

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 Wimmerleigh; 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 Wimmerleigh. 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.

A great wave of pity swept through the young man as he held his father, once so strong, now crushed and broken, enduring indescribable tortures at the hands of the unspeakable Jole.

With a short laugh, he stepped forward to the centre of the room.

"I am sorry to spoil this dramatic scene, gentlemen," he said, with a reckless toss of his head, "but I have had enough of this nonsense. Jole defended me at my trial, and he means well. He wants to help me, but I don't require his services

any longer. The game is up. I confess all. It was I who killed Lord Haverham."

THE JUDGE REPLIES.

Dick Foster's self-accusation, so calmly made, had a startling effect upon all present.

Beaumont Chase, who had his back turned, swung sharply round, dropped his newly lighted cigarette, and stared fixedly at the young man, a new interest in his sleepy, dark eyes.

Sir John Millbank, who had sunk into a chair apparently on the verge of physical and mental collapse, sat up as though galvanised. The colour returned to his pallid cheeks, and the fire to his weary eyes.

Once more the grim, fighting expression gave strength and virility to the lined and haggard old face.

But he did not speak. With a steady-searching gaze, his lips tightly compressed, he surveyed his son in silence.

"The Millbank blood!" The words formed themselves in his brain, though he did not utter them. "My son! And he knows the truth! He is lying, he is condemning himself to the lifelong torture of a prison-cell, and he is doing it to save me. He knows! And to think I drove such a son from my roof by a mad and cruel blow. I have been blind, blind!"

His thoughts went back to that scene when the schoolboy, proud and defiant, stood before him with the livid mark of the whip-lash on his face.

But still he did not speak, nor did his grim, hard face, so long schooled to impassivity, betray by a single tremor the agony and remorse that seethed within his breast.

It was Kitty who broke the spell that seemed to have fallen upon them all.

She gave one startled look at Dick, and then flew to him, her eyes sparkling and her face aglow.

He tried not to meet her gaze and made an effort to pass out of the room, but she clung to him, detaining him and looked up eagerly into his pale, agitated face.

"Oh, Dick!" she cried. "You killed him! You really killed him! And it was to save me. You know I hated him, and rather than let him have me and make me miserable you killed him. Oh, Dick, how—how splendid!"

The climax was so unexpected that everyone gave a jump, and Beaumont Chase uttered a sound that had a deplorable resemblance to a laugh.

"Take me away," he said, in a low voice, to the officer by his side. "I can stand no more of this. Take me away."

Inspector Fenn, bewildered and confused by the turn of events, was grateful for a definite suggestion, and was quick to act upon it.

Gently, but with great firmness and decision, he drew Kitty aside.

"Please be calm, miss. You are doing no good. You can do nothing," he said gently.

Kitty flung out her arms desperately in the direction of her lover, who was moving towards the door.

"Oh, Dick! Is that true? Can I do nothing?" she cried wildly.

He had reached the door now, but he paused for a moment, and, turning his head, looked at her gravely.

"Nothing, dear," he said, in a low but clear voice. "There is a barrier between us that nothing can break down. If I were a free man, I could not marry you. Fate has been very cruel to us, my darling, but we must each face what lies before us with courage. You must put me out of

your life. I never ought to have come into it. Try and be happy. Time cures all things, they say. God bless you! I—" His voice faltered, and then, burying his face in his hands, he staggered out of the room.

Kitty darted forward, a pitiful cry on her lips, but on reaching the door, she found it locked on the outside.

Swiftly she turned and faced them all. Her bosom was heaving, and her eyes ablaze.

"Can none of you help him? Can none of you save him?" she cried scornfully. "You know he is a better man than any of you. What he did for me. Would you do as much for any woman? Would any one of you? He shall not spend his life in prison. Daddy, you will do something!"

The old judge moved to her side, and taking her hand, patted it soothingly.

"Yes, child, of course, everything will be done," he said quietly. "But now you must be calm. Say nothing more. It is so easy to say too much."

Still holding her hand, he turned his eyes upon Jacob Jole.

There was mockery as well as contempt in his cold, steely gaze.

Mr Jole had so far remained dumb with consternation and dismay.

With infinite pains, he had collected a number of remarkable facts and built up a strong circumstantial case against Sir John Millbank.

The evidence he had so laboriously acquired satisfied his own mind that the old judge was closely concerned with the death of the late Lord Haverham. Dick's confession, however, had staggered him, and all his elaborate theories began to topple about his ears.

He was utterly bewildered, and could see no explanation of the mystery anywhere.

Then the judge addressed him in that cold judicial tone which frequenters of the Old Bailey knew so well.

"You have made a serious charge against me, Mr Jole. Of course, you know that having made that charge before witnesses, you must now go on with it and give me the opportunity of refuting it in open court. Unless you commence proceedings forthwith—let us say within the next three days—I shall take action against you for attempted blackmail, and, incidentally, your name will be removed from the rolls. You may now go."

Mr Jole's puffy face grew very red, and he began to splutter excitedly and angrily, but meeting the judge's cold, merciless gaze, his courage failed him, and he collapsed.

"This isn't the last word, my lord," he contrived to say, but his voice sounded thin and hysterical.

Then he took a step towards the door, but suddenly remembering it was locked, he swung round with an almost ridiculous petulance, and strode out through the still open French window into the garden.

