

Trailing a Diamond Smuggler

Taken from the Archives of Bullivant, Limited, the greatest inquiry and detective agency of modern times

By FREDERICK REDDALE

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ALL forms of modern get-rich-quick schemes, diamond smuggling is the easiest and the most profitable. Captures are few, and while the risks are great, the rewards are correspondingly great.

Thus spoke Mark Manley, in reminiscent mood, the young-looking gray-haired special agent of Bullivant Limited, crime detectors and solvers of mysteries, as he and I sat in the cozy corner of an up-town New York cafe not a thousand miles from the Great White Way.

"So I've heard," I commented just to keep the conversational pot boiling; "not that I personally know much about it, but I've read a lot, and I'm willing to take your word for the rest."

Manley nodded, sipped his Rhine wine and seltzer, lighted one of his interminable Panatelas, and settled himself comfortably. Scanning a story I merely looked as intelligent as I possibly could.

"Yes," he went on, "I once tracked one of 'em for two solid years."

"And—" I prompted.

"Oh, yes, I got him at last. But only by accident after all." True genius is ever modest, you see.

"I'd like to hear about it," I murmured, hitching my chair closer to the little round table between us, "that



is, of course, if it wouldn't be trespassing on professional secrets."

"Not at all," he countered. "I'll use fictitious names, anyway—so you can print all you've a mind to, and no one'll be hurt. This was the how of it, or rather the way it began."

And then he told me the following yarn straight from Bullivant's archives:

One day about ten years ago there blew into this office one of the leading diamond importers in the Maiden Lane district. He was hot all over and boiling mad. Says he:

"This thing has got to stop, else we and every other honest house might just as well go out of business." The chief smooths him down and inquires what's the trouble.

"Just this," says Mr. Sternmuler. "There's a firm down yonder—Blins & Backus—who're underselling every other house in the trade in the finest grade of unset stones. There's only one explanation—they don't pay the duty. See? Blins is the resident partner; Backus—his name's really Backhaus, and he's a Belgian—does the traveling and the smuggling. But they're never been caught, although the customs people have been after 'em for the last four or five years. Don't ask me how he does it, for I don't know. But we want you to find out. I've got the trade behind me, and we'll stand for any expense in reason. All we ask you to do is to stop their little game."

"Pretty large contract," says the chief, his eyes twinkling, "but I guess we can handle it, given sufficient time and money."

"Take all you want of both," says Sternmuler. "The thing's got to

"Well, sir, I shadowed Backus for three or four voyages without getting on to his game. He was cunning as they make 'em. For instance, at the end of every trip he'd regularly declare a small parcel of stones and pay the customs duty; and yet within a few weeks Sternmuler and the trade would discover that they were being undersold, and it was always the choicest gems that were offered in this way."

There's one good thing about Bullivants—they never hurry their men; once you're put in charge of a case they let you alone until you cry enough! So I simply reported progress, sat tight, and remembers the old adage about the pitcher going once too often to the well. For in my own mind I was certain sure that sooner or later I'd catch our friend Backus. And so I did.

We were coming west on the Cedric. For several voyages I'd been shadowing the gentleman, under different disguises, but had never spoken to him. This trip I thought I'd get a little closer. So, in my rightful character as a southern tobacco grower—I really was, you know, once upon a time—I allowed him to scrape a smoke-room acquaintance. After that we were together quite a lot. Upon every topic but his real business I found him a mighty pleasant fellow—an importer he said he was; we gossiped the decks, smoked, and yarned and bet on the day's run just as any other chance acquaintances might.

On the evening of the fifth day out we happened to exchange cigars, and he handed me a fine large Perfecto, rich, fat, long, and dark, saying:

"Try this, Mr. Stanwood; I think

you'll like it; I have them made for me specially."

Sure enough, it was a mighty fine smoke, and I said so, jokingly remarking that they were better cigars than I could afford. We walked and smoked our cigars to the tips, and then, finding our pockets empty, Backus invited me to his stateroom for a fresh supply. Needless to say this was the very chance I had been looking for.

He switched on the electric—his was a deck-cabin while mine was on the deck below—and produced an opened box originally containing 50 of those ideal Perfectos from which perhaps half a dozen had been used.

We were both standing when a peculiar thing happened; the steamer gave a sudden lurch and a roll at the instant when Backus was extending the open box. I staggered, threw my arm to steady myself, and purely by accident knocked the box out of his hand. The cigars went flying all over the place—some in the berth, some under the berth, and on the floor, others here and there like things possessed.

I rapped out an apology for my clumsiness, but nevertheless I caught something very like an oath from my host. In an instant he was on all fours, ducking and bending hither and yon, picking up his precious cigars. He seemed more scrupulous about recovering every blessed one of them, even to arranging them neatly in the box and counting them over and over to see that none were missing. When apparently satisfied that all were salvaged he shut the lid and tossed the box in his berth, saying that he'd give me one out of a fresh lot—those that had been on the floor were probably broken and not fit for a gentleman to smoke, and so on. Accordingly he produced an unopened box from his Gladstone bag, and we had our smoke.

