



DISPERSIA CURE

The Weekly Post.

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Lady Stalland's Diamond.

(Continued from last week.)

He took the diamond from its hiding-place, and gazed at it with eyes of longing and despair. Its value in thousands was nothing to him. How gladly would he have signed a cheque for the full amount, or for any amount if by doing so he might have released himself from this painful and dangerous dilemma! How cheerfully would he have hurled the sparkling stone into the mazes of the shrubbery, if that would have enabled him to sleep once more in peace! But he must keep it now, though its possession must inevitably bring him to confusion. What a conspiracy of circumstances it was!

"It is hidden, I expect, somewhere about the house," thought Mr. Fitchett, basing his decision upon a long experience. "At any rate, I must get a look at this man at once. If he's the one I fancy, well, things are likely to get straight very soon."

After clearing up every point which seemed in the slightest degree hazy, he whiled away the probable time of Mr. Fitchett's return, and had decided to get a quiet look at him from the shrubbery as he came in. Then had followed his meeting with the bishop, and its interesting results.

It was Mr. Fitchett's opinion that the most glib of all earth's creatures was the human tongue. He did not doubt that the bishop was like the others of his class. He regarded him now with a great deal of contempt, a little admiration, a fair amount of pity.

"You are a good man, my lord," he murmured, with a curious smile, as he made his way back to the house. "You are a good man, but you are very soft. As for you, friend Martin, your game is up. You managed the bishop right enough, but you never thought of Fitchett. Wait until this morning and you'll see him!"

with himself once more, and felt a little easier in his mind. Martin was surely safe now, for a time at least, and before that time had expired, he would have made everything right. By to-morrow evening he would be at home, writing that letter to Stalland. The inspector did not follow the bishop for some time, recalling the conversation which had just ended, and trying to discover how it bore upon the case. In about five minutes he had fitted it nicely into the framework of his theories.

"Martin, my friend," he said to himself, "you are a little smarter than I thought. You have managed to get round on your feet, and got him to make things easy for you. It was a good idea—a very good one indeed!"

The inspector's conclusion was a very natural one. On his arrival at Stalland House, Sir Edward had informed him thoroughly as to all the circumstances of the case. In addition to this he had, perhaps unconsciously, communicated to him his own suspicions, which lay in the direction of Martin. The detective perceived that they were not without reason; and when he had yet to come upon this tangled skein.

He had never expected a refusal to answer. Denial would have been natural, and he had been fully prepared to hear a long, tissue of falsehoods and pretensions. He had been still more prepared to witness a collapse, a confession, and a pitiful appeal for mercy. But to meet him in any other way, and to be told that the whole of the evidence was purely circumstantial. He watched the faces and waited, his small blue eyes half closed.

"But Martin isn't a wobbler. He isn't a bit of a wobbler," Fitchett said to himself; "what is this?" Lady Stalland frowned at the child, and Sir Edward turned impatiently. Seeing, however, that he was not to be spoken to, he said nothing. It was the bishop who silenced her by a whisper of "Hush!"

The others had been surprised at her remark, but he had been alarmed. He had come to the conclusion that the game was not yet really over—that the man was prepared to keep silent. He would keep silence, at least, until to-morrow, when all would be set to rights. But the bishop had brushed the thought aside with contempt. He was once again standing on a high ground.

His emotions of the night had culminated in a sudden revival of his fugitive courage. Face to face with the bishop, he became human again. Martin's own it was a revelation, and the revelation at a moment. While his weakness has been without hurt to others he had indulged it; but now he was in a delicate position, almost into evasions, shufflings, almost into baseness. Now he saw another man accused in his stead, and he was forced to prepare to own his error. In spite of his pallor, he had never been so like a bishop, nor so manly.