Sir John Millbank gave an involuntary sigh of relief, his stern expression relaxed, and the look of weariness returned to his eyes.

"I am tired," he said, almost in the tone of a child as he looked down at Kitty. "Let me go to bed."

"One minute, Sir John, I will not detain you longer. But there is one thing I must know before we go to bed to-night."

It was the quiet voice of Beaumont Chase.

His presence had almost been forgotten by the other two, but now they both looked at him.

In his quiet, self-possessed demeanour there was something which somehow inspired fear.

Kitty felt it, and so did the judge. The old man's grip tightened on the girl's hand.

The millionaire took a step towards them, but without looking at Kitty, fixed his eyes upon the judge's careworn face.

"Sir John," he said quietly, "your daughter has consented to marry me, and she has asked me to fix the date. I have done so. All arrangements are made for the ceremony to take place to-morrow. I wish to know to-night—now—whether she is prepared to keep her promise."

Kitty stared, her mind recalled to matters which had been blotted out by the events of the evening; but before she could say anything the judge answered for her.

Once again the bowed figure stiffened, and the fighting look returned to the old eyes.

(Continued on page 6.)

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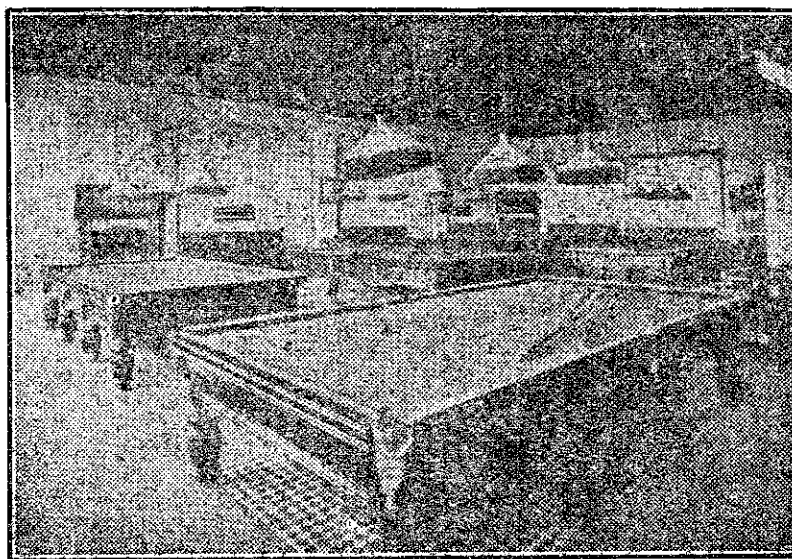
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CIVIC BILLIARD ROOM.

NEWS OFFICE BUILDINGS, DEE STREET, INVERCARGILL.

(Above "The Digger.")

EVERY ATTENTION AND CIVILITY.



BILLIARD NOTES.

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

An in-off from baulk when the white is situated on the lower angle of a centre pocket. Such a stroke is always very uncertain even with the very best players, and for ordinary players it would be nothing more or less than a fancy stroke with long odds against its coming off. The stroke played in exactly the same way in every detail as regards line of aim, strength of stroke, side used, etc., would in all probability vary in result if attempted on two different tables owing to the difference that would most likely exist between the cushions and even on the same table a difference in strength or the unintentional use of a slight amount of side would show a considerable difference in results between two strokes that to all appearances were identical.

I have simply given the stroke as an example of what is on the way of an in-off and I have more than once seen a good amateur increase a big break by getting this stroke when nothing else except potting the white was at all on. In the ordinary way, however, such a stroke is not worth going for.

A STRONG RUN-THROUGH IN-OFF.

A position for a run-through, the object white being dead on the cushion, and the cue-ball only an inch or two away from the cushion. Were the cue-ball a few inches farther away from the cushion, the stroke would be the ordinary run-through, correctness of hitting being the only essential. There would be no possibility of a kiss marring the stroke, for owing to the

object-ball being hit full, or nearly full, it would always come well away from the cushion. When, however, the cue-ball is much behind the object-ball, the full contact that the stroke demands will naturally cause the object-ball to travel towards the pocket in a line so close to the cushion that it will always strike the lower angle of the pocket, and at a point very near the fall of the slate. If the run-through were played in the ordinary way—that is, with only medium strength, one of two things would happen. Either the object-ball, after striking the angle, would fall into the pocket, or else it would rebound from the angle and be met by the oncoming cue-ball, and the kiss would, of course, make the stroke a failure.

Instead, therefore, the stroke should be played with considerable strength, so that the speed at which the object-ball strikes the opposing angle will not only prevent it from falling into the pocket, but will also cause it to be thrown from the lower on to the upper angle whence it will run down the table, leaving the oncoming cue-ball free ingress to the pocket. The cue-ball should be struck above the centre with pocket side, and it will run along the cushion either straight into the pocket or, should it strike the lower angle, the side—which, though check side at the moment of striking the object-ball will be running side when the ball strikes the opposing angle—will carry it into the pocket. When playing the stroke into a top pocket, the object-ball should be kept out of baulk, but if the stroke be played with even more strength than is necessary, and on a table with fast cushions, the ball will often go into baulk and remain there.

Clocks to the number of 260,884 were exported to England by Germany in the first two months of this year.

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