



*had a slight stroke of paralysis at Derby in 1885, and had been obliged to give up work for a time. Whether on his return to work his mind had entirely recovered its former vigor, or was suffering a gradual loss of strength, is a matter that need not be discussed. But those familiar with the judge's powers during his earlier years on the bench may well doubt, in reading the report of Mrs. Maybrick's trial, whether those powers were as conspicuous and effective in the trial of her case as they would have been had it taken place some few years before. Of the judge's scrupulous anxiety to be fair, just, and considerate towards the prisoner no impartial reader can doubt."*

Perhaps it is unfair to cite the following excerpt from the judge's summing up as evidence of his failing intellect, but to most Englishmen it would be otherwise inexplicable: "The next date after that took place is the Grand National 'something.' I don't know whether it is a race, or a steeplechase, . . . but it is something called the 'Grand National,' as if everybody knew what the substantive was—but the Grand National took place on the 29th March." Counsel at the bar and spectators must have mentally shaken their heads at such ignorance. In any case, Stephen's conduct of the trial called forth much sharp comment in both the press and the legal profession and provided the chief basis for later

action in Mrs. Maybrick's behalf. Stephen left the bench two years later, was created a baronet, and died in a private asylum in 1894.

Florence Maybrick was found guilty and was sentenced to death. But the case had aroused so much interest, and her plight so much sympathy, that almost half a million persons throughout the kingdom signed petitions to the Home Office urging her reprieve. Among those who circulated the petitions were members of the Liverpool Exchange (who obtained signatures over quick ones laced with arsenic at the corner chemist's?) and medical men, who argued that the quantity of arsenic found in Maybrick's body was too small to have caused death and that the symptoms observed during his last illness did not point to arsenic poisoning; some of the classic manifestations were not present. Some members of Parliament signed the petitions. Public meetings in Mrs. Maybrick's support were held in London and Liverpool, and, since Mrs. Maybrick was American by birth, leading officials and citizens of the United States also pleaded in her behalf. Among the names subscribed to the petitions were those of Cardinal Gibbons, Vice-President Levi P. Morton, members of the cabinet in addition to Secretary of State James G. Blaine, and high army officers.

At length, public opinion had its way to the extent that the condemned woman's sentence was re-

duced to life imprisonment. Mrs. Maybrick was released after fifteen years and returned to the United States, living first in Highland Park, Illinois, then in Florida, and finally in South Kent, Connecticut, as an eccentric old woman in a shack overrun with cats. She died in 1941. The beginning of her story, in the promise of a transatlantic marriage—overlooking the "vulgar" origin of her husband—may have been fit for Henry James's pen, but the long unhappy sequel would have had to be written by another hand. ▲