

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.

Dick stared at the letter which was tossed over to him, and then picked it up almost reverently with a hand that trembled.

Somehow he staggered out into the street.

Then standing unmoved in the jostling crowd he tore open the envelope and read:

"Dear Mr Foster,—Daddy is very, very ill. He wants to see you. He keeps asking for you. You must please come at once.—Yours sincerely,

"Kitty Chase."

THE JUDGE SPEAKS.

For a moment Dick Foster stared at the letter, scarcely believing his eyes. Judge Millbank was ill, and wanted to see him.

"You must please come at once."

When she wrote those words, Kitty was not thinking of him or of their young love-dream, now for ever shattered.

All her thoughts were doubtless concerned with the old man, who had been more than a father to her and whom she loved with more than a daughter's love.

Dick's thoughts now also turned to that same old man.

The young man's memory went back to his boyhood days. Once again he recalled the scene when he and his father stood face to face.

He saw the whip in his father's hand, he felt the lash across his cheek.

Dick sighed. Many years had passed, and much had happened since that day when he left his home, and with bitterness in his heart went to a foreign land to fight his way alone.

He had sworn that he would never acknowledge John Millbank as his father again. So far he had kept his vow, and under another name had fought his lonely battle.

He would keep his vow to the end, he told himself, but there was no longer any bitterness in his heart.

His father was ill, perhaps dying, and he had sent for him.

It was a summons which could not be ignored.

Nevertheless, it was with mingled feelings that Dick made his way to the house in Kensington Park Gardens.

He hoped Kitty would not be there.

On his arrival, he was admitted by a grave old butler, who betrayed extreme agitation on hearing his name.

"Thank heaven you have come, sir!" he exclaimed impulsively. "For the last three days Sir John has never ceased to ask for you. He gets no rest, and he grows weaker every day. This way, sir! I will let the nurse in attendance know you are here."

Dick was shown into the sombre library.

As soon as he was left alone he recognised the room.

It was here that grim interview had taken place between him and the judge, shortly after his conviction.

Dick Foster drew a deep breath as he recalled the scene. He had not faltered then; he would not falter now.

A sound of someone approaching outside the room made him turn quickly and look towards the door.

The nurse was coming to conduct him to the sick-room for yet another interview with Sir John Millbank.

"This shall be the last," muttered Dick to himself. "Yes, after to-day, it will be best for us both that we should never meet again. We have brought too much trouble into one another's lives."

Then the door opened softly, and someone entered, but it was not the nurse.

The girl who stood there on the threshold, with her pale, pathetic face turned towards him, was Kitty, the wife of Beaumont Chase.

For a moment neither spoke, but stood motionless, looking at one another.

Then the girl's lips moved.

"You have come," she said tremulously.

"Yes; you sent for me."

The girl flushed, and then answered hurriedly, and with some confusion:

"Sir John sent for you. He wants to see you. I don't know why, but he can think of nothing else. When you did not come, I feared for his reason. He is now asleep, but he will soon wake. He never sleeps for more than a few minutes at a time. You will wait?"

There was an eager, almost desperate, note in her voice as she uttered the last words, and Dick, looking into her pale, haggard face, was deeply moved.

"Yes, I will wait, of course," he answered. "But you are ill!" he added anxiously. "The strain of nursing Sir John is too much for you. You must get help and rest, and—"

He stopped abruptly, checked by the look in her eyes. It was a look not so much of weariness as of fear and hopelessness.

A wild desire took possession of him to take her in his arms and comfort her, and to tell her, in passionate, burning words, that he would defend her against all the world.

As he fought against the mad impulse, his face became deadly white, and beads of sweat came out on his forehead.

"Kitty," he said tremulously, "you are not happy. That—that man! He has been bothering you?"

She shook her head dumbly and drew back a pace, as though aware of the temptation which assailed him.

Then with an effort she continued to speak:

"No. Mr Chase has—has been very kind. I have not seen him since—since that day. He has promised— But—oh, Dick, I am afraid! He is near at hand. He sends me flowers and chocolates and costly presents every day. I feel his eyes are upon me. I feel he is watching, and waiting—waiting—"

Dick Foster, shaken to the very centre of his being, staggered forward, and seized her trembling hand.

"My child—my child!" he murmured brokenly. "If I could only help you! If I only knew what to advise! I will see him—I will reason with him! I—"

He was interrupted by the loud and frantic ringing of a bell, which with startling suddenness awoke the echoes of the house in a prolonged and clattering volume of sound.

With a low cry of fear the girl seized Dick's arm and clung to him.

And so they stood, staring through the open doorway, and he still held her hand.

They were both dazed, neither realising what had happened, but both conscious of impending disaster.

They heard the street door open, and then a sudden outbreak of excited speech.

No, sir, I will inquire. You cannot, sir? I cannot permit you to enter until— Sir, it is outrageous! I—"

"Out of the way! Do you hear? I tell you I saw him come in! I saw him! He's here, the treacherous scoundrel, and, by Heaven, I'll find him!"

"Really, sir—"

"Get out of my way, you fool!"

There was a weak cry of almost hysterical protest in the voice of the old butler, and then the sounds of rapidly approaching footsteps along the corridor outside the library.

The next moment Beaumont Chase, his face inflamed and his dark eyes ablaze, strode into the room.

"Ah, as I expected! You hypocritical cur!" he cried furiously. "All your fine sentiments come to this. You pretended to serve me—to give me good advice, and all the time it was a trick so that you could keep me out of the way while you—"

"That is not true!"

Dick Foster was very white, but he was now quite calm, and he did not flush as he confronted the infuriated man.

"Liar!" snarled Chase, his rage now utterly beyond his control.

