

GRAND SERIAL STORY.

JUDGMENT.

The Most Amazing Story Ever Penned.

FOR NEW READERS.

SIR JOHN MILLBANK, a successful, but stern judge, quarrels with his only son,

JACK, who leaves his father's house to fight his own way in the world; and whilst serving with the Australian contingent, under the name of Dick Foster, he meets, and falls in love with

KITTY, the adopted daughter of Sir John. However, Sir John has arranged for her marriage with

LORD HAVERHAM. In a moment of despair, Kitty writes to Dick, asking him to meet her in the Blue Room at Rivercourt Mansions. At the appointed hour, Lord Haverham goes to the Blue Room to write some letters, and, unbeknown to the guests, Sir John meets him there. An altercation arises between the two men, resulting in the accidental death of Lord Haverham. Later, Dick arrives in the Blue Room, is caught and accused of murder, and found guilty. Whilst passing the sentence of death, Sir John recognises the prisoner as his own son Jack! A few days later, Sir John interviews the prisoner at his private residence under escort of the warders, and tells him he will have to serve at least three years' imprisonment. Just as they are leaving, Dick with the assistance of Kitty makes his escape, and that night they decide to drive into Winnerleigh; but the car breaks down, and they are forced to accept the hospitality of

BEAUMONT CHASE, a millionaire. The following morning, Dick's host informs him that Sir John had called during the night and taken his daughter away. Dick, believing this story, leaves that morning for Winnerleigh. Kitty goes down to breakfast, and is cross-examined by Mr Chase, but on his promise of assistance tells him the whole story. At a fabulous price Mr Chase engages the services of

MR PELHAM WEBB, a clever but unscrupulous detective, to find Dick Foster, and extracts a promise from Kitty not to attempt to see or write to her lover until a year has elapsed. Pelham Webb discovers Dick, and unbeknown to Beaumont Chase, takes him to the latter's residence where he is installed as gardener. Sir John and Kitty arrive at Beaumont Hall, and Beaumont Chase loses no time in asking Sir John for the hand of his daughter. Sir John consents. That afternoon Kitty receives news that the gardener is seriously injured.

The concluding paragraphs of last week's instalment, reprinted to refresh reader's memories.

Kitty paused, and Beaumont Chase put his arm tenderly about her.

"And then to-morrow you will go obediently to the sacrifice? Poor little girl! Never mind, I mean to make you happy in spite of yourself, Kit. Before long I will make you forget all about that unfortunate young Australian. Meanwhile, my dear child, of course you shall see this old man and satisfy yourself that he knows nothing about Foster. Come, let us go and see him together."

As he spoke, with his arm still around her waist, he led her round to the front of the building.

Producing a key from his pocket he unlocked the door, and they entered a pavilion together.

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OLD CLARKE TAKES OFF HIS WIG.

While Kitty and Beaumont Chase held their long conversation outside the half-open pavilion window, two men within strained their ears to listen.

At Kitty's first cry of alarm on being surprised, Dick Foster had sat up, a startled exclamation on his lips, and in another moment he would have been out of bed.

It was then that Pelham Webb acted with that promptness and decision which accounted a good deal for the success he had achieved in his profession.

He could not guess the meaning of the disturbance outside, but that it threatened danger to his plans he swiftly realised, and he acted accordingly.

Gripping Dick by the shoulders he forced him back on to the pillow, at the same time uttering a fierce whispered warning.

"Silence for your life! There is something afoot. We must find out what it is. Keep still and listen!"

His tones were so earnest that Dick was impressed and instinctively obeyed.

Already the voices had sunk to a tone of friendly conversation.

A single cry of help would have caused Dick to defy all risks and rush to the rescue, but no such cry came.

The murmur of voices continued, now rising and now falling, but rarely did a coherent sentence reach the eager ears of the listeners.

Dick realised one fact, and one only, but it was enough to set his heart beating wildly and to send his blood coursing through his veins.

The female voice outside was the voice of Kitty, and she was pleading—pleading with a man.

For whom was she pleading?

No glimmer of the truth crossed his brain.

Had he guessed that for his sake Kitty was preparing to sacrifice herself to a man she did not care for, he would have repudiated the shameful bargain.

A quite different explanation of the affair presented itself to his mind.

"The police have discovered me," he murmured to himself. "They are coming for me, and Kitty has learned the truth and is trying to keep them back."

