

Romance of the South African Diamond Fields.

Sixty years ago the man who was bold enough to suggest that a solitary diamond could be found in the whole of South Africa would have been regarded as a lunatic.

He could have bought as many square miles as he pleased of the barren veldt which to-day comprises the De Beers, Dutoitspan, and Bultfontein mines for a few shillings an acre; and every acre, not many years later, would have been valued in millions.

In the first scene of this drama we see Van Kirk, a poor Boer farmer, looking on as one of his children picks out a pebble from the mud with which his rough, single-storeyed home was plastered.

House Encrusted With Diamonds. Upon looking at it, he found that it was a tiny crystal, which, in the sun's rays, emitted vari-coloured lights. An examination of the walls of his house revealed scores of similar pebbles. He consulted an expert, and discovered that his humble walls were literally encrusted with diamonds!

Thus was revealed the secret of one of South Africa's richest hidden treasures, soon to be famous throughout the world as the Dutoitspan Mine. For every tiny pebble in Van Kirk's mud walls there were diamonds worth hundreds of thousands of pounds awaiting discovery beneath the barren acres of his farm.

Not long after Van Kirk had awakened to the discovery that his walls were sprinkled with diamonds, a young Englishman named Rawstone, roaming over the veldt, flung himself down, exhausted by his tramping and the fierce heat of the sun, under the scanty shade of a thorn bush.

As he was playing idly with the sand by his side, he uncovered a pebble which flashed back the sun's rays in jets of fire. Even to his untrained eye the stone thus accidentally brought to light was a diamond of uncommon lustre as well as size, and his conviction was confirmed when, on his return, he showed it to his host.

Thus were revealed the riches of the famous Kimberley Mine. Within a few years the mine was yielding an annual million pounds worth of diamonds.

Nor was the tale of romantic discoveries ended. Riding one day at sundown to bring in his horses from the veldt, a Boer farmer saw a small animal, called a meerkat, scurrying earth from its hole. Some peculiarity of the ground thrown up led the Dutchman to fill his handkerchief with it, and after he had stabled his horse he examined the earth. To his astonishment he found a three-quarter-carat diamond.

Further search at the meerkat's hole revealed other diamonds, and the secret of the Wesselon Mine was discovered. A few months later £450,000 was refused for the small farm on which the Dutchman had made his accidental discovery; the De Beers Company was glad to purchase a quarter of it for £175,000, and since that day it has yielded hundreds of thousands of carats of the purest diamonds.

De Beers, Dutoitspan, Bultfontein, Kimberley, and Wesselon—such are the world-famous mines, which have been discovered within a few miles of Van Kirk's mud-plastered farmhouse. Within the memory of men who do not consider themselves very old, a few hundred pounds at the outside would have bought the land which for so long had hidden its treasures from the world's knowledge.

Since that time these mines have yielded diamonds to the value in a single year, and their output so far has exceeded £100,000,000. And all these riches have been the fruit of a sequence of accidents almost absurd in their triviality!

Why Ice Floats.

It is not for one peculiar property of water, the past history of the earth would have been completely altered and man himself might never have been born.

Almost everything gets bigger when it is heated and smaller when it is cooled, and in the ordinary course of events water does exactly the same thing. But the strange point is that if you cool water to seven degrees above freezing-point it stops getting smaller and begins to expand, continuing to do so until it becomes ice.

That, of course, is why ice always occupies more space than the water from which it is made, and so easily bursts jugs and water-pipes. It also explains why ice floats in water.

But if water followed the general rule, and got continually smaller as it grew colder, ice would be heavier than water and would form at the bottom of ponds, rivers, and seas, instead of at the top.

That would mean that in past ice ages all the living inhabitants of the water, including the progenitors of man, would have been frozen to death, or numerous forms of life are always to be found beneath the ice-lapped sea of to-day.

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A Motor-Driven Parachute.

ACCIDENT THAT MAY REVOLUTIONIZE FLYING.

"A fall in an aeroplane, a broken arm and ribs, and several weeks in hospital gave Dr. Hubert Julian, a West Indian negro, a first lieutenant in the Canadian Air Corps during the war, the idea for a parachute invention that is destined to revolutionize the science of aeronautics.

At the age of thirteen Julian won a trade scholarship, and was sent to England to study motoring and mechanical science. He is an expert mechanic. He became interested in aviation, and learned to fly.

After two and a half years of experiment, during which the practicability of the parachute was demonstrated, Lieutenant Julian applied for a patent. In the opinion of experts, the invention was the kind that the aeronautical world had long ago been wanting. Demonstrations were held and its practicability established.

The device, as explained to the writer by Dr. Julian, consists of a parachute built like an umbrella and mounted on the top of the aeroplane, and of a motor-driven fan below it to force air into the parachute. It relates to new and useful improvements in safety appliances for aeroplanes.

The primary object of the invention, said Dr. Julian, is the provision of a safety appliance for aeroplanes so constructed as to prevent the machine from falling in case of engine trouble, thereby preventing resultant damages to the machine or injury to the occupants.