"I am sorry," he began—"I am sorry that Martin should have been suspected in connection with the loss of the diamonds. I shall be inclined to have their full effect. Inspector Fitchett heard them with growing uneasiness, the others with surprise. Martin stood up in breathless anxiety. But at that critical moment there came a slow tap, tap, tap from the edge of the table where the bishop stood, and Miss Dugby was heard to exclaim in a loud whisper, "One, two, three!"

one which followed it indicated that there had been a change. "Martin," he said, kindly, "as the man cannot say, I have been thinking about you to-day on Saturday evening. Your words gave me great pleasure, and I shall be glad to try you again."

"As it happens," the bishop continued, "my letter, Gannet, will be leaving at the end of the quarter. If you think you could take his place you may write to the bishop, and he will have mentioned the matter to Lady Stalland already."

And with that the bishop passed on. Martin stood still thinking it over, and the more he thought of it the more astonished he became. Why, the butler at the palace had a house all to himself. A house, of course, meant a wife to keep it; and a wife—But when he hurried away to find Miss Connie's nurse.

The other interview indicating a change before the bishop took place at lunch. The story of the diamond had, of course, to be retold, and Sir Edward concluded the tale with an expression of surprise. "What puzzles me," he said, "is Martin's silence. I can't imagine why he should have refused to answer the question I asked him."

"I shouldn't trouble about that. Perhaps the man was hurt and some people get obstinate when they feel insulted. He felt himself in Fitchett's black book, you know."

The commander's suggestion was generally considered satisfactory, and the matter dropped. Mrs. Dugby, who was again the bishop's neighbor, then turned to another subject. "By the way," she began, "you remember the case we were speaking of the other night? That man has been through the law, and the magistrates, of course that's all nonsense, as you said on Saturday. Circumstances, indeed."

"Indeed!" he said, "What was the result?" "He received his defence," answered Mrs. Dugby, "and he hinted that he was the victim of circumstances. Of course that's all nonsense, as you said on Saturday. Circumstances, indeed!"

CHAPTER V.

"Circumstance is the test of a man's quality; his conduct in a crisis the standard of his value."

The bishop looked up from his paper and smiled. They were both sitting on the lawn seats.

"What is the matter?" he asked. "It is very poor."

"It is absurd," said the bishop. "Absurd means that it is not to be taken seriously. It is a man's output, and rising hastily, he stepped into the drawing-room to replace the volume upon a table."

Commander Digby, as usual, was there and looked up as he entered. The bishop gave him a glance of doubt and questioning, not unmingled with a little curious but pardonable resentment. He remembered that this fellow-guest had checked his plans more than once by his apparent desire to lounge in that corner chair as often as long as he possibly could. Such conduct seemed utterly thoughtless and unreasonable.

But now the commander rose with a little gesture of relief. "What do you mean?" asked the bishop, in natural surprise. "I am presuming to observe, my theory, answered Commander Digby, "it's about that diamond."

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Advertisement for Castoria, featuring a signature and the text '900 DROPS CASTORIA FAC-SIMILE SIGNATURE OF CHARLES H. FITCHETT'. It describes the medicine as a vegetable preparation for assimilating food and regulating the bowels.

Advertisement for 'That Tired Feeling' featuring an illustration of a horse and the text 'Dick's Blood Purifier restores this lost vitality'. It claims to be a food for the blood and is available in 50-cent and 25-cent packages.

Advertisement for J.J. Wetherup, a dealer in genuine bell organs and pianos, including Mendelssohn, Gerhard Heintzmann, and Beattie Bicycles. It lists the address as 307 North of W.M. Robinson's Store.

Advertisement for Epps's Cocoa, described as a grateful and comforting beverage. It is sold in 1-lb. tins and is available from Whitehall Wicks Co. in Toronto, Canada.

Advertisement for 'We're Humming with Business' featuring a list of services including kiln drying of lumber, sawing, dressing, and planing, offered by Geo. Ingle.

Advertisement for Riggs' Tobacco and Cigar Store, located at Kent St., Lindsay. It offers a variety of choice tobaccos, fine cigars, and large assortment pipes, along with jewelry and musical instruments.