

The Red Stones

Rowland Harvey was a gentleman by profession with refined tastes in horse flesh, old wines and big game shooting. These being expensive things and his worldly possessions amounting in American money, to some fifteen dollars odd, the clothes on his back and a file of unpaid bills, he looked upon the world with a somewhat cynical eye at the time of which this small adventure is written.

Mr. Harvey was lank, muscular and bronzed, with a handsome mustache, splendid health and a somewhat shiny suit of clothes.

He was contemplating a new start in life, and not wishing to be trammelled with the possession of unnecessary property, had determined to dispose of his present cash holdings and start square. With fifteen dollars he could spend at least one enjoyable evening, living on the fat of the land and feasting on a rare dish or two of which he had learned in foreign travels—for good clothes he cared nothing. Careless of appearance, he had, however, been a man of some parts, and he felt that his entertainment would be incomplete if a mental diet was not included in his bill of fare; so it was to that end, on a drizzly Thursday evening, close onto seven o'clock, that he strolled into a second-hand book store and idly scanned some tattered volumes of old tales. Most of them were trash, but at last he found one which suited his bizarre fancy—a quaint little volume bound in brown

leather with the date, 1665. It was dedicated to the "Most high and puissant, the Marquis de Noailles," and purported to be the private memoirs of a period when to keep a diary was an indiscretion.

It was too early to dine—as he intended to dine—so he turned into a neighboring cafe, ordered a glass of absinthe and began to inspect his purchase.

It proved interesting and not a little scandalous; and, heedless of the passage of time, he had read maybe twenty pages, when a slip of paper detached itself and fell to the floor.

The Puzzling Diagram.
He picked it up and glanced at it, a half sheet of modern note paper covered with writing in modern Greek. At the bottom was a diagram. With casual interest, Harvey began stumbling through it, picking out a word here and a sentence there by the aid of his almost forgotten school-boy education.

Suddenly he sat up and rubbed his eyes, for in the midst of the Greek he had come across some scattered English words. One was Raymond, another was Brayford Grange, and then there was some mixed Greek and English reference to a mill house.

His interest was now thoroughly aroused, for, as he was well aware, these names were connected with the tale of a famous jewel robbery of the '60's, a crime with which the whole country had rung at the time, and for which an innocent man came near losing his life.

In the summer of 1860, to be precise, an eccentric old gentleman had taken Brayford Grange on the Thames. Among other hobbies he had a mania for jewels which he kept unmounted in trays in a safe. The Raymond rubies were world-famous. Late one night the safe was rifled and the old man brutally murdered.

The crime was the sensation of the day. The Scotland Yard people recovered the greater portion of the stolen property, but the rubies, the most famous of all the jewels, were never found, nor were the perpetrators of the crime captured. After a nine days' wonder, public interest subsided, and nothing had been heard since of jewels or murderers.

Harvey scanned the paper with redoubled care. He remembered that the crime was said to be the handiwork of a foreigner, but the crabbled modern Greek was too much for his

scant memories of the classics. "Hang it all," he exclaimed aloud. "I can't make head nor tail of it." A touch on the arm aroused him.

A little, ferrily sort of man, seated at the next table, leaned across toward him. "Excuse me," he said, "but you are puzzling over Greek; can I be of any service? I—er—in fact, I used to be a teacher of the language."

A Startling Translation.
"The deuce you did," said Harvey. "Good. Give me a hand and I shall be awfully obliged."

"With pleasure," said the other, seating himself at Harvey's table. The latter pushed the paper across to the newcomer, tearing off, however, the bottom portion containing the diagram.

"This—er—is a most extraordinary document," said the little man. "It is, pardon me, a jest of some sort, or may I ask how you secured it?" There was latent suspicion in the tone. Harvey glanced up sharply, and returned a vague and evasive answer.

"It seems to be," said the small man, "in the nature of a—er—confession, a crime—jewels—precious stones—a curious document altogether. Shall I read it to you?"

"Yes," said Harvey, with concealed interest. The little man adjusted his spectacles and began: "I am dying. Antonio also is dead,

for I killed him. The red stones are safely hidden. Go and fetch them and sell them to Massena, the Jew. It was Antonio who killed the old Englishman, Raymond, against my wish. Many of the jewels have been taken from us through Antonio's folly, and are past recovery, but the red stones are safe. Go to the old millhouse at the end of Brayford Grange, by the river, and there you shall find them if you follow these instructions."

"On the lowest floor of the millhouse is an opening. Down this descend, using caution. The stones are in a bag of soft leather, inside of a canvas bag, to which is a cord of strong silk and this is attached to a bar of iron, the whereabouts of which you will find plainly by the diagram. The water is of great depth. I die at the hand of Antonio's brother, who thought to discover this hiding place. To you alone I leave the secret."

