr. Corrigan seated himself at the desk to await another impatient client.

The following and successive days of the week,

the leading newspaper in the town contained the following "ad." in the personal column:

"An ideal home for sale at a tremendous sacrifice. House is admirably situated in Oshawa. A newly-married couple would find it a regular little paradise. For a family it would prove equally splendid."

"For an aged couple to pass the evening of their life, no finer place could possibly be had."

"The house and grounds will be sacrificed for \$5,000. Sickness alone makes this bargain possible. Address at once for appointment to see the house, Home Sweet Home, Daily Record."

Promptly the following Friday a red auto drew up in front of the home of Mr. Carl Henderson. Mr. Dennis Corrigan alighted, and stepped briskly along the gravel walk that led to the front door. A sharp ring at the door-bell brought a speedy response in the person of Mrs. Henderson. She was gowned in a neat and most becoming frock which seemed to suit the critical inspection of Mr. Corrigan.

"I am so glad you have come," she said. "We feared you had forgotten us, Mr. Corrigan. Have you got a purchaser for the house?"

"Not yet, madam," was the reply. "But I must look over the premises and see what requires to be done."

"What do you mean, Mr. Corrigan? You cannot improve the house except by a fresh coat of paint, and as it happens, the house was painted very recently."

"I will explain in a few minutes, madam," was the reply. "Meanwhile, give me ten or fifteen minutes to investigate and I will lay my plan of campaign before you."

The puzzled little woman returned to her domestic duties and wished her husband would soon return and try to find out what the strange Mr. Corrigan was trying to do.

The idea man rapidly surveyed the house and grounds. He held a large notebook in his hand and made copious notes from time to time. Meanwhile, Mr. Henderson had returned, and was informed by his wife of the strange procedure of Mr. Corrigan.

When finally his canvass of the premises was completed, Corrigan joined the Hendersons on their sunny veranda.

"Good morning, Mr. Corrigan," said Henderson, as he advanced with outstretched hand.

Salutations having been heartily returned, Mr. Corrigan seated himself and, producing his memorandum book, began to read from the notes.

"The first thing we will start on," he said, "is the house. It is all right, the location is good, but it needs sprucing up. In its present condition it is unsaleable, but inside of a few hours we will have it in a saleable shape. The grounds are in a bad condition, the trees are uncared for, and you must confess it kills the good points of the house. I firmly believe it is on account of the surroundings of your home that you were unable to get a purchaser. By the way, Mr. Henderson, what is that green fruit on those two big trees over there?" Corrigan pointed to the trees in question, which Henderson defined as "sour wild apples."

Mr. Corrigan paused a moment, and turning to Mrs. Henderson, exclaimed, "Now, madam, we must get busy. Bring a paper and pencil and write down the things we need to make our sale a success."

In a moment, Mrs. Henderson returned with the writing implements and wonderingly proceeded to write down the list of the things which Mr. Corrigan read off: One can of red paint, one paint brush, two barrels of ripe red apples, three hammocks, two garden swings, a quantity of potted plants, a parrot, and a large cage.

"What in the world do you need the red paint for?" asked Mr. Henderson.

"You'll see," said Mr. Corrigan, "the judicious use I can put the paint to, so get a hustle on, as it is nearly noon, and have all these things here as quickly as possible. I presume you will have to buy the paint and apples, but the rest of the stuff you can borrow from your neighbors, and if you pick up half a dozen porch chairs and an invalid chair as well, they would prove mighty useful."

Mr. and Mrs. Henderson exchanged frightened glances. There was no doubt in their minds that Corrigan was crazy, but as he had extricated their dearest friend, Mr. Muzzle, from a serious scrape, each inwardly determined to see it through, and trust the idea man to win or lose. Mr. Henderson wended his way to town to make the necessary purchases, and Mrs. Henderson was soon interviewing her neighbors in a quest for chairs, swings, plants, parrot, etc.

