Communed from First Page

find put together the evidence. Those clews had all passed out of his posses-sion now into the hands of the district attorney, all except the chessman and the broken piece of ivory. They had seemed subsidiary to the main crime that had fitted so well to Astray Marsden that he had kept theo to himself, kept them with perhaps the idea that one of these days he might run across the remainder of the set and find out what part? if any, they played in the drama upon which the curtain would then have long since been rung down He recollected that he had placed the pawn in his pocket before he left Norcombe that morning, and almost uncon-

out and gazed at it. Rising suddenly from the table, the girl crossed the room and, taking from the sideboard a sandalwood box inlaid with mother of pearl and ivory, opened it and displayed to Darrent's astonished gaze a set of chessmen of which that

pawn evidently formed a part. "These," she said, "look exactly like the one you have in your hand, Mr. Darrent Do you think that they may help you; that there may be some clew

surprise to answer, slowly took the pieces out and arranged them on the table. There were 31. A red pawn was



others. It was a faccimile. There could "Come, now," said the detective gaintly; "you'd better make a clean set. Then Darrent sureed his attention breast of the whole affair, or you may others. It was a faceimile. There could restments, the carved payedas on hacks of the elephants, the flowing the white queen in his hand and er "There's not much to te cept the red pawn and the white queen. "Yes yes scrap of ivery that he picked up from library fees, fitted it exactly into Astroy come over here'the troken part of the crown. Yes beyand all doubt, this was the set of

to sweep over Imrems. He had be felt. om wasting his sympathy to us putstarted on a fresh track, he had comment to reconsider all his conclusions. yet the very true new step that he had token had only the more deeply emfirmed the familiag evidence that help your case ? Do you think these will

prive anything?" she asked breaking the king parse fore I suswer.

Yes, soything you like anything Where did you get these chessmen?

"I do not know." "Was there no letter of message with

"They were sent to me.

"None," she hesitatingly answers

"Come, come; you must confide the whole truth to me if I am to help you and Astray. When did you recoive

"Two days after the murder ' "How ?" "They came by express

"Have you the wrapper stiff?" "I dare say I can find it. Shall I see?" "One moment. You do not know who cent them?"

"No; but the same morning I had a letter from Astray, written in Chicago, telling me that a small box would come addressed to me; that I was to unpack and take care of it for him until we

Norcombe?'

"You have never seen these changer

about them?" "Never.

"Thank you; that is all. You may now find me the paper in which the box one, if you will " While Miss Kingston went in search

ivory queen and the red pawn in his ther ?" pocket and, laying the rest of the pieces evenly in the box, closed the lid. "Thank you," he said as she returned and gave shim the desired paper "Thank you, and goodby."

"Do you think there is any hope?"

"I cannot tell yet. We must do our best Shall I say anything to Astray for you? I shall see him tomorrow." "Only tell him that I know that he is

innocent. . I know it. "More than I do." muttered Darrent

THE IVORY QUEEN'S SECRET. There was no train back to Barnstaple till late in the afte. on, and Darrent filled in the time with a hearty meal and a long country walk, pendering over the discovery he had made that day and feeling that the latest phase of the case only tended to deepen the evi-dence that had already condemned Astray Marsden to the scaffold.

When at last he found himself alone in the tonin for Barnstapes of drew from his pocket the paper that he had received from Miss Kingston in which the chessmen had been wrighted and scrutinized it carefully. It was an ordinary sheet of coarse brown paper. with an adhesive address label indicat-ing that it had been expressed from rent of words with which he was assatied. 'I have come for two reasons— Barnstaple Jan. 13, 1896.

noker, lighted a cigar and ruminated It was scarcely likely, he felt, that in the time that had elapsed, some six or seven weeks, the express clerks would remember who handed in that parcel or recognize the writing on the label Still, he would go to the express office directly on his arrival in Barnstaple and make inquiries.

Suddenly the train pulled up with a junction, and they stuck for a good quarter of an hour, with the result that when they • 1 get into Barnstaple the express office was closed. He tried to find the clerk, but failed, and then how to kill the 12 hours till 8 next morning became the problem that sorely perplexed him, for he must stop in Baru-staple that night. Suddenly he recalled his friend of the Gaiety theater. From the highly colored placards that decorated the streets and the entrance to the theater he learned that an equally thrilling melodrama to that which was purveyed to the public on his last visit

was in progress. passage again, and the stern janitor conveyed his card to Mr. Ridgeway and sciously he took the little carved piece brought it backed with the message from the manager that be would be on the stage all the evening, but if Mr. Darrent would go in front and see the show Mr. Ridgeway would see him afterward, and on the card was penciled an order for a stall. Darrent glanced at the writing and received his second shock that day, and, instead of accepting the hospitality of Mr. Ridgeway. he paid his money at the door and care-

fully placed the card in his pocketbook With the fall of the curtain Mr. Darrent reached the stage door and a conple of minutes afterward was in the

mager's room again. Mr. Ridgeway motioned him to a seat and awaited the commencement of the conversation, for, while he could not deny that, upon the evidence submitted at the trial, the verdict had been a just one, he did not somehow feel overamiable toward the man who had bit by bis, buils ny biss evidence.

efficacy of setting base the first whot, sinddenly opened fire.