There was no signature, no hint as to the writer's identity. The little man looked up. His face was pale and his eyes spoke greed. "And the diagram," he said, speaking quickly in his excitement. "Ah, yes, the diagram," said Harvey. "There must have been one."

"There was! You tore it off as sure as my name is Mr. Vyse."

"Well, then, Mr. Vyse," retorted Harvey, coolly. "What then? It was mine to tear and that paper is my property."

"I am a poor man," the other retorted. "I have been poor all my life and this paper—do you think—"

"I don't think at all," said Harvey, curtly. "I know one thing and that is that I wish you a very good evening."

"Wait," said Vyse. "You have forgotten one thing. Raymond—ah, yes, I recall the case well. Raymond died without friend or relative and his property reverted to the Crown. There would be a reward offered for such information as I could give the police," he said, spitefully.

A Dangerous Bluff.
"You venomous little beast, you sneaking humbug. Police! Oh, yes, I know all about treasure trove and the law and all that sort of thing. If you'd been decent, I'd have shared a bit with you for your pains. But blackmailing don't go with me. Call all the police in London if you want and you will get locked up for a lunatic." And he strolled out of the cafe.

Harvey caught the late train for

Brayford Grange. He forgot his dinner. He had not taken his seat two minutes before he saw Vyse's sneaking little face peering into all the carriages as he walked along the platform. Harvey swore below his breath and concealed himself behind his paper. In another minute the train was off. Arrived at his destination, Harvey procured some candles and after a desultory chat with the landlord on fishing prospects, slipped in a question about the mill house. Yes, it was still uninhabited, a ruin, half a mile or so away.

It was just eleven o'clock when Harvey, candle in hand, alighted on the mill house floor, having wrenched off a shutter. There was no sound beyond the gurgle of the water. He pulled out his diagram and the situation was now clear to him. It represented the opening mentioned in a cross set in the center of the fourth board on the left hand side admitted of no doubt as to the position of the iron bar.

He lit a second candle, crossed the floor with delicate tread, and found himself at the edge of a large square opening.

The Gleam of Dark Waters.
Below, he could just catch the gleam of dark, swift water. Across the opening at a depth of some six feet ran two parallel beams, slimy and rotten with age. To get at the bar he must lower himself on to one of these. Setting the candle on the edge of the opening, he cautiously dropped down. The next second he was standing firmly, peering into the space. With a quick impulse and a feeling of disgust that he was about to be disappointed, he selected the fourth board on the left side, as directed, and attacked it with his knife. It yielded at the first touch and fell with a splash into the dark water below. Disclosing to view a rusty iron bar, from which depended a thin, rotten-looking line. He caught hold of it and pulled in terror, lest it should snap in his grasp. There was weight at the end. Finally, inch by inch, he coaxed it upward and hauled it in, apparently a bundle of weeds. However, by the feel of the thing there was something in the midst of it, and with trembling fingers he disclosed a small, dripping black bundle—a bag—sodden, and nearly rotted to pieces.

Ransom for a King.
A slash of his knife laid the bag open, disclosing to view a hoard of small, gritty-looking pebbles of varying sizes—rubies—wealth untold. He picked out some of the largest and endeavored to clean them on his coat sleeve. Two needed washing before he could make anything of them, and he slipped them into his pocket. The largest of all was less begrimed, and taking it gingerly between his finger and thumb, he raised it toward the light. There he held it in blank amazement, for peering over the edge of the opening, his face twitching with excitement, was the man, Vyse, carrying in his hand with obvious fear, a cheap, nickel-plated revolver.

"Oh," said Harvey, "so you're there? How about the police?"

The little man lifted the revolver with shaking hands. "Give 'em to me, give 'em to me, curse you, they're mine."

"You infernal little chyster," cried Harvey, "put that gun down. Put it down, I tell you, or I will wring your scraggy neck." And with a quick movement he reached upward to seize the weapon.

Vyse started in terror. The next instant there was a flash and a report and the bullet seared Harvey's forehead. He struck with his other hand, but lost his balance, slipped, and fell.

Mr. Vyse shrieked with fright and lay grovelling on the floor, as Harvey sank into the water with a dull splash. The bag of jewels, already open, followed him, emitting a tinkling sound, as one by one the famous Raymond rubies sank toward the soft, black ooze of the river bed.

When he recovered his senses, a matter of probably some five seconds, Harvey was swimming mechanically in the calm back-water with the mill house behind him. He still held the big ruby tightly pressed between his first and second fingers.

