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Advertise in the Evening Telegram

Hunting for Diamonds Full of Peril.

William J. LaVarre, of New York and Washington, an explorer who through all his life has had a burning urge to prospect for diamonds, has just returned to New York from a trip through South America and New Guinea, bringing with him the largest diamond ever found on this side of the Atlantic.

This diamond, the explorer believes, may lead to beds of great carbon deposits, a diamond source which might rival the output of the famous Kimberley Fields of South Africa.

The rough gem will be polished and cut for the market. It is thirty and a quarter carats and in rough measure seven-eighths of an inch from point to point.

Mr. LaVarre calls his jewel "an alluvial diamond." That means that it was carried to the jungle earth from which he withdrew it by rushing water; and it is his theory that the Essequibo and Mazaruni rivers, one or the other, or both, brought the diamond down from the craters of volcanoes in which the terrific heat of erupted lava crystallized carbon formation.

Mr. LaVarre had many adventures during his journeys in the jungle.

One day he and twenty-five natives who were of his party were paddling up the Mazaruni River. They were in the midst of a 250 mile trip to the interior of British Guiana, and along the way were on the alert and casually prospecting for precious stones or minerals. LaVarre had the diamond fever then. The oarsmen were paddling automatically along, jargoning to each other, and the explorer's eyes were on the banks of the stream.

Gliding gracefully through the water, a long, sleek, river monster—a giant water boa—came toward the boat with its unwatching passengers. With a leap from the water the boa flung itself at the boat. The terrified and panic-stricken natives, not knowing what else to do, cast themselves overboard into the river. They swam in all directions. This mass flight disconcerted the boa constrictor somewhat, but the monster soon recovered its wits, leaving LaVarre sitting quietly in the boat preparing his gun for action, slipped its long body over the low side of the vessel and set out in pursuit of one or two of the comparatively slow swimming human beings.

A LUCKY SHOT.

One, slower than the rest, went in to new panic when he turned and saw the sinister form gliding menacingly near behind him. His panic made him forget to swim for an instant and he went down.

Then a shot rang out and the body of the boa went limp. LaVarre's aim had been good. His bullet had crashed through the head of the reptile, and after a little while the natives came back to their boat, which was drifting for lack of man power.

Mr. LaVarre said the snake seemed to him, as he watched its threatening antics and as he prepared to shoot, the biggest reptile in the world. But when its carcass was recovered from the stream and the explorer set to work to explore it the boa turned out to be a paltry eighteen feet in length.

Nothing frightens the native so greatly as a snake. Consequently they avoid all places where they think snakes might be in hiding.

LaVarre's chief hunter once disclosed the fact that he had never seen a large snake nor even a jaguar during all his days of wandering under the canopy of the jungle. And the jungle is overrun with wild beasts, and reptiles. The explorer has captured many rare specimens and presented them to museums and zoological institutions.

On another occasion LaVarre had a battle with a big snake in the jungle—this time a venomous one—and was bitten. He went through a terrible ordeal and his life was on the brink of going more than once before he recovered from the effects of the bite.

But to get back to diamonds.