With very little hope that she would succeed he nevertheless realised that his only course was to keep silent.

It was what she would wish him to do.

There was yet a chance that with her woman's wit she would be able to lead the police away on a false scent.

Pelham Webb, it is needless to say, had no such illusions.

Very soon he guessed pretty well what had happened, and he thanked his stars that Beaumont Chase had arrived in time to prevent Miss Millbank from pursuing her investigations.

He prayed fervently that they would soon move out of earshot and return to the house.

And then, suddenly, there reached his straining ears a sentence which turned his blood to ice, and filled his soul with terror.

"By all means, let us go into the pavilion together."

It came from the lips of Beaumont Chase.

Pelham Webb heard the words and recognised the voice quite distinctly.

All his carefully constructed plans swayed and tottered before his eyes.

This means disaster, indeed. Ignominious failure and utter ruin.

His elaborate tissue of lies would be rent asunder.

If either the millionaire or Miss Millbank discovered that Dick Foster was here in the very grounds of Beaumont Hall, it would be equally disastrous.

The detective, in a frenzy of dismay, first rushed to the door, with some idea of refusing admittance to the unwelcome visitors; but quickly realising that such an attempt would be futile, he darted back to the bedside.

"Quick! Put on this wig!" he said. "Remember, whatever happens you are to play the part of Daddy Clark. You are very ill. You can only speak very feebly. Remember, your liberty depends upon it, perhaps your life, also the happiness of others. Act as you never acted before. Remember I am your friend. Follow my advice and I'll save you yet."

He then darted to the centre of the room and turned down the lamp so that there was only a feeble glimmer.

At the same instant they both heard the key turn in the lock of the outer door.

Then came the voice of Beaumont Chase. "Wait a minute till I strike a light."

Pelham Webb moved to the door and opened it.

"Is that you, Mr Chase?" he inquired, quite calmly.

"Yes, it is I and Miss Millbank. We must apologise for disturbing you, but we want a few words with the invalid."

"Oh, yes, certainly," said Webb, with just the natural amount of surprise in his voice. "He is awake, but the poor old fellow is very weak. You will not stay long?"

"Oh, no, Miss Millbank just wants to ask a question."

"This way, Miss Millbank," said the detective quietly. "It is rather dark we have to keep the light low. It is the doctor's orders."

Kitty was trembling as she entered the room, but she did not hesitate. She went at once to the bedside.

She saw the black, luxurious curly wig of Daddy Clark against the pillow, and the white face partly concealed by the bed-clothes.

"Are you well enough to speak to me, Mr Clark?" she said, in a low, tremulous voice.

For a moment Dick could not reply, and the hot tears rushed to his eyes.

The sound of that dear voice unmanned him, and he experienced an almost overwhelming desire to fling out his arms and draw that sweet, gentle face still closer to his own.

With a desperate effort, however, he controlled his emotion, and replied in a bare whisper:

"Yes."

"You know Dick Foster?"

"Yes."

"You saw him last before he left England?"

"I saw him last."

"What the deuce is the meaning of this?" muttered Beaumont Chase sharply, turning to the detective.

The latter hastily drew the millionaire aside.

"It is all right," he whispered. "I have told the old fellow to say anything to pacify her and reconcile her to her union with you. Don't spoil it, sir. Come away. Don't let her think you are listening. Is it true you have arranged for the wedding to take place to-morrow, sir?"

The millionaire who had allowed himself to be piloted away from the bedside, nodded.

"Yes, it is all arranged."

Pelham Webb, anxious to keep the other in conversation, went on hurriedly, still in a low undertone.

"Then after to-morrow I am at liberty to arrest the man?"

"Oh, yes, if you like. Then you know where he is?"

"I can make a shrewd guess. He has been attempting to communicate with Miss Millbank. It has given me a good deal of trouble to prevent that. I shall be more at ease when he is once more under lock and key."

"Then see to it; but for Heaven's sake don't let any word of it get out till after the ceremony. Once she is my wife I can manage her; but she is very restive, and if she got to know before the knot is tied that I have deceived her about young Foster—"

"Oh, precisely. You can safely leave that to me, sir; but I shall be glad if you will get the young lady back to the house now. Old Clark is very willing to oblige me, but he is in a weak state."

Meanwhile, Kitty was eagerly pursuing her examination of the invalid.

"When you last saw Mr Foster, did he give you any message for—for me?"

