

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.

Beaumont Chase remained seriously thoughtful for a while. Then he smiled again.

"Look here, Mr Jole," he said quietly, "I am a plain man, and I always put my cards on the table, face upwards. For reasons of my own, I want to get a hold of Sir John Millbank. You have certain documents, certain evidence you have collected. That evidence now appears to be worthless. So it is to you. You can't get a man like Millbank. He is too big for you. Still, you have certain evidence which appears to incriminate him."

"I have evidence which, if properly used, will hang him!" cried Jole.

"Good! What do you want for it?"

TWO ROGUES MAKE A DEAL.

Into the cold and colourless eyes of Mr Jacob Jole there came an eager light, and his puffy, fleshy face assumed an expression of indescribable cunning.

A moment ago he was beaten and humiliated. Now he saw a chance of snatching victory out of the very jaws of defeat, or, at the very worst, of saving something from the wreck.

He made a few rapid mental calculations before he spoke.

"You are a rich man, Mr Chase," he said at length.

"Yes; I have a great deal of money. Everyone knows that," replied the millionaire frankly.

"The evidence I have accumulated has cost me a great deal of trouble and a great deal of expense—" began Jole cautiously, when the other cut him short.

"Suppose we dispense with preliminaries," observed Beaumont Chase, in the languid tone of one who is rather bored.

"I never bargain; I cannot afford the time. When I want a thing, I make an offer for it—a generous offer. If the other man won't sell, I dismiss the matter from my mind. I am going to make you an offer. You can take it or leave it. But first I must know the quality of the goods you have to sell. Tell me, what reason have you for thinking that Sir John Millbank had anything to do with the death of Lord Haverham?"

"If I tell you that I shall give away my whole case," said the other cunningly.

"Why not?" retorted the millionaire coolly. "Tell me what you know, and I will pay you according to the value of your information."

"I have only your word for that. Why should I trust you?"

"Because you can't do anything else. You know very well you can't fight Judge Millbank. He knows the game a jolly sight better than you do. Besides, he is one of His Majesty's judges, and you are just a sharp solicitor with a doubtful reputation. Pardon me, but we are talking business, and we want to get at the facts. I am concealing nothing. I want to get a hold on Sir John Millbank. You say you have information which would enable me to do that. Give me the information, and I will pay you well."

"What do you mean by 'well'?"

"Two thousand pounds."

Jacob Jole's eyes glistened, but not otherwise did he betray his satisfaction.

"Not enough," he said shortly.

"It is my offer," replied the millionaire, and then he yawned.

Mr Jacob Jole rose, buttoned up his coat.

"Very well! I'm sorry, but there's nothing doing," he said emphatically.

At the same time he strode briskly towards the door. On reaching it, however, he glanced back swiftly over his shoulder.

Mr Beaumont Chase was lighting another cigarette.

Mr Jacob Jole shrugged his shoulders, and, returning, dropped into his chair again.

"All right," he said, with a short laugh. "I accept. Ready cash, of course?"

"My cheque."

"I suppose that will have to do, but I am relying absolutely on your honour."

A faint smile played about the millionaire's mouth.

"That is so," he answered coolly. "Now, what do you know? What have you found out? You did not make that charge against Millbank without having something up your sleeve. What is it?"

"If I satisfy you that the judge was in some way concerned in the death of Lord Haverham, you will pay me two thousand pounds? Is that it?"

"Yes."

"You don't want proof that would satisfy a court of law?"

"No; satisfy me, and you get the money."

"Very well; that's a bargain. On the night of August 15th last, nearly a year ago, the late Lord Haverham gave a dinner-party at his country house, Rivercourt. During the evening, after dinner, Lord Haverham retired to write some letters. He went to a room known as the Blue Room. Half an hour later a servant heard a sound like the opening of a window, and went to the room. He found his master dead on the floor and a man escaping by the window. He gave the alarm, and the man was caught in the grounds. That man was Richard Foster. He was brought to trial before Judge Millbank himself, and found guilty. The judge broke down at the trial. Briefly, those are the facts?"

"Yes."

"Now, you agree with me that Foster did not commit the murder?"

"Yes; I am now convinced he is innocent."

Jacob Jole nodded.

"I came to that conclusion shortly after the trial. Millbank sent for me, and showed a most unusual interest in the case. It was clear to me that he wanted to save the condemned man, if possible. Then Foster escaped, no doubt by the connivance of the judge, and we now find him concealed here."

"Yes, but what made you first suppose—"

"I am coming to that. At my first interview with Millbank he treated me badly, and I began to make inquiries. I wanted to get my own back, you understand. I knew there was some mystery about the whole affair, and I made it my business to find out what it was. With a lot of trouble and expense—I found out exactly what had happened on the night of the murder. I have here the sworn statements of servants and guests, but first I'll give you the facts in outline. Sir John Millbank for some time had been arranging a marriage between his adopted daughter and Lord Haverham. It was all fixed up, when Sir John discovered that Haverham was making advances to a wealthy widow. He discovered this on the very day of the dinner party."

"You are sure of this?"

"Oh, yes; I can produce the widow."

"Well, go on."