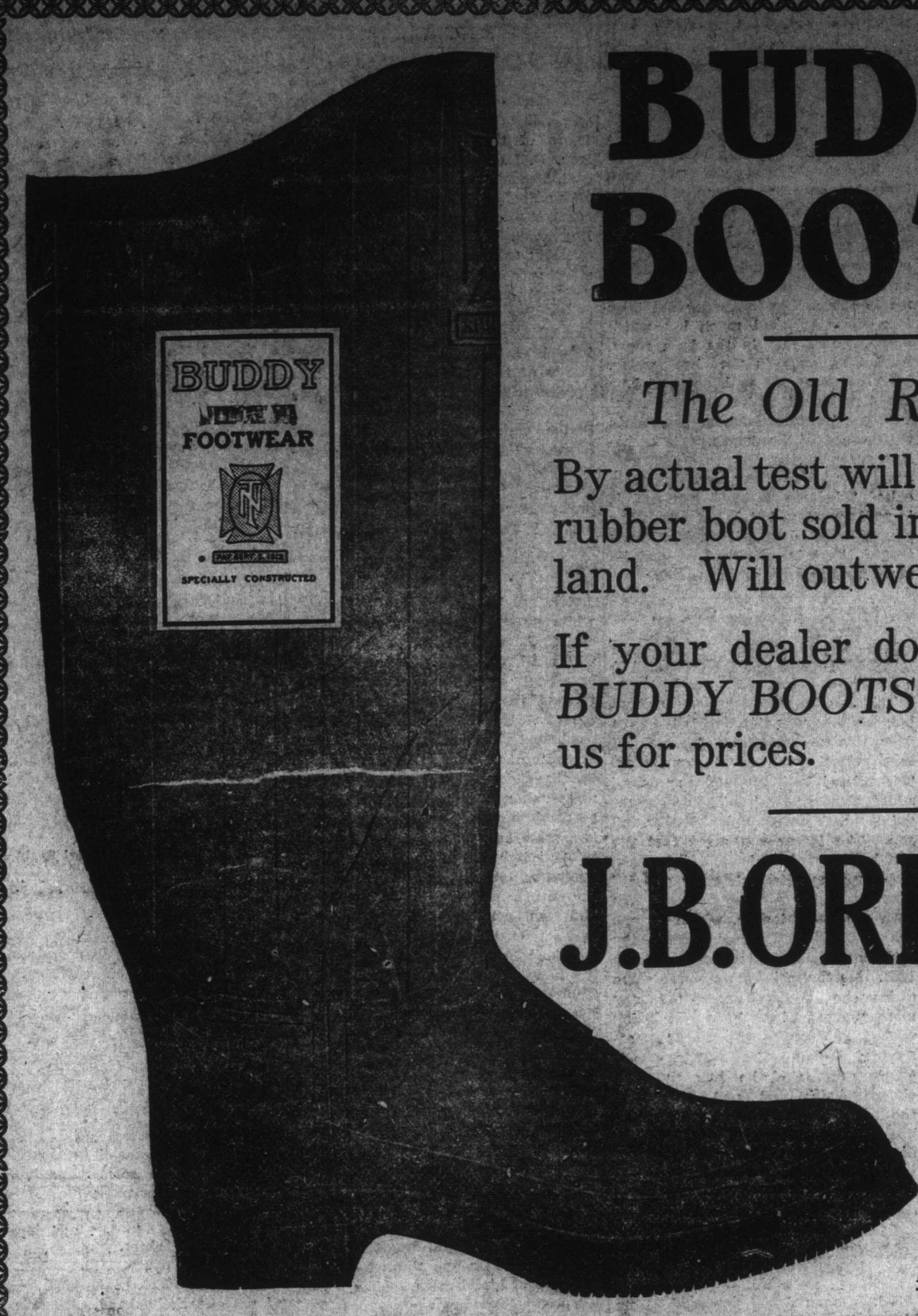
The name given to the large diamond LaVarre found is "The Kurupung." It resembles nothing more than its rough state than a disproportionate lump of green bottle glass. "If you came across it in the street," he says, "you would knock it out of the way."

Then he goes on to describe it: "When it is examined closely one sees a certain oily sheen which is very typical of the rough diamond. Its shape is octahedron and, measuring seven-eighths of an inch from apex to apex, it is peculiarly heavy for so small an object."

TEETH VERSUS STONE.

"The bushman's idea that everything but diamonds can be bitten with the teeth still holds good. Down in the bush the natives bite all of the stones they are doubtful about, and those that break under the pressure of molars are thrown away. If the teeth break, the stones are kept for further examination."