The man hesitated, and then replied in a faltering voice:

(Continued on page 6.)

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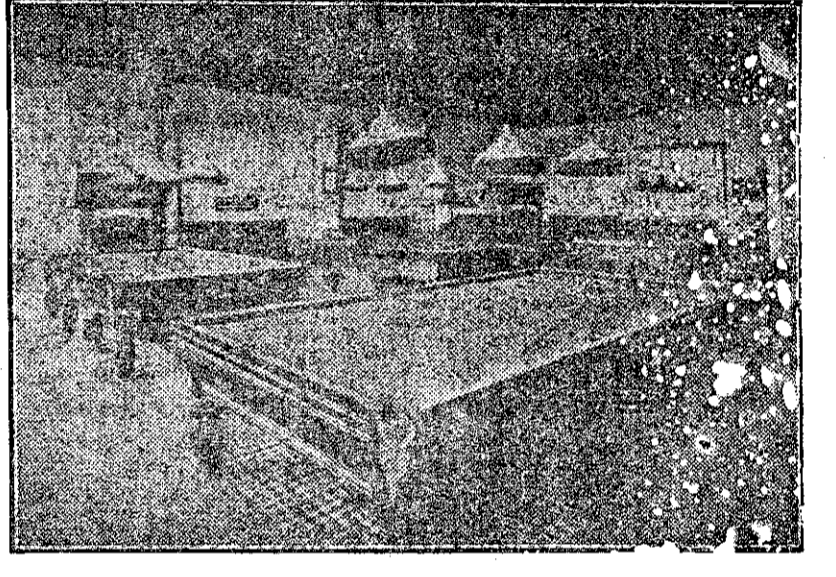
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CIVIC BILLIARD ROOM.

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(Above "The Digger.")

EVERY ATTENTION AND CIVILITY.



BILLIARD NOTES.

VARIOUS IN-OFFS. CHIEFLY WITH THE WHITE AS THE OBJECT-BALL.

Every conceivable variety of stroke must at some time or other be requisitioned when playing an in-off from a ball—the fine stroke, and the half-ball stroke, the run-through, the forcing and the screw stroke, all in their turn must be resorted to in order to successfully cope with the exigencies of different positions.

In the course of this chapter, however, I do not intend to discuss all the various positions for in-offs that are constantly occurring, but simply to confine myself to a review of some of those positions which constantly crop up, and the successful treatment of which generally differs in some salient characteristics from that which is required for what I may term the ordinary class in-offs.

Many very beautiful in-offs are played by all good players when the white is the object-ball, which are never attempted when the red ball takes the place of the white, for the obvious reason that the alternative stroke of potting the red is a far easier one, besides being a stroke that in the majority of cases can be played in such a manner as to leave good position.

IN-OFFS BY FIRST HITTING A CUSHION.

A position with the white ball either touching or almost touching the top cushion. Playing from baulk, it would be quite possible to get the in-offs by means of a fine stroke, and most beginners play the stroke in this way, and though they sometimes get the shot, they more often miss it. In trying to get the shot by

means of a fine stroke, one of two things is very likely to happen. By reason of playing to hit the object-ball very fine from the distance of the D, or even from positions higher up the table, a player may easily miss the ball altogether, and perhaps suffer the annoyance of giving a three miss, or he may just as likely hit the object-ball a trifle too full, when a kiss will result, and the in-off will be missed. To get the pocket by a direct in-off requires accurate hitting; the slightest error in aim, and the object-ball will either be struck too full or missed altogether. Moreover, even though the cue-ball be truly hit, the slightest deviation from its correct path in its journey up the table—and such deviation may easily take place owing to the table or the ball not being quite true—will often prove fatal. If, however, the cue-ball be directed high up against the side cushion, the stroke will always be successful, as owing to the object-ball being so near the pocket, it is immaterial whether it be struck quite thin or moderately thick.

A position with the white ball some little distance away from the top cushion but not quite far enough away from the side cushion to leave an ordinary in-off on. The in-off might, of course, be made by means of either a very thin stroke or a run-through, but by far the safest way to play it is by first hitting the side cushion. In all strokes of this nature the only thing required is to know to what point on the cushion to direct the cue-ball. The simplest way for a player to gauge this is to imagine he could place his ball on the side cushion anywhere he liked, and then play the in-off from that position.

Tame snakes are used in Morocco to clear houses of rats and mice. The sight of a snake seems to terrify the rodents.

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