

sons, and then rubies were exchanged for necessities.

But Dara Mallin never recovered the shock of his father's loss. Before a year had passed around he had rejoined Mung Ko in the land of shadows.

THE DIAMOND BUTTON

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

By BAROLAY NORTON.

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CHAPTER I. "MURDER! MURDER!"

Instead of striking the track I looked for, I had strayed into a desolate gulch, strewn with the debris of mighty rocks.

HE place was Union square, the time, an hour before the sun had set.

Three men, leaving three different points on the square, met at a little north of the monument of Washington.

When the arm of the iron railing which insures the father of his country the uninterrupted enjoyment of that ride upon which he had loitered long with the air of one who had no purpose in his walk, smoking with hisripy puffs.

The other two walked briskly. But the third, having the shorter distance to go, was near enough to see the man who had come from Fifteenth street and Fourth avenue stop short as he was about to pass the other, catch him by the arm and peer sharply in his face, and heard these words:

"What do you do here, Ho-Ton?" he asked in a shrill, troubled voice. "I went the path to the lower village," I answered. "I have missed it."

"You are far out of your way. You can not reach the upper village. It is better to stay in father's—in our cave again. Come."

I obeyed the word and gesture, and a very few paces brought us through a steep descent on to my old ledge, and thus again into the familiar quarters of Mung Ko's secret home.

My goal of the mine, then, was Mung Ko's son? "Mark!" said he. And a terrified look came upon his countenance.

I listened, but could hear nothing. My senses were less acute than his. "Ten, yes, it is he," he said. "It would, the boy cried, smiting his breast. And his eyes dilated with fear."

"What is your trouble?" I asked, though I could already guess. "Mark, I say, again!" he answered in an agonized wailing lounder. There is fighting below in the valley. Oh, will they kill him?"

Kill the loved and revered phonogian, of whose lapses from orthodox there seems no current suspicion! I thought it very unlikely. Yet the foreboding words of the seer echoed in my memory.

The events went in anxious watching and waiting. It was marvelous how the one touch of nature made us kin. But the boy spoke no word of his past.

When the morning dawned, two anxious faces watched from the friendly veil of the bushwood the head of the great valley. A solitary wayfarer came into view. Battered, slung into exuberant joy, was my companion's accoutrements. "It is my father. He is safe," the poor lad said.

"Oh!" said the sergeant. "Who is Mr. Templeton? What do you know about him?"

"Not very much," replied the bar-keeper. "Comes into my place pretty often. Usually stops in on his way up-town or after a drink. Sometimes comes in at night, but not often. He was in our place half an hour ago."

"Had he been drinking?" "Not much in our place."

"Was there any quarreling among them?" "No, very friendly and jolly."

"Still it might have been one of them who shot him."

"No," said Holbrook, "I saw this man standing on the corner of Fourteenth street and Broadway. He started from them and came this way; the others went down Fourteenth street toward the North river. The arc lights made everything clear to me, and there were few people in the square."

"Yes, that is so," remarked Westing.

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