"Why did you pust a last of cheesen to Mins Ethel Singuba. Bideford.
on the 18th of January?" he seled.

The effect upon Mr. Arthur Ridge. way was instantantes and astroish

ing. He simply colleged into the near-est chair and gasped. Here the dickens Never such bow I know I ask you why did you do it!" "I did it for Astray Maraden's sake "Come, come, Mr. Bidgewey; this is a hittle ton thin. It's not o play, you

"As sure as heaven's above us Mr

the white pieces. He scrutinized the find you've put yourself in a very arrived our ranktion." "Has Astray confessed?"

"Never mind what Astray's done "There's aid mach to tell. I always going chap, and so I do now, thind contlines of a scaffold with a daugling you, "said Ridgeway. "So I do now."

"Yes. yes: go on," calmiy interject

"Well the day after the murder

- beking seared and white, and The pawn was cut out of one solid piec chasamen stolen from The Grange. And begged and prayed me to go over to of ivory, with the exception of the flat where had befound them! In the house Nortembe the first thing the next base, which, with a dexceros swist of of the flances of the man now lying morning and to pretend to Dobson, the bis strong fingers, Darrent observed A sudden revulsion of feeling seemed chief of police there, that I was a detective and get him to give me a box of he laid it on one side and picked up the tweet chestraen from the library of The avery queen. The little statue stood trange."

Well, pen did eh ?" "I refused at first but Astray permaded me. He told me it might be a matter of life and douth to him and that he must have those chessmen before any one came from Chicago. said I was the only man who could do fr and the only one he could trust I was on actor and would play the part I could make up so that I should never



be recognized and I'd only have an idiot of a policemen to deal with. He swore to me that he was innocent of the murder, and I believed him." "So you went over to Norcombe and got the chessmen?"

"Well, you did it cleverly, Mr. Ridgeway, but it was not quite so clever to address the box in your own hand-writing to Miss Kingson at Bideford." "I sent it there because I refused to was the address Astray gave me. But how the dickens you found it out"-"Never mind how. I did. Now, Mr. of the paper Darrent calmly slipped the Ridgeway, do you know anything fur Grange, "I'm not going to wait for

"Nothing, upon my soul." upon the position in which he had so and found that that was exactly th suddenly found himself placed and to speculate what his misplaced generosity the paneling. Then, with a portable

"More than I do," muttered Darrent to himself as he walked toward the witness station.

Norcombe, and, having obtained perant a join in the wood could be discerned and, pulling it forward, a panel some visit to Astray Marsden in the jail. The time that had elapsed since his

conviction had already had an effect upon the prisoner. He had grown very ered volume. Darrent took the book out and pushed back the panel; then, sent pale and sallow, his eyes were sunken, and deep black circles showed round them, telling of sleepless nights. Dar- fireplace, proceeded to read rent gazed at him for a few moments without speaking, and Astray glared sullenly book at him, and neither broke the silence. At last Astray found his

"I have come," Darrent answered, striving to keep calm in face of the tor-

a Darrent saft back in his sent in the line Rivi who believes in you still come to say that she believes you innocent, will ever believe you innocent."
Thank God for that?"

"That is my first duty, and I have discharged it, and now I have come to help you if I can."

O'Help me! Listen to him—help me! Haven't you done enough for me al-roady? Haven't you put the rope rounds Suddenly the train pulled up with a my neck? What more can you do, ch?"

jerk. Signals were against them at the Perhaps I can help to take it call

again, if you are only reasonable and will answer a few plain questions." "Well, go ahead There's one consolation-things can't be worse even if you do take down what I say and use it in evidence against me . 15 won't

avail now."

"Why," calmly asked Darrent, "did you instigate Arthur Ridgeway to steal that fex of chessmen from The Grange and send them to Miss King

rent. It was useless teattempt to deny the fact since Derent knew it. "Because I believed they were of the utmost value to me."

"Old Marsden had always, led me to believe they were. He had always told me that there was some secret connected with them that I must one day know, he was gone, especially if he ever died suddenly. When we were good friends and used to play chess together in the old days at The Grange, he would often say as we set out the men. 'Don't forget. Astray, if anything ever happens to me you will find a secret hidden in those pieces, in the ivory queen."