"Sir John was determined to have an understanding, but Haverham avoided being alone with him, and after dinner—at exactly twenty minutes to nine, it was—his lordship slipped away on the excuse of writing letters. The rest of the company remained in the drawing-room. Sir John Millbank only remained there, however, for a few minutes. Then he went out into the garden to smoke a cigar. It was one of his own cigars, a special and rather peculiar brand. He was absent nearly half an hour. A few minutes after his return the murder was discovered."

"And you suggest—"

"I will make my suggestion later. For the present I am giving you facts. You will remember I conducted the defence of Foster. Well, Lord Haverham was found dead. On the floor, close to the body, was a half-smoked cigar. No importance was attached to this at the time. It was supposed merely that Lord Haverham had been smoking when he met his death."

"Which is possible."

"Of course; but I have since discovered that Lord Haverham did not smoke cigars. I have also discovered that the half-smoked cigar was that peculiar and special brand favoured by Sir John Millbank."

He paused, and for a moment neither spoke.

Then Beaumont Chase said quietly.

"You can support all this by evidence?"

"Every word of it."

"Your theory then is—"

"My theory is that Sir John during his absence from the drawing-room went to the Blue Room, determined to come to an understanding about the wealthy widow. The two men quarrelled. They came to blows, and Haverham was killed, probably by accident. Millbank returned to the other guests. Then Foster arrived. He had an appointment to meet Miss Kitty Millbank in this very room—"

(Continued on page 6.)

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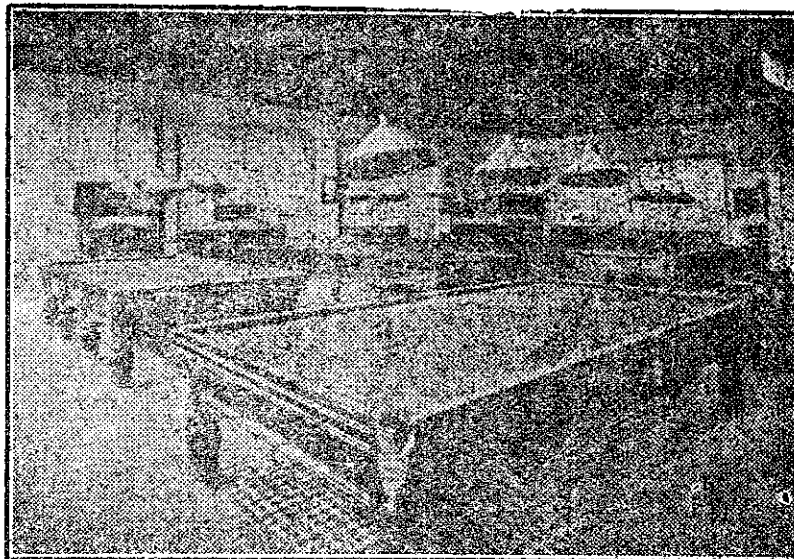
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(Above "The Digger.")

EVERY ATTENTION AND COURTESY



BILLIARD NOTES.

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

When the in-off from the cushion is played with the right-hand side, which is running side off the top cushion, the ball must go clean into the pocket, for if the angle of the side cushion is touched, the side on the ball, which is here check side, will tend to keep the ball out of the pocket. When the stroke is played with right-hand side (running side off the top cushion) the cushion must be struck farther away from the ball than when played with left-hand side, and it is perhaps easier to judge the angle in the former case than in the latter; but the left-hand side has the advantage of being pocket side off the opposing angle. Of course, the stroke could also be played without side at all. The stroke is also on when the object-ball is considerably nearer the top cushion. All in-offs of the nature just described are, however, always more or less difficult, and some practise of them is very advisable.

A DIFFICULT CUSHION IN-OFF.

An example of an in-off that is often on, and while strokes of this nature are always difficult owing to the great judgment required as to where the cushion must be hit (a very slight error will cause the stroke to fail), they are not quite so difficult as they no doubt appear to the majority of players. Either side may be used, or no side at all, though the stroke is best played with check side off the cushion, as this side will be running side off the angle of the side cushion which is the opposing angle. The stroke is also

on with the object-ball much farther away from the side cushion.

The white ball over a top pocket, and it is intended to be in such a position that, whilst a ball held in one's fingers could be passed into the pocket, touching the bed of the table, without disturbing the other ball, there is barely 1-16 of an inch to spare—that is, about 1-32 on each side as the ball is passed through. In playing an in-off with the white ball so located, especially when striking from a position a considerable distance away from the pocket, as though playing to give a three miss. The reason for this is that from a distance it would be very difficult indeed to give a three-miss even if facing the pocket, as the ball would have to go into the pocket, just missing both the side cushion and the object-ball by 1-32 of an inch. If it travelled only a shade to one side of this three-miss path, it would either graze the side cushion and then graze the ball, or else finely touch the ball in the first instance, in either case finding the pocket. If any player doubt this, let him try this stroke a dozen times, playing from a distance, and see how often he can give a three miss, and he will be surprised at the result. If, on the other hand, a player tried to play such a stroke by first striking the cushion, there would always be a probability of the in-off being missed owing to the object-ball being struck too full.

When the stroke is played from the D, no part of which is facing the opening of the pocket, the space between the object-ball and the opposite cushion may be slightly increased without much fear of a three miss being given. Especially will this be the case when playing from the end of the D, on the same side of the table as the pocket played for.

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