Glancing about him, he struck out for the nearest bank, and then began to swear vehemently. His arm hurt him for one thing and he yearned for the blood of Vyse with a most unwholy longing. His hand instinctively sought his pocket with the idea of finding a handkerchief to wipe the water from his face. He did not find it, but instead he found the two other large rubies which he had placed there not five minutes before. Then he stopped swearing and began to laugh. After all, three immense rubies were not so bad. They would bring him a figure well into the thousands, a very good night's work—further his best sense of humor conjured up a vivid picture of a little, ferrily man, running, terror-stricken, through the dark night, quivering with a guilty remorse for a murder which he had never intended and never committed.—London Mail.

Pointed Paragraphs
From the Chicago Chronicle.
Most of the serious slips occur after the cup has been to the lip.
Some people never realize that they are wrong until they are found out.
One idea of a pleasant conversationist is one who knows how to make a long story short.
It is easier to make a new quarrel than it is to patch up an old one.
Many a man who thinks he thinks has a wife who does most of his thinking.
The self-made man will be a good thing—if he ever gets himself finished.
It is always difficult to separate the man who claims to have a soul above mere gain from a little of his money.
What a delightful world this would be to live in if our neighbors knew half as well as we do what is good for them.

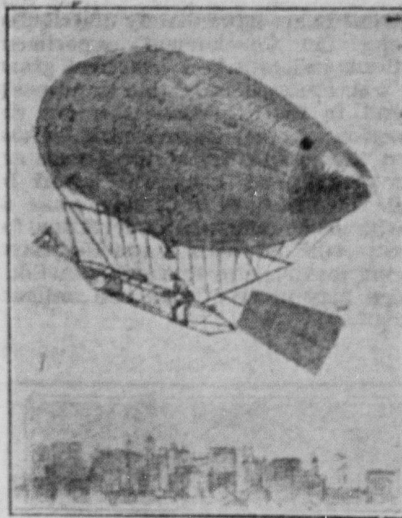
To Be Married in October.
"But do you really love me just as I am?"
"Just as you are, dear. There is not a thing about you that I would change except your name."

IN UPPER CURRENTS.

MAN'S SUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO INVADE THE REALM OF BIRDS.

Balloons Have Carried Daring Aeronauts Higher than Loftiest Mountains.—High Air Currents Blow Two Hundred Miles an Hour.

The recent sensational balloon flights of Roy Knabenshue in New York City at which half of the street population of the town was either on the roof tops, hanging out of windows, or racing up and down the streets in trolley cars, automobiles, cabs and afoot, in an endeavor to keep in sight of the air machine sailing majestically over the city, invites some attention to the high places of the earth and the success attained by men thus far in penetrating into and ascending above the clouds. Mr. Knabenshue's performance was conducted on a plane of only 1,000 or 1,500 feet. He sailed around over the gigantic New York office buildings at a distance only two or three times their height. Had he attempted to circle the Eiffel Tower in Paris instead of the Flat Iron Building in New York he would have had to go higher or endanger his car.



ROY KNABENSHUE NAVIGATING OVER NEW YORK.

The balloon, however, has ascended into the sky as high as it has been possible for man to exist. In 1901, M. Berson went up to the record height of 35,000 feet—almost seven miles—and nearly 3,000 feet above the region of the highest clouds. The following year a balloon from Strasburg Observatory reached a height of 73,000 feet. This balloon was, of course, unoccupied.

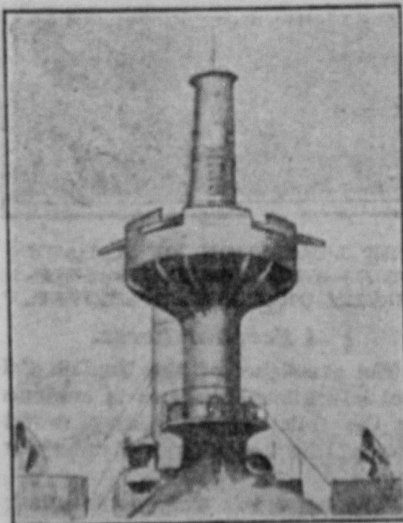
Of things more substantial than balloon ascensions, the Eiffel Tower which rises 984 feet is the highest building in the world. Mount Everest rises 28,965 feet, the loftiest peak on earth. Its summit has never and probably never will be reached by man unless in an airship. Dr. Workman, of Worcester, Mass., holds the highest record for mountain climbing which is 23,963 feet. His wife is a close competitor and has the woman's mountain climbing record for 23,910 feet.

Something was learned of the upper air currents at the time of the vast volcanic disturbances in the Island of Krakatoa in the East Indies, a seismic disturbance to which the recent Mont Pelee eruption was a slight ebullition. With the final bursting of the mountain, hundreds of thousands of tons of impalpable ashes were discharged hourly into the heavens, rising to a height of probably 20 miles, where the mass took on a dull reddish hue. Through this phenomenon science discovered that at that height a vast wind constantly rages at the rate of 200 miles an hour. This fierce air current swept the ashes of Krakatoa entirely around the globe.

