

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 readers' memories.

Kitty was met by her maid, who gazed at her drawn, white face in dismay. "Oh, miss! You are ill!" "No, Julie," replied Kitty, in a strained, unnatural voice. "I am quite well, quite well. There is nothing the matter—nothing. Would you care to travel, Julie?"

"To travel, Miss?" "Yes. To-morrow I am going abroad." "Abroad? To-morrow?" Kitty was standing rigid, staring in front of her with big, unseeing eyes. "Yes," she said slowly; "on my

honeymoon. Didn't you know? To-morrow, I am going to be married!"

THE MARRIAGE BY SPECIAL LICENCE.

Kitty awoke to find the September sunshine streaming in at her windows and filling the spacious bedroom with a kind of pallid radiance.

To-day was her wedding day!

Her pretty, childish face was very pale and haggard, and her eyes seemed unnaturally big as she sat up in bed and stared fixedly in front of her.

In that dreadful interview with Beaumont Chase, last night, she had learned things which had changed her from a child into a woman.

A veil had been lifted, showing her for the first time the dark, ugly secrets in the heart of man.

The millionaire had told her that Sir John, the great judge, whom she had worshipped so devotedly, and loved so dearly, as a father, was the real murderer of Lord Haverham.

And having told her that, Beaumont Chase had done more. He had proved his words with sworn documents, which she could not disbelieve. He had convinced her.

The pitiful breakdown of Sir John's health and nerve, and many other things, which had puzzled her, were now explained.

"Poor daddy!" she murmured. "You who have done so much for me! How can I let you be exposed to public shame now that you are old and feeble? No! You shall die in peace. I will pay the price. Beaumont Chase has promised to spare you and to save Dick, if—I consent. And I have consented. As Beaumont Chase's wife I will see that he keeps his promise."

She buried her face in her hands, and for a while rocked herself miserably to and fro.

But in a very little time she recovered herself, and when her maid, Julie, presently entered the room, she found her mistress strangely calm and self-possessed.

"I have seen Mr Chase, miss," said Julie.

"Yes?"

"He has now left the house, and he told me to tell you that he would not see you again until he met you at the church this afternoon."

"Yes?"

Kitty's voice was still quiet.

Julie went on hesitatingly, her manner betraying nervous embarrassment.

"He asks you to be at the church at three o'clock. I am to go with you and Mr Pelham Webb."

"Pelham Webb?"

For the first time there was a note of surprise in Kitty's face.

"Yes, miss. I understand he is to give you away."

Kitty caught her breath, and a flush of colour came to her cheeks.

"Where is my father? Is he better this morning? I must see him as soon as he is up!"

"Sir John has gone away, miss. I understand he left the house at daybreak this morning."

"Gone away!"

Something of hopelessness, and something, too, of fear, was in Kitty's voice, as she uttered the words.

"He left no—no message for me?" she said presently.

"No miss. He left no message of any kind."

Kitty rose, and dressed in silence. Some thoughts crowded her brain.

Now, indeed, she was alone.

Sir John Millbank had gone away, without a word, leaving her to her fate.

No doubt he had learned of the sacrifice she was making, and felt he could not face her.

She felt no bitterness towards him. She had loved him too dearly for that. She remembered only his kindness in the past.

Some mysterious power had decreed that she should be the wife of Beaumont Chase. Was it, indeed, Fate, Or was it that strange man's indomitable and unscrupulous will?

"I always get what I want," he had once told her, and she had scorned him, but now she was convinced that he had but spoken the simple truth.

He wanted her, and in a few hours she would be his for life!

The remaining hours of her freedom passed with incredible swiftness.

No one came near her, but all the time she felt that she was being watched.

It was a strange wedding day. No solicitous friends and laughing bridesmaids thronged about her. She wore a travelling gown. Her luggage had already been sent to the railway-station.

After the ceremony, she and her husband were to proceed at once to London, and then, in a day or so, to the Continent.

All was arranged. She had not been consulted in any way. Beaumont Chase had simply informed her of his plans.

"It is time to start, miss."

Kitty was seated in a quiet corner of the garden, when Julie's voice startled her.

The maid was already dressed.

Kitty rose without a word, and, entering the house, passed through to the front hall.

Outside, she beheld a carriage and pair. It was unadorned. There was no gay, white ribbon fluttering from the coachman's whip, no rosettes on the horses' heads.

Kitty was glad of this.

As she stepped out of the front door, which a footman, with impassive face, held for her, a man appeared at her side. It was Pelham Webb.

No words passed between them, but she permitted him to hand her into the carriage.

Julie followed, and then Pelham Webb himself.

A footman closed the door, and the carriage began to move down the long drive.

During the short journey to the church, Kitty sat motionless, a fixed, hard look on her pale face.

The carriage stopped at the church.

A few villagers had gathered outside, eager and curious, but there were not many, for in the main the secret had been well kept.

Very few of those who saw Kitty's pale, girlish face, as she walked along the narrow path from the gate to the church door guessed that she was a bride.