"The ivory queen?" "The white ivory queen. 'When I am gone, Astray, and I may go suddenly. One never knows!' 'He said that?''

"Yes. Why should I lie now? 'When I am gone, you will find a secret in the ivory queen that will explain all that I dare not tell you now.' That's what he said many a time."

"And so, after the murder, you got Arthur Ridgeway to impersonate a desective from Chicago and obtain those chemmen for you and then send them Bideford, where you thought they would be safe?"

"Yes."
"And you do not yet know the se-

and I've never been free an instant

What good could it have done? It bad nothing to do with the murder Leave me, leave me to myself! Fve What's the good? You do not believe it. I've sold the parson here I'm inne cent He does not believe it. All he tays is 'Regent, repent.' I am sick of It all I'm condemned, and I've got to

peace until the end comes! And, despite all Darrent's efforts to get him to talk. Astray Maraden would not open his lips again, would not atter amined the carring. You: a tiny piece liked young Marsten. I teld you that another word, but sat glum and test-had been chipped off, just a little frag when you came before. I always by had been chipped off. just a little fragt when some one hefore. I always be tagn, staring into space with eyes that ment of the delicate loory fligges lies of him and thought him a straight as w nothing unless it was the ghastly

> locked the door, look out the two ivery inch and a half and formed a small cireniar platform upon which the firm

edge all round.
Gripping the base, Darrent swisted it to the right, and the figure anserowed revealing a long narrow cavity. repains the whole length of the hady. of parcomers had been pushed. With the blade of his punknife he carefully withdrow the little aroll, which was shout an inch long by two inches wide and spread it out latere him It was correct with very small writing, and the following inaription

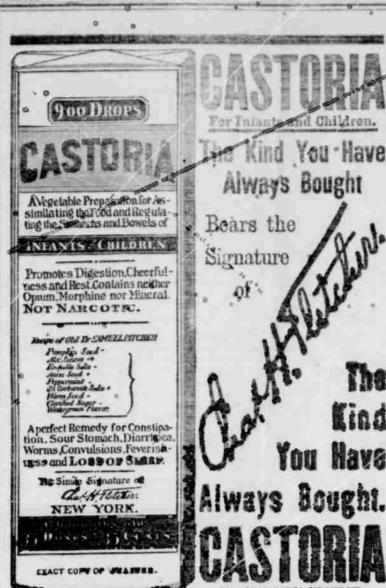
When the full section to the library winton, its took along the Bost will reach at midnight a knot in the wood. Measure from that
host three feet to the west and eight feet to the
north, which will back to the waterest; then
measure as feet up the wall to the carved scroll,
and wall forward. When the full moon stines three Phree times Darrent read the paper

Marsden had hidden all through his tee to cure or refund the money. life, but had wished when he was dead that Astray should know? Was there possibly some clew to the real murderer, something that should tell an avenger where to search for old Marsden's ene my, the deadly enemy that had struck the murderous blow, or was there som concealed wealth lying behind that panel for which Josiah Marsden had een murdered? If he had been mur dered for that wealth, those who had killed him knew where the treasure was hidden and no doubt had stolen it al ready. It was useless to speculate. He must go to The Grange at once, follow keep them in my possession, and that out the instructions of the parchment and see what was the result.

alone he entered the library at The any hocus poeus of moonlight and mid night I'm just going for this orna FACTS "Well, good usest I shouldn't won mental scroll work, and if there's a bit der if you hear from me again." And of it loose I'll find it and what's behind Mr. Darrent strolled down the narrow it too." In the gathering dusk he took picture gallery, with its fresh examples a rule from his pocket and measured six When people are contemplating a trip of vice vanquished and virtue victo- feet from the ground on the portion of rious, leaving Mr. Ridgeway to ponder the wall not covered by the bookcases on behalf of young Marsden might electric lamp and a large magnifying glass, he carefully examined the carv Early next morning Darrent went to ing. Presently he came to a piece where eight inches or ten inches long came with it, disclosing a narrow abace b

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

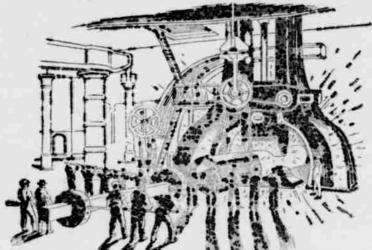
ing himself in one of the corners by the





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wasting diseases, all effects of selfbuse, or excess and in-Three times Durrent read the paper through. What could it mean? What mystery was there hidden behind those dark oak paneled walls in the dreary library at The Grange? Was there some guilty secret stowed away that old for \$2.50; with a written guaran-

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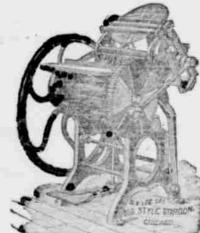
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