PRACTICE OF THE BLACK ART.

Change in the Navy as a Result of Japan's Sea Victory.

There is no teacher to compare with experience and the wise man profits by the experience of others. Uncle Sam has applied to his own war fleet one of the lessons of the Japanese naval battles. Heretofore what are known as



FIGHTING-TOP OF DESTROYED RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP "PERESVIET."

the fighting tops of battle ships have been supplied with small caliber quick firing machine guns, the idea being when vessels came together to sweep the enemy's deck of every living thing. But it has been found that one or the other ship either goes to the bottom or is placed "hors de combat" before ever they get close enough to allow the little guns to do serious execution. Therefore these little war devils are being removed and range-finders installed in their place. For the protection of the vessel from torpedo boat attacks, reliance will be placed on the small guns mounted on deck.

The range-finder in the tops will tell the crews of the big guns below how to aim. And this is certainly one of the most marvelous and eerie things of modern warfare—that a gun and its crew can be entirely out of sight of the obstacle at which they train their guns and can be mathematically instructed how to hit that object. Such is truly a practice of the black art. Japan followed it and the accuracy of Togo's gunners was one of the startling things about that terrific battle in the Straits of Korea.

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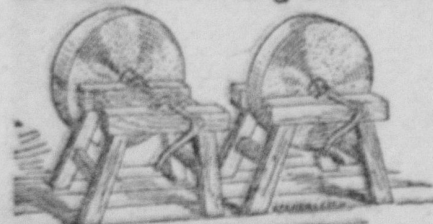
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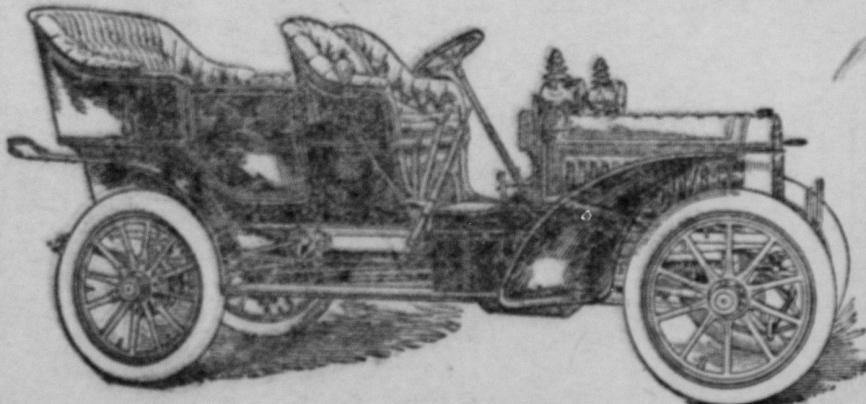
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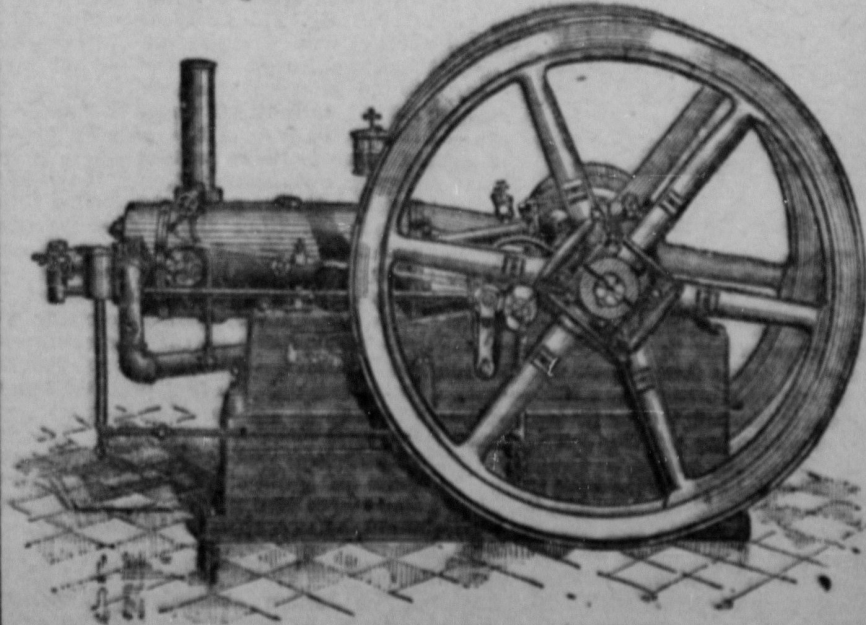
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