

# THE MASTER OF MAN:—By Sir Hall Caine

An Outspoken and Moving Study of a Deep Sex Problem by the Noted Author of "The Manxman," "The Deemster," "The Eternal City," "The Woman Thou Gavest Me," Etc.

### THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Victor Stowell, son of the Deemster or Chief Justice of the Isle of Man, is handsome and of fine nature. To his charm, Allick Gell, son of the Speaker of the Manx Parliament, from an escapee, Victor takes the blame of walking with Bessie Colliator, a pretty peasant girl, outside the town, and she does Gell. Fenella, after graduating from college, where she imbibes advanced ideas on the rights of women and the wrongs they suffer from men's laws, takes a post for seven years as the lady warden of a London institution, as she is not sure of her feeling toward Victor. Victor and Allick go holidaying to Douglas, a town on the Isle. Bessie meets Victor and Allick. She gets home late and Dan Baldromme sees her out. Going back to town, she meets Victor, who takes her to his room. In the morning, consciousness strikes her. She wonders how he is to get her home. Fenella comes and she tells her of her passion. Fenella decides to marry her, after she has taken some education at a select school. Fenella comes home and she leaves for her profoundly ravaged. She leads in the woman's rights movement on the Isle and retains Victor to defend a woman who had murdered her husband.

### AND HERE IT CONTINUES

AS a sequel to the Mellish talk during the dinner of the ancient customs of the island. The Deemster, who could have told most, said little, but the Governor spoke of the riots of the Manx people (especially the copper riot when they wanted to burn down Government House), and Janet of the roysters and hafts of the Atholts who kept race horses and fought duels—her mother in her girlhood had seen the blue mark of the bullet on the dead forehead of one of them.

### HALL CAINE

men, the women and the manners! Fenella joined in the talk with great animation, but Stowell was silent and in pain. Here they were, his family and friends, without a suspicion that some day, perhaps soon, he would bring quite another atmosphere into this house, this room of the miller, his wife and his daughter rose before him, and he felt like a traitor.

But it was not until they went into the library (it was library and drawing-room combined) that he knew the full depth of his humiliation. The Deemster, who was by the fire, asked Fenella to sing to them, and she did so sitting at the piano, with Dr. Clucas (who in his youth had been the best dancer in the island) tripping about her with old-fashioned gallantry to find the music and turn over the leaves.

"This is for the stranger," she said



Fenella sang "Allan Water" and "Annie Laurie"

(cutting deeper than she knew), and then followed a series of old Manx ballads, some of them like the wailing of the wind among the rushes on the mounds, and some like the dancing of the water in the harbor before a fresh breeze on a summer day.

Then the doctor brought out from a cupboard a few faded sheets inscribed "Isabel Stowell," and Fenella sang "Allan Water" and "Annie Laurie." And then the Deemster closed his eyes, and it seemed to Victor, who sat on a hassock by his side, that his father's blue-veined hands trembled on his knees.

"And this is for myself," said Fenella, dropping into a deeper tone as she sang: "Less than the weed that grows beside thy door— Even less an I."

said Fenella. And putting something over her head she walked by his side to the door, and on Stowell's arm unasked and keeping step with him.

"I was just wanting a word with you."

"Yes?"

"It's about your father. You must really come back to live with him."

"If he asked—"

"Not to say asked! 'Victor doesn't come to see me very often—that's all.'"

"After this case is over I'll—"

"Do. You can't think how much it will mean to him."

On the way back to Ramsey, by the lamps of the dog-cart opening up the dark road in front of them, Stowell was silent, but the doctor talked continuously, and always on the same subject.

"I've seen something of the ladies in my time, Mr. Stowell, sir, but I really think—yes, sir I really do think—"

and then rapturous praises of Fenella. They sang and talked and talked.

When he struck like minute-bells also.

When he closed the street door to his chambers he found a large envelope in the letter-box behind it. Bessie's note.

As he held it under the gas globe in his cold room the picture gave him a shock. Beautiful! Yes, but there was something common in the beauty which he had never observed before.

His first impulse was to hide the photograph out of sight. But at the next moment he tore open the cedar-wood frame on the mantelpiece, removed the portrait it contained, inserted Bessie's in its place, and then put it on the table by the side of his bed.

"There! That shall be the last face I see at night and the first I see in the morning!"

But oh vain and foolish thought! With the first sleep of the night another face was in his dream.

### CHAPTER XII

#### The Death of the Deemster

The Deemster had not intended to sit at the next Court of General Jail Delivery, and had already arranged for the second Deemster to take his place, but when, next morning at breakfast, he heard from Fenella that Victor was to plead, he determined to preside.

"I must hear Victor's first case at the General Jail," he said.

"We shall have to be careful, then," said Dr. Clucas. "No excitement. Your Honor! No more heart strain."

On the morning of the trial he was up early. Janet heard him humming to himself in the conservatory as he cut the flowers for the vase in front of his young wife's picture. When he was ready to go she helped him on with his overcoat, turning up the collar and putting a muffler about his neck.

And when young Robbie came round with the dog-cart he stepped up into it with surprising strength.

And then Janet, who had smuggled a brandy flask into the luncheon basket at the back of the dog-cart, stood with a swollen heart and watched the old man as he went off in the morning mist, with the awakened rooks cawing over the unseen tops of the trees.

Three hours later, the Deemster arrived at Castletown. The sun was up, and there was a crowd at the castle gate. All hats were off as he passed through the judge's private passage way to the dark robing room with its deeply recessed window. The Governor, in general uniform, was there already, for he sat also in the high court of the island.

A few minutes later they were in

the courtroom. It was densely crowded, and all rose as they entered. But at that moment the Deemster was conscious of one presence only—his own youth in wig and gown (himself as he used to be forty years before) in the curved benches for the advocates immediately below. It was Victor.

