

ROYAL
Baking Powder
ABSOLUTELY PURE
Where the finest biscuit, cake, hot-breads, crusts or puddings are required **Royal** is indispensable. **Royal** is equally valuable in the preparation of plain, substantial, every-day foods, for all occasions.
Royal is the only Baking Powder made from Royal Grape Cream of Tartar—made from grapes—

A Mysterious Disappearance
By Gordon Holmes
A Great Detective Story

(Continued.)
"Yes," said the complacent mother, "she taught herself when—before she went on the stage. She was always a clever girl, and when she grew up she improved herself. I wasn't able to afford her much schooling when she was young."
"I have seldom seen a nicer hand," he went on. "Have you any other specimens of her writing? I should like to see them if they are not private."
The smooth surface of the photograph might perhaps lead a deceptive fancy to the pen. He wanted to make quite sure that he was not mistaken.
"Oh yes. She's just copying out the part of Ophelia in Hamlet. And she acts it beautifully."
Mrs. Harding handed over a large MS. book, and there, written on the first page, was the name of the luckless woman whose fatal passion had moved millions to tears. He admired Miss Marie le Marchant's efforts in the matter of self-culture, but he was determined, once for all, to wrest from her some explanation of her actions.
The title of a key in the outer door came to him, and the young lady herself entered. "A few weeks of stage experience had given her a more stylish appearance. There was a 'professional' touch in the arrangement of her hat and the drop of her skirt."
She knew him instantly, and listened in evident anger to her mother's explanation that "this gentleman has just called to see you."
"All right, mother," she cried, "I see it. Mr. Bruce. Will you get tea ready while I talk with him? I shall be ready in two minutes." This with a defiant look at the visitor.

When Mrs. Harding quitted the room her daughter said in the crisp accents of ill-temper:
"What do you want with me, now?"
"I want to ask why you dared to write a letter to Sir Charles Dyke in the name of your dead mistress."
The answer was so direct, the tone so menacing, it's assumption of absolute and unquestioned knowledge so complete, that for a moment Marie le Marchant's eyes failed her.
She stood like one petrified, with eyes dilated and breast heaving. At last she managed to ejaculate:
"—why do you ask me that question?"
"Because I must have the truth from you this time. You are playing a very dangerous game."
That he was right he was sure now beyond doubt. It was impossible for the girl to deny it with those piercing eyes fixed on her, and seeming to read the secrets of her heart.
Yes she was plucky enough. Although she was confused and on the point of bursting into tears, she managed to reply:
"I will tell you nothing. Go away."
"You are obstinate, I know," said Bruce, "but I must warn you that you are juggling with edged tools. You should not imagine that you can trifle with murder. What is your motive for deliberately trying to conceal Lady Dyke's death? If you do not answer me you may be asked the question in a court of law."
"You have no right to come here annoying me," she retorted.
"I am not here to annoy you. I come, rather, as a friend, to appeal to you not to incur the grave risk of keeping from the authorities information which they ought to possess."
"What information?"
"The reasons which led you to leave Sir Charles Dyke's house so suddenly. There is a source from which you obtain your money, paid to you, doubtless, to secure your silence, the motive which impelled you to use your ability to imitate her ladyship's handwriting in order to spread the false news that she is alive. This is the information needed, and your willful refusal to give it constitutes a grave indictment."
"I don't care that for you, Mr. Bruce," replied the girl, her face set now in a scornful temper, while she snatched her fingers to emphasize the words. "You can do and see what you like. I will tell you nothing."
"You cannot deny you wrote that letter to Sir Charles Dyke last Saturday?"
"I am waiting for my tea. Sorry I can't ask you to join me."
"Your flippancy will not avail you. See, here is the letter itself—your own production—written on paper of which you have a quantity in this very room."
The girl was a bold one. She was staggered, almost subdued by this melodramatic production of the original, and his clever guess at the existence of similar notes in the house.
But her dogged temper saved her.

DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS
CURES ALL KIDNEY DISEASE
BRIGHTNESS OF EYES
DIABETES
GRAVEL
URIC ACID
GOUT
RHEUMATISM
MIGRAINE
HEADACHE
BRUISES
AND ALL AFFECTIONS OF THE KIDNEYS
AND URINARY ORGANS
SOLD EVERYWHERE

Jane Harding was British, notwithstanding her penchant for a French-sounding name, and she would have died sooner than beat a retreat.
"I will thank you to leave me alone, Mr. Bruce," she said.
There was nothing for it but to retire as gracefully as possible, but the barrister was more than satisfied with the result of his visit. He had now established beyond a shadow of doubt that for some reason which he could not fathom the ex-lady's maid not only knew of her mistress's death, but wished to conceal it.
This desire, too, had the essential feature of every other branch of the inquiry: it grew to maturity long after the day when Lady Dyke was actually killed. What did it all mean?
From Bloomsbury he strolled west to Portman Square, and found Sir Charles on the point of going for a drive in the Park.
He briefly told him his discovery.
The baronet at first was sceptical. "Do you mean to say, Charles," he cried, "that I do not know my wife's whereabouts when I see it?"
"You may think you do, but when another person can imitate it exactly, of course, you may be deceived. Besides, if this girl, as is probable, was a girl of education by her wife, what is more likely than that Jane Harding should seek to copy that which she would consider the ideal of excellence. Don't harbor any delusions in the matter, Dyke. The letter you received on Monday morning was written by Jane Harding. I am sure of that from her manner no less than from the accidental resemblance of the two styles of handwriting. What I could not find out was her motive for the deed."
"It is a queer business altogether," said Sir Charles wearily, "I wish it were ended."

CHAPTER XXV
Miss Phyllis Browne Intervenes.
Bruce was quite positive in his belief that Jane Harding was the paid agent of some person who wished to conceal the fact concerning Lady Dyke's death. Her unexpected appearance in the field at this late hour, no less than the bold style she adopted in proving this conclusively. But in England there was no torture-chamber to which she might be led and gradually dismembered until she confessed the truth.
So long as she adhered to the policy of denial she was quite safe. The law could not touch her, for the chief witness against her, Sir Charles Dyke, was obviously more than half-inclined to admit the genuineness of the letter, even in opposition to the superior judgment of his friend.
Yet it was a matter which Bruce considered ought to be made known to the police, so he sent for Mr. White and told him the strange result of his interview with Marie le Marchant.
"Dash everything!" cried the detective, when he had heard the news. "I made a note some time ago that that girl ought to be watched, but I clear forgot all about it."
"Remember," said Bruce, "that my discovery was the result of pure accident. My object in visiting her was to endeavor to induce her confidence with regard to Lady Dyke's former life and habits. Indeed, I handled the business very badly."
"I don't see that, sir. You got hold of a very remarkable fact, and thus prevented the success of a bold move by some one which, in my case at any rate, nearly cost me the life of the inquiry."
"True. Thus far, chance favored me. But I ought to have been content with the assumption. There was no need to frighten her by pressing it home."
"Oh, from that point of view—" began the detective.
But Bruce was merely thinking aloud, rough-shaping his ideas as they grouped themselves in his brain.
"Perhaps I am wrong there too," he went on. "If this girl is working to instructions she would have refused to help me in any way, and she already knows that I am on her trail. There is one highly satisfactory feature in the Jane Harding adventure, Mr. White."
"And what is that?"
"The person, or persons, responsible for Lady Dyke's death know that the matter has not been dropped. They are inclined to think that the circle is narrowing. In some of our caste, Mr. White, we must have come so unpleasantly close to them, that they deemed it advisable to throw us off the scent by a bold effort."
"No doubt you are right, sir, but I wish to goodness I knew when we were 'warned,' as I am becoming tired of the business. Every new development deepens the mystery."
The detective's face was as downcast as his words.
"Surely not! The more pieces of the puzzle we have to handle the less—wouldn't you say—the final task of putting them together."
"Not when every piece is a fresh puzzle in itself."
"Why, what has disconcerted you today?"
"Mrs. Hillner."
"What of her?"
"I have had another talk with the maid, her companion, you know—a girl named Dobson. It struck me that it was advisable to know more about Mrs. Hillner than we at present."
Bruce made no comment, but he could not help reflecting that Corbett, the manager from Wyoming, had entertained the same view.
(To be Continued.)

Fashion Hint for Times Readers



PANEL EFFECTS ON LINGERIE BLOUSES.
The long line of the tight-fitting sleeve must be broken in some manner with trimming, when it is made of white fine lace, or the effect will be severe and ugly. A panel down the outer side of the sleeve, the prettiest trimming for such sleeves and many of the summer frocks and blouses of white lawn and batiste show these panels, made of lace insertion or fine embroidery. This linen waist has panels formed of cluny and Venice lace and the yoke extends downward in panel effect to the hem. The touch of hand embroidery at either side of the front adds greatly to the value and attractiveness of this pretty blouse.