Another feature is the provision of a machine having a collapsible parachute attachment secured thereto and means for raising the parachute attachment from an inoperative to an operative position.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a safety appliance for aeroplanes, including a parachute attachment which is normally in a closed position, together with a suitable fan or propeller adapted to raise the parachute mechanism to its extended position when desired.

Another feature is the provision of a safety appliance for aeroplanes which will be comparatively simple and inexpensive to manufacture, reliable and efficient in use, and readily operated.

In case of engine trouble, it was explained, or any other difficulty which would cause the machine to fall to the ground without control, the motor is set in operation, which rotates the horizontal fan with sufficient rapidity to raise the parachute from the dejected position to full inflation, and the speed of the fan is so controlled that the air driven against the under side of the parachute will allow the machine to descend gradually and without danger of injury to the occupants or to the parachute.

The parachute may be made to operate as a separate device, being fitted with a small gasoline engine, fuel tank, etc., so that it is dirigible or controllable, enabling the flyer to steer it in any direction. It can be used on dirigible airships as well as on aeroplanes.

Cuban Bandit Makes Sensational Escape.

HAVANA, Cuba.—With sentences totalling 200 years in prison hanging over his head and 250 troops and rural guards at his heels, Ramon Arroyito, Cuba's modern Jess James, is still at large. His latest feat of escaping from the jail at Matanzas through a hole blown in the thick walls at midday, has again made him a popular hero and added to the difficulties of the authorities; for they claim nobody will help them follow his trail. Arroyito took to the high road about

three years ago and, if the holdups, kidnappings and other unlawful acts attributed to him are well founded, he operated in every part of the island before he went into retirement after two years of hectic endeavor and with a fortune variously estimated at from \$50,000 to \$200,000. But last spring, while very prosaically travelling from Matanzas to a nearby village to attend a cock fight, he was captured by two rural guards, acting as a train escort, who held him first for carrying arms without a license, but loaded him with chains when they discovered he was the notorious outlaw.

Brought to "Havana" Arroyito was greeted by thousands at the railway station and his trip to the city jail resembled a triumphal procession. While being tried and convicted on numerous counts, he perfected his plans for breaking loose from jail, and only the accidental presence of a mounted policeman on the harbor side of the jail prevented a clean getaway three months ago. His escape from the Matanzas jail, where he was lodged last week to await trial for kidnappings, is credited to a former pal, Julio Ramirez, whom Arroyito once rescued from jail at Jarico by holding up the warden and trunkkeys single handed in broad daylight.

Swedish Expert Outlines Germany's Financial Future.

STOCKHOLM.—"If France breaks with Germany financially, chaos will follow, and the mark will drop to almost any conceivable low rate," said Professor Gustav Cassel, Swedish expert in international finance, and advisor to the League of Nations, upon his recent return from Berlin where he had been called upon by the German government, together with seven other financial experts from the United States, England, Holland and Russia. Professor Cassel declares that unless present conditions in Europe are altered, stabilization of the German mark will be impossible. The experts were agreed on this. They recommended that the German government ask for a moratorium of reparations payments for at least two years. If this request is granted, stabilization will depend principally on Germany's production and on the make-up of the national budget. An international loan to Germany would not in itself solve the problem, he says, but would have a tremendous moral effect on the people. The commission of financial experts recommended, according to Professor Cassel, that in case the moratorium were granted, Germany give the following guarantee: the establishment of a "central foreign exchange department" at the Reichsbank, to be provided with some of the Reichsbank's gold reserve;

the expenditure of this gold in the purchase of paper marks; the limitation of the floating debts, and the raising of the discount rate at the Reichsbank. With the consent of the Reparations Commission, an International Financial Association should be invited to help in the work of stabilization. The redeeming of paper marks should be limited to notes of the Reichsbank, chiefly foreign holdings. If marks were priced at the rate of 3,500 to the United States dollar, says Professor Cassel, less than half of the gold reserve of the Reichsbank would be sufficient for redemption. Professor Cassel has recently agreed to act as financial adviser to the Soviet State Bank in Petrograd.

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fancy flery as milady of to-day. Queen Elizabeth was presented with "a new pair of black knit silk stockings" as a New Year's gift, the which after a few days wearing pleased her Highness so well that she sent for Mistress Montague, and asked where they came from, and if she could help her to any more.

The silk mistress in reply, said: "I have made them very carefully of purple silk for your Majesty, and seeing these please you so well, I will presently set more in hand."

doe I like after stockings so well because they are pleasant, thin and delicate, that honestly I will wear no more cloth stockings.

Wisp of Wisdom. The stickler seldom gets stuck. Hope and strive if you would thrive. Persistence is free—cures are costly. Every man is a son of his own wife. The promised land is the land where one is not. Long take the memory. Truth telling is tax-exempt.

If there were no clouds, we should not enjoy the sun.

Get the wisest feeling of content with everything finished. Wealth brings power, but what most people need is "mass control." Get wealthy honestly, use wealth judiciously, never reveal directly. As a rule, what the heart longs for the head and the hand can accomplish. One of the great lessons in life is to learn how to obtain victory over defeat.

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