"It is not true," repeated Dick quietly.

"I beg of you to be silent, lest you say something which you will afterwards bitterly regret. Already you have spoken words which are an insult to your wife. I came here to-day, not to see her, but to visit Sir John Millbank, who lies seriously ill in the house."

The millionaire laughed bitterly.

"To see Millbank—you, to see the great judge? Bah! Do you think me a fool! I don't believe a word of it. It is a trick, a conspiracy between you and Kitty. Well, this ends it. I will be fooled no longer. Kitty, put on your things, and don't waste time! In ten minutes, you leave this house with me."

Kitty stood rigid, like a figure carved in marble, unable to move or speak.

It was Dick who stepped forward and confronted Beaumont Chase.

"That is impossible," he said quietly but firmly, while he looked steadily into the other's eyes. "You undertook to permit your wife to remain with her father until he was well enough to dispense with her services. You must keep your promise. You will certainly gain

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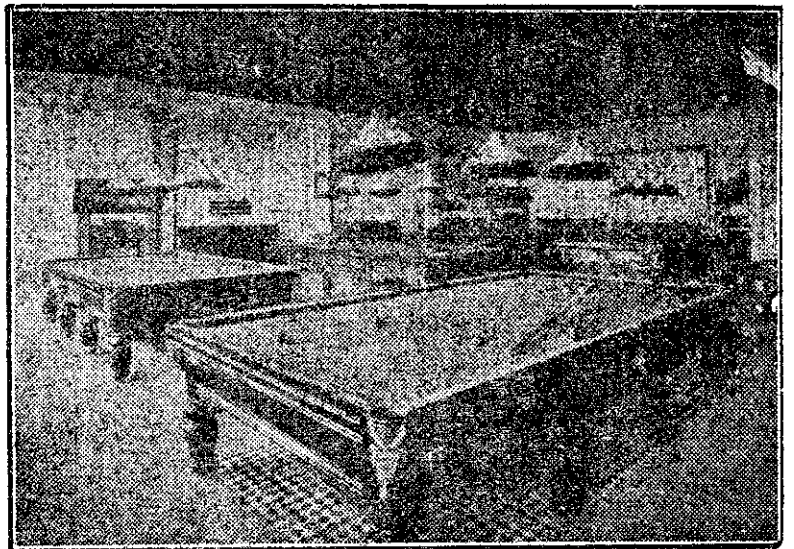
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CIVIC BILLIARD ROOM.

NEWS OFFICE BUILDINGS, DEE STREET, INVERCARGILL.

(Above "The Digger.")

EVERY ATTENTION AND CIVILITY.



TOWN COUNCIL.

SEWERAGE LOANS.

EXTRACT FROM ENGINEER'S REPORT.

Sewerage Loans: The position in regard to these loans works is as follows:—
No. 1 Area Loans: Authorised by rate-payers £34,000. Total cost £31,000, balance unexpended £3,000. The work in this area is now completed. No. 2 Area Loan: Authorised £28,000. Total expenditure £28,200. After deducting refunds, Loans No. 3, 4, and 5 for expenditure incurred in providing septic tank No. 2, larger intercepting sewers and deeper trenching to permit of suburban areas coming in; I estimate the additional cost of completing this area will be £4,500.
No. 3 Area Loan: Authorised £25,000. Estimated additional cost to carry out the work £15,000.

No. 4 Area Loan: Authorised £12,500. Additional amount required £3,500.

No. 5 Area Loan: Authorised £13,000. After allowing for works already completed in this area, an additional amount of £5,500 will be required. New subdivisions Lennel and Eastend not included in the original loans, £2,700; No. 3 septic tank and outfall, £3,000; additions on present loans for reticulation, £33,000, plus allowing loan netting £95; £1,935; 1st year's interest and sinking fund 6½ per cent., £2,640; total, £42,275 less £2,600 in hand on No. 1 Loan after deducting above charges. Total new loan required, £39,675.

Since the original estimates were prepared on which the loans were raised, the following increased cost of labour, tools and materials have taken place: Labour 55 per cent; Pipes 100 per cent; Timber 105 per cent; Cement 50 per cent; Gravel 40 per cent; Oil, for lighting 300 per cent; Tools 110 per cent; Castings 30 per cent; Bricks 95 per cent; Carting 50 per cent.

nothing by breaking it. How can you propose, even though you are her husband, to force this young girl, against her will, to leave her father when he is lying ill, perhaps on the point of death? Are you quite mad?"

"No, Mr Dick Foster, smooth-tongued trickster and ex-convict; I have come to my senses! Henceforth, I will take care that you interfere no further in my affairs. But before we part, let me tell you what I think of you. You are a rogue and a liar! Not one word you have uttered is true. You came here to see my wife—"

"It is false!"
Beaumont Chase turned quickly, for the voice came from behind him, and then he gave a start at what he saw.

In the doorway stood a tall, emaciated figure, clad in a long dressing-gown.

It was Judge Millbank, but so dreadfully altered as to be almost unrecognisable.

There was a pause of several moments, and then the judge's hollow voice was again heard:

"Mr Chase, if you have anything to say in this house, you will say it to me. What that young man has told you is true. He came here to-day at my request, not to see the lady who is unfortunately your wife, but to see me."

"It is a lie," cried Chase vehemently. "What business has he with you? He is a gaolbird, a worthless vagabond of no account. Why should he come to see you?"

Judge Millbank seemed to gather his failing strength by one desperate effort.

His emaciated figure became erect, his old eyes seemed momentarily to regain their ancient fire, and his voice rang out proudly:

"Because he is my son!"

(To be continued.)

Sir Auckland Geddis states that Canada is in the unique position of being able to act as interpreter between the United States and Britain.

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