

THE DIAMOND BUTTON

FROM THE DIARY OF A LAWYER AND THE NOTE BOOK OF A REPORTER.

By BARCLAY NORTH

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CHAPTER XV.

TOM PURSUES A CLEW WITH SUCCESS.

"HEN Tom Bryan and Tall fellow, slim, dark haired, dark eyes, handsome, swells—a kind of a duds fellow." "Well, that does kind of answer to him." "Yes, by thunder! That's just like him. You see, he didn't get a suit a size too large for him and didn't buy the vest?" "Well, no, I can't recollect that, and I don't think—I know we sold a vest with every suit. You see it would cost the same whether they took the vest or not." "If he was up to the game I think he would make any difference about the price. I say, would you recollect his face if you saw a photograph of him?" "I think it likely, sir." "What day did you sell it to him, can you recollect?" "I can't tell by looking at the sales slip, I always keep the slips." "Do, please." The clerk went off and returned with a handful of papers. Looking them over he finally extracted one. "It was on the 13th, in the afternoon." "Five days before the murder," thought Tom. "I can't tell. I am on to him. Please send these clothes to No. 1,100 East Thirty-first street. I'll pay you for them now."

"This is such a good day's work," said he, when out on the street, "I think I will dine well and at the expense of the paper."

"Am as sharp now as I ever was, only I can't recollect as I used to. That's because I'm getting old." "It's because you are getting your skin full of whisky every day. Now see here. You are a brother of Charles Preston." "Of course I am, or why did he give me money for fifteen years?" "What's the use of our arguing that point? It makes no difference between us whether it was because you were his brother, he has defaced, or because you had a secret of his worth paying for. For all we want, you are." "Well, I was, I tell you." "Never mind, we can establish, by putting your papers and my papers together, that Charles Preston was an assumed name; the reason why he charged it that you were his brother; that he had no relations other than you, and no descendants; and establishing these facts we can take his property. Now, I don't care take the first step before the surrogate until I have seen you have got the story so straight you won't stumble when you go on to the stand." "OK, I'll get it, don't you fear." "Well, I do fear. There is the story of your own life, I have written that, too."

Parker laughed an ugly laugh. "It was a tough job to reconstruct the twenty years of your life you spent between four stone walls." "Hush," said the other old man, "for heaven's sake don't talk of that."

"Well, you served your time out; they can't take you for it again. It was a rocky path that of your life, old man, and I have smoothed it very ingeniously." "Keep quiet!" cried the old man, with an oath, "or I'll kick the whole thing overboard!" "This great had a soothing effect upon Parker.

"Why don't you do it yourself? You are a lawyer."

"There are certain circumstances connected with my professional career which make it advisable for me to keep out of court. But I can't lie here. I've got a great deal to do today. Here are some papers. I want you to sign."

"To be sure, you are a lawyer, only I can't recollect as I used to. That's because I'm getting old." "It's because you are getting your skin full of whisky every day. Now see here. You are a brother of Charles Preston." "Of course I am, or why did he give me money for fifteen years?" "What's the use of our arguing that point? It makes no difference between us whether it was because you were his brother, he has defaced, or because you had a secret of his worth paying for. For all we want, you are." "Well, I was, I tell you." "Never mind, we can establish, by putting your papers and my papers together, that Charles Preston was an assumed name; the reason why he charged it that you were his brother; that he had no relations other than you, and no descendants; and establishing these facts we can take his property. Now, I don't care take the first step before the surrogate until I have seen you have got the story so straight you won't stumble when you go on to the stand."

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