Then the prisoner, who was brought in a forlorn-looking creature of three or four and twenty, not without traces of former comeliness, but now a rag of a woman, ill-clad and slatternly.

When asked to plead she said nothing, therefore the customary plea of not guilty was made for her, and without more ado the attorney general embarked on the history of her crime.

It was not a case for refinement; the crime was palpable; it had no redeeming feature, and for the protection of life in the island it called for the extreme penalty of the law.

Then, with the usual long pauses, the woman's story was raked out of the witness-box by her neighbors in the low streets that crept under the Castle walls, the police and the doctor. She had been an orphan from her birth, brought up at the expense of the parish by the woman who had ill-treated her. As a young servant girl she had been "taken advantage of" in the big house she lived in, perhaps by the footman, more probably by the officer of the regiment then garrisoned in the town. Finally she had married the dead man, lived a cat-and-dog life with him, and was a dark record of drink and assaults) and at last stabbed him to the heart in a fatal quarrel and been found standing over his body with a table knife in her hand.

Stowell's cross-examination consisted of three questions only. When the dead man was found had he anything in his hand? "Yes, a poker," said the policeman. When the prisoner was arrested were there any wounds on her? "Yes, three on the head," said the doctor. Were there any wounds on the dead man's body except the one on his chest, which he died? "None whatever."

"Ah!" said the Deemster, and he reached forward to make a note.

**Is Man's Law Too Hard for the Woman in the Case? Is Conscience Enough Punishment for Him, While She Pays the Legal Penalty?**

**In This Frank and Gripping Story the Man, as Judge, Sits in Sentence on the Girl Tried for Her Sin.**

When the court adjourned for luncheon, the case for the Crown was over, and it almost seemed as if the ropes of the hangman were already about the prisoner's neck.

Stowell did not leave the courthouse. He sat in his place with folded arms and closed eyes. Tommy Vondy, the jailer, looked in on him sitting alone, and presently returned (from the direction of the Deemster's room) with a plate of sandwiches and something in a glass, but he sent back both untouched.

When the court resumed it appeared to be still more crowded and excited than before. As the Deemster took his seat, he saw that his son's face was strongly illumined by the sun (which was now streaming from a lantern light in the roof) and that it was pale and drawn. Immediately behind Victor a lady was sitting—it was Fenella Stanley.

The accused had told him nothing, and degraded as they might think her, he had not thought it right to invade the sanctity of a woman's soul. That she had killed her husband was clear. If killing him was a crime she was guilty. But was it a crime? To answer that let the jury follow him while he did his best to piece together, from the evidence before them, the torn manuscript of this poor creature's story.

Then followed such speaking as none of the hangmen would have heard in that court before. Flash after flash of spiritual light seemed to recreate the stages of the prisoner's life. First, as the child, who should have been happy as the birds and bright as the flowers, but had never known one hour of the love and guidance of her natural protectors. Next, as the young girl, pretty perhaps, with the light of love dawning on her, but betrayed and abandoned. Next, as the deserted creature,

braving out her disgrace with "Wait! only wait! My gentleman will come back and marry me yet!" Next, as the badgered and shame-ridden woman, with all hope gone, saying to her despairing heart, "What do I care what happens to me now? Not a toss!" and then marrying (as the last cover for a hunted dove) the brute who afterward had beaten her, brutalized her, cursed her, taught her to drink, and brought her down, down, down to—

Kill him? Yes, she had killed him—there couldn't be a doubt about that. But if she had three wounds on her body, and he had only the wound from which he died, was it not clear as noonday that she had been the victim of a murderous assault, and had struck back to save her life? If so her act was not murder and the only righteous verdict would be not guilty.

For the last passage of his defense Stowell faced full upon the jury, and spoke in a ringing and searching voice:

"Long ago, in Galilee, out of the supreme compassion which covered with forgiveness the transgressions of one who had sinned much but loved much, it was said, 'Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone.' We have all done something we would fain forget, and when we lay our heads on our pillow we pray that the darkness may hide it. But does anybody doubt that if the all-seeing Justice could enter this Court this day another figure would be standing there in the dock by the side of that unhappy woman—a man in scarlet uniform perhaps, with decorations on his breast, and that the Deemster would have to say to him: 'You did this, for you were the first. Mercy, then—mercy for the beaten, the broken, the scapegoat, the sinner!'

The spectators had listened without making a sound; the jury (a panel of stolid Manx farmers) had sat without moving a muscle; the prisoner had

shortest that had ever been heard from him. There were legal reasons which justified the taking of human life, but the cases to which they applied were few. If the jury thought the prisoner had willfully killed her husband they would find her guilty. If they were satisfied from what they had heard that she had reasonable grounds for thinking that a felony was being committed upon her which endangered her own life they would find her not guilty.

Without leaving their box the jury promptly gave a verdict of not guilty; and then the Deemster in a loud, clear, almost triumphant voice, said:

"Let the prisoner be discharged."

A few minutes later there was a scene of excitement on the green within the castle walls. The spectators, being turned out of the courthouse with dignity, were waiting for the chief actors in the life-drama to come down the stone steps, and from the private door to the Deemster's room.

The Deemster's summing-up was the

"Wonderful! He snatched the out of the jaws of death, sir! Deemster's a grand man, but he'll be looking to his laurels!"

That was a speech that had been dear to a father's heart though!"

To be continued tomorrow

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### Plays Prank on Police

A joker telephoned to the police at 3 o'clock this morning that there had been a smashup at Twentieth and Spruce streets, in which a number of persons had been hurt. Policemen were hurried to the corner in three patrol wagons. When they reached Twentieth and Spruce streets they learned that there had been no sort of accident there. Then they began to hunt for the joker. They couldn't find him.

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