As for Kitty, a mist seemed to envelope her, and she was hardly conscious of anything until she stood at the altar, with Beaumont Chase standing by her side.

Then suddenly all her senses became once more acutely alert.

She saw everything, and every word uttered by the old clergyman rang clear and distinct in her ears.

She had never read the marriage service, and its solemn significance impressed her deeply as it proceeded, and even filled her with a nameless fear.

"Into which holy estate these two persons come now to be joined. Therefore, if any man can show just cause why they may not be lawfully joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace."

As these words, solemnly spoken, fell upon her ears, a wild momentary hope leaped up within Kitty's breast.

Surely, surely even now, at the eleventh hour, some voice would be uplifted to save her, some stern command would ring out, forbidding this hateful sacrifice!

But there was only silence—silence of barely a second's duration, and then the clergyman's voice sounded once more.

Now the voice was addressing her:

"Wilt thou obey, and serve him, love, honour . . . so long as ye both shall live?"

Her voice did not falter as she made the response.

And now the man by her side had taken her hand, and now she felt the ring slip on to her finger, and at that moment it seemed to her that her whole self, body and soul, had passed from her own keeping into possession of another.

She was kneeling, and the man—her master—was kneeling by her side.

(Continued on page 6.)

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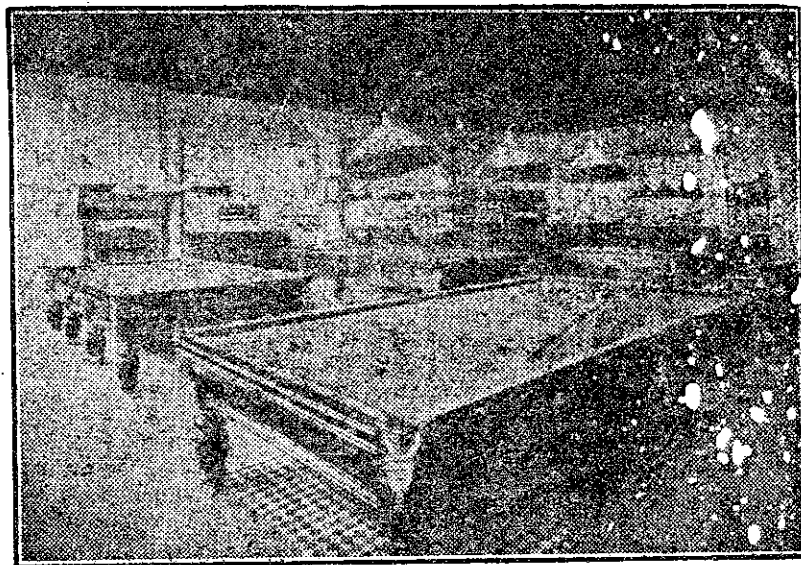
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CIVIC BILLIARD ROOM.

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(Above "The Digger.")

EVERY ATTENTION AND CIVILITY.



BILLIARD NOTES.

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

AN IN-OFF BY MEANS OF A POWERFUL TOP SHOT.

The white ball once more over a top pocket, but this time there is still less room between the cushion and the ball, the intervening space measuring from 3-32nds to 1-8th of an inch less than the diameter of the ball. In this position, though the in-off cannot be got by means of the squeeze shot previously described, it can be made by means of one of the most beautiful shots in the game of billiards, and one that, moreover, prevents no insuperable difficulties to a very ordinary player; the only things required being ability to strike a ball very forcibly indeed in conjunction with plenty of top. Any number of players who seldom or never make breaks over 30 can strike with tremendous force, and anyone who can do this will be able to get this extraordinary-looking shot. In playing this stroke, aim should be taken straight at the pocket, and as much top as possible imparted to the cue-ball; for, although the shot could not be got by means of top only, top is really the chief essential in the making of the stroke. When the stroke is played at a very great pace, a momentary jam takes place just for the instant that the

cue-ball is wedged between the object-ball and the cushion; but the force of the impact causes the cue-ball to be thrown back several inches, and more or less on the line by which it travelled to the pocket. The strong forward rotation which has, however, been developed in the cue-ball by means of the top imparted to it, very quickly arrests its course away from the pocket, and then, still under this powerful influence the cue-ball rushes back to the pocket in a wonderful manner. Of course, I don't mean to say that the shot is a certainty for anyone who can strike a ball very hard and with plenty of top; for, even though the stroke be so well played that the cue-ball rushes forward again after having been kissed back some distance, it will not always enter the pocket. Sometimes it will strike one cushion, sometimes the other; but should it strike the angles of the pocket, it will almost always wriggle in.

The stroke is one that is well worth going for by any player with plenty of power of cue for a strong shot, and to anyone who has never seen the stroke before, the action of the cue-ball in finding the pocket after having been thrown back some distance will appear to be truly marvellous. As a rule the cue-ball will be thrown back from three to six inches; but I once saw a gentleman who had never made a bigger break than 30 play this in-off when the balls were in a favourable position for the stroke, and get it after his ball had been thrown back fully twelve inches.

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