Mr. Corrigan had autoed away, promising to return at 4 p.m. sharp to complete his laying out of the grounds. Right on the hour he was back, and a scene of indescribable confusion met his gaze. The grounds were covered with potted geraniums and

other plants, and a large variety of porch chairs were scattered around. Three hammocks were tangled up in an old-fashioned invalid chair and on the veranda several canaries were chirping merrily. Mr. Corrigan smiled with gratification. He knew that he had the material. All that was necessary now were the finishing touches.

"Come here, Jim," he shouted to his chauffeur. "Get into these overalls. We have two hours of hard work ahead of us." The chauffeur swung himself to the ground, took off his coat and got into the overalls.

Just at that moment Corrigan heard a shrill feminine voice shouting, "I've got it, I've got it! Mr. Corrigan, I've got the parrot!" Mrs. Henderson was advancing swinging a big cage wherein repose a gaily-plumaged bird. "Oh, Mr. Corrigan, I had such hard work to get him. You know, this is the only parrot around here. He belongs to old Miss Jones, who loves him like a brother, and I had the job of my life to secure him for a day."

"You have done well, Mrs. Henderson. We can arrange things very nicely now, and I can assure you of making a sale to-morrow at a higher price, too, that you expect; but here comes your husband."

When Mr. Henderson joined them, his face was expressionless. He could not make head or tail of the proceedings. The pot of red paint and the barrels of apples puzzled him especially. The smiling face of his wife when she greeted him, was exceedingly satisfying. The confident air of the idea man was equally assuring, and as he did not ask for any further details he did not receive any.

"Now, Mr. Henderson, said Corrigan, 'if we sell the plants and birds with the house, can you arrange it with the owners?'"

"No! No!" exclaimed Mrs. Henderson, "not the birds. I can easily arrange the chairs, plants and hammocks, but Miss Jones would never get over the shock if I sold her parrot."

"Well, then, it is settled. The birds will be returned, but all the other stuff must go. Now," continued Mr. Corrigan, "I want to know if you wish to dispose of your furniture with the house. If so, tell me your price, and I will make a clean sweep of the whole business, including the borrowed things as well."

The Hendersons consulted together and finally announced that \$1,000 would be acceptable to them for all the paraphernalia inside and outside of the house. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Corrigan," said Henderson, "but what use can a barrel of apples and a pot of red paint be in selling a house?"

"That is my secret, Mr. Henderson," said the idea man, "but I can assure you it will be the main help in the sale." Mr. Henderson shook his head and sank back into one of the borrowed porch chairs.

"Mrs. Henderson," said Corrigan, "it will be necessary for you to remove your belongings at once, and leave the house in my possession."

"Leave the house! What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say. Your home will be sold, lock, stock and barrel, to-morrow, and you both must clear out at once; so pack your trunks, and I will take you in my auto to a hotel, where you can stay until I bring you the price of the house." Half an hour later, the Hendersons were safely located in the hotel, both wondering how it all was going to end.

When Corrigan joined his chauffeur a little later, he found considerable order had been produced from the chaos. Hammocks were swung from the trees, green, red and white porch chairs were artistically distributed on the walks and porch, chirping canaries in gay-colored cages were hanging from various points of vantage, and potted plants were effectively landscaped. "Good work, Jim, good work!" exclaimed Corrigan. "It is easy to see you are not an amateur in sprucing up real estate for sale. By the way, Jim, where did you put the parrot?"

"In the parlor," said Jim. "He jabbered such a lot of rubbish, I couldn't stand it no longer, so I locked him up in the parlor."

"Jim," said the idea man, "fetch me a ladder, while I open the red paint."

The ladder was soon on the scene. Corrigan placed it against the branches of one of the wild apple trees. "Here, Jim, take this paint and brush and let me see how nicely you can doctor up these green things and make them look ripe and luscious. I will unload the real apples and proceed to plant them."

A few minutes later Corrigan rolled a big barrel of apples under the tree where Jim was doing his painting.

"Keep up the good work," shouted Corrigan. "That tree certainly looks the real thing. These painted apples actually make my mouth water."

It did not take very long to fix up the second tree, and instead of miserable green apples, the trees were loaded with tempting, rosy fruit. Scattered all over the ground under the trees were scores of real

Continued on page 47