AFRICAN JUNGLES SHOULD ECHO WITH CRIES OF JOY

Mr. Roosevelt Very Generously Decides Not to Kill All the Beasts—Will Confine Himself to Two Elephants, Two Rhinoceros, Two Hippopotami and All the Lions and Leopards He Can Get.

Mombasa, British East Africa, March 11.—Mombasa is preparing already to welcome Theodore Roosevelt when he lands here the latter part of next month on his much-heralded African trip, and the coming of the former president of the United States has given a decided impetus to the interest in the present hunting season. The governor of the protectorate, Lieutenant Colonel Sir James Hayes-Sacred, is getting up a programme of welcome and entertainment for the distinguished visitor, the greeting to Mr. Roosevelt will be more to the great sportsman, whose fame is well known to local hunters than to the former president.
East African sportsmen were highly gratified to learn that Mr. Roosevelt had refused the offer of the authorities to grant him a special hunting license, that he would permit him to kill game to an unlimited extent, instead of confining himself to the two elephants, two rhinoceros, two hippopotami, etc., of the regular license. Lions and leopards are chased as the vermin and consequently no license to hunt them is required.
The white population of Mombasa has heard much of Mr. Roosevelt's personality, and in a joking way frequent references to the "big stick" are being made.
The rains are late this year and a heavy fall is expected. The regular time for the "big rains" is from the end of January to the end of April. The prospects for good hunting this season are considered excellent. Many of the settlers in the outlying districts, realizing the increasing interest in the prospect for sport, because of the coming of Mr. Roosevelt, are voluntarily submitting in all respects to the decision of the game. According to a despatch received here today, a record group of full grown lions was secured on the Nandi plateau yesterday, at a point about fifty miles north of Port Florence. (The Nandi plateau on the west side of the great rift valley). Among them were three huge males. Four families of giraffes have been seen at Makindu, 200 miles inland from here on the line of the Uganda railroad, and elephants have been seen at Elburgu, 475 miles inland on the railroad and along the Sabaki River, not far to the north of Mombasa.
R. J. Cunningham, the noted English big game hunter and field naturalist, who is to be guide to, and general manager of the expedition, he takes only experienced men who are known to be courageous and to possess great physical strength. The "safari" kit, in other words, the camp equipment for the work in the open, arriving from London and all will be in readiness when Mr. Roosevelt arrives.
The railroad car used over the line as far as Port Florence by other distinguished visitors to Uganda, such as the Duke of Mecklenburg, the Duke of Connaught, the Duke of Abruzzi, Joseph Chamberlain and Winston Spencer Churchill, is being repaired for the use of Mr. Roosevelt. This is most complete in its detail and provides the traveler with every comfort.
Everything points to a successful stay in British East Africa and Uganda for Mr. Roosevelt; the natives are peaceful, game is plentiful, and the people of Mombasa are waiting eagerly to give him a welcome.

THE BALKAN SITUATION STILL THREATENS WAR

It is a Pretty Game, But There is Still Plenty of Gunpowder Lying Around Loose—Rival Ambitions at the Bottom of It All.

In a London cable H. R. Chamberlain, gives this interesting review of the Balkan crisis which still threatens the peace of Europe.
"It is necessary to warn distant observers of the great game that Europe is playing over the Balkan situation for the high optimism of the last few days has been much out of place as was the black pessimism of a week or a fortnight ago."
"Serbia, in response to Russia's friendly appeal, definitely withdrew her claims for a territorial concession and for the autonomy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or rather she announced her willingness to submit in all respects to the decision of a European conference touching all her interests, but this concession was just as suddenly cancelled."
"The news of her surrender was received in Vienna with secret chagrin and irritation. Austria has never given her full consent to a European conference over the effect of her action of last November. She expressed a willingness at the height of the crisis to submit the question of the annexation of the two provinces to the formal ratification of a treaty, but she has never given her full consent to a European conference over the effect of her action of last November. She expressed a willingness at the height of the crisis to submit the question of the annexation of the two provinces to the formal ratification of a treaty, but she has never given her full consent to a European conference over the effect of her action of last November. 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