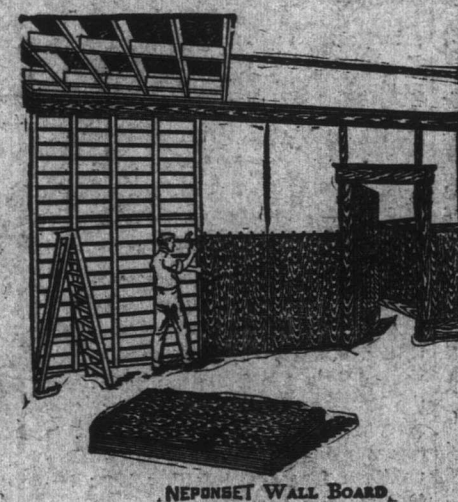
"The results of my last expedition into the jungle make me feel that perhaps the diamonds which are certainly there are of volcanic origin. The craters of the Kurupung is alluvial. While it was held fast in the clutches of solid rock it had been worn by friction. This diamond was so ex-



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posed that a groove was worn in it by loose material. "Where this big stone was found a thousand other stones have been eroded from the ground mass and spread over a large area of the jungle floor by the almost perpetual rains. Then they were swept into the streams flowing thru British Guiana."

LaVarre believes he is getting nearer and nearer always to the true source of the diamond deposits by the processes of elimination which he follows. He has found many small diamonds, and much imperfect formation of the near diamond species.

Wherever, in stream and near them, he has found no gems he has eliminated. Now he has come down to two streams in the beds of which diamonds are lying, and he hopes to follow these rivers to a common head and there find the diamond held he seeks.

DIAMONDS OF VARIOUS COLORS.

The diamonds he has found vary in color—white, pink, blue, yellow, green, and black—and their shapes range from spherical to flat and include some practically perfect diamond shaped gems. The largest South American stone on record pre-

vious to his find was only half as large, weighing but fourteen carats. It was discovered by a "pork-knocker," a huge native whose ordinary vocation was something like that of a butcher.

On his prospecting trips Mr. LaVarre's interest in natural history, and the animal life of the jungle has influenced him to seek and capture many rare specimens of monkeys, reptiles and birds. These trophies include the strange, long-haired, short-tailed monkeys known as the Uakari, the vampire bat, and an odd and ugly turtle called the Mata-Mata. This last is a puzzle to scientists, who have had much difficulty in solving the age of the reptile.

"The Mata-Mata is so ugly," says Mr. LaVarre "that all other creatures flee whenever it approaches."

Miss Ruth Oswald gets "nicely thank you" in "Madame Sherry" and when the room begins to go around sings "I'm all right."

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Who's Who?

Ladies and Gentlemen.
MR. THOMAS WALL.
Baritone.

Mr. Wall has had considerable experience during his career, both in Vaudeville, Concert and Opera, and he began his work in Musical Comedy, so that he has appeared in practically every important phase of show production. His debut was made with Richard Ordinski. He appeared in "Fair Holland" which ran for a considerable period and also worked with the Crisp Sisters and the New Producer Opera Company. His favorite opera's are Cavalleria, Rusticana and Carmen, and we hear he will probably soon sing the "Toreador Song" from the latter. He endeavored unsuccessfully to enlist with an American Regiment during the War, but later joined a Canadian organization in New York. When his splendid voice was discovered they took him out of the trenches and he became the premier baritone entertainer for the Canucks. He is a young man and has a great future before him in his chosen profession. Mr. Wall will be pleased to make your better acquaintance at the Casino.

Personal.

The wedding of Miss Nellie L. Knight, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Knight, Atlantic Avenue, and Mr. L. R. Crammond, Manager Bank of Nova Scotia, Grand Bank, will take place next week.

Miss Sophie Coultas, who has been on a visit to her brother and friends in Nova Scotia and other provinces of Canada, is returning by S.S. Sabla I.

NOT UNEXPECTED.

BERLIN, June 3. The illness of Premier Lenine of Soviet Russia, is due to a general nervous breakdown, complicated by an acute attack of gastritis, Foreign Minister Tchitcherine said here. The Russian Premier has no serious organic trouble, and complete rest of several months would probably effect a cure.

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