At the moment and for some time thereafter I gave no further thought to the incident. But when I had turned in that night the extreme solicitude with which Backus had rescued and counted those spilled cigars struck me as peculiar, to say the least. Suddenly the true explanation flashed into my mind, and I broke out into a cold sweat. The more I pondered over the matter the more I believed I had solved the mystery of the smuggled diamonds. But it would need careful work to make sure, and in order to verify my suspicions I needed full access to Backus' stateroom. Above all things he must not suspect me, or tell my work for months past would go for nothing. After lying awake half the night I mapped out a plan that I thought would work.

We were a very full ship, that trip, and most of the single male passengers were "doubled up," two in a room. But it happened that myself—for obvious reasons—and Backus had double-berthed rooms to ourselves; mine being on the lower deck. My plan for its success demanded the cooperation of the ship's purser. So to him I went directly after breakfast next morning.

Disclosing my real identity, and explaining as much of my errand and my suspicions as were necessary, I besought his help. Briefly my scheme was to get myself billeted on Backus for the remaining 48 hours of the voyage.

The purser was a somewhat stolid Englishman, but I finally prevailed. "Er—er—how do you propose to manage it?" he queried. "What excuse can you offer for leaving your own quarters?"

"Why, you see," I explained, "I very carelessly left my portmanteau open last night, and this morning a green sea poured in and soaked everything—mattress, bedding, and carpet. I was literally afloat, and it'll take at least a couple of days to dry things thoroughly. In such an emergency you might properly insist on Mr. Backus letting me have his upper berth."

"I see, I see," said the purser, with a ponderous wink. "Leave it to me. He's only paid for half a stateroom anyway. I'll see him after breakfast."

Whether Backus liked the change or not, it was his cue when we met on deck to seem perfectly delighted and to welcome me. When I went below to freshen up for luncheon I found that a steward had transferred all my traps, and I was regularly installed in the enemy's camp.

Every hour brought us nearer to New York and it behooved me to work quickly. All that I wanted was a look at the box of cigars that had been so unexpectedly spilled all over the cabin, yet it needed all my finesse to secure that end. Of course Backus could not always be below at the same time as myself, and really he seemed totally unsuspecting of my true errand and character.

I had noticed that on every voyage he always "traveled light"—carrying no trunk, but merely a roomy bag. Hence I knew that the cigars I wanted were probably in that receptacle, seeing that the fresh box remained in full sight on the table. And probably the Gladstone bag would be locked.

So it proved when my chance came. I bolted the stateroom door against the possible return of brother Backus, although when I left the smoke-room I had seen him deep in a game of bridge, at which he was winning hand over fist. But I was by this time so sure of the correctness of my theory that I had no scruples whatever over fitting a skeleton key to the lock and thus gaining access to the bag.

Sure enough, there was a quarter-filled box of Perfectos reposing innocently under a change of clothing, neckties, collars, and what not. Rapidly I snapped on the electric, for I needed a good light, and selected two of the topmost cigars. Each was banded with a broad label, and close

scrutiny revealed none of the tell-tale marks I had expected to find. But on going to the bottom of the box I discovered that each band, on the undermost layer bore a minute cross in red ink—so small, in fact, as to escape all ordinary observation, being apparently part of the gaudy design. This was what I was looking for, so I slipped one of the substituted cigars into my vest pocket, substituted for it another from the open box on the table so as to make the tally correct should Backus count them, restored the box to the Gladstone bag, which snapped and locked itself, and betook my way to the saloon, where my roommate discovered me calmly eating my lunch when he came in.

Immediately after the meal he went back to his game of bridge, being properly anxious to "press his luck," for which I thanked the Fates, and I was left free to put my theory to the test.

Right aft I went to the turtle-back. There the deck was deserted. Turning my back on the ship I drew out the marked Perfecto. Ruthlessly I broke it in two, and then crumbled the leaf, wrapper and filler, in my palms just as a pipe smoker serves his plug-cut. Result: a goodly handful of flaky brown tobacco. But from the dark depths of the mass sundry hidden gleams shot forth. Carefully winnowing the pulverized fragments in the smart breeze, then blowing and letting them waft away astern, there were gradually disclosed four beautiful diamonds glittering and scintillating in the sunlight, each at least six or eight carats in weight, and worth at least a thousand dollars apiece. I had discovered the secret of Blins & Backus, and why they could undersell the New York diamond market.

"And then?" I queried as Manley ceased speaking to relight his panatella.

"The rest was easy. Shinnecock Light was abeam and we would dock in a few hours. I knew to a dot what Backus would do. According to custom, he'd declare a small parcel of inferior stones, then march coolly down the gang-plank bag in hand. A customs inspector would go through his Gladstone and find nothing dutiable; the partly-smoked box of cigars called for no duty; in fact, Mr. Inspector would probably be jovially handed one of the gaily-banded smokes—of course, one of those with unmarked labels; the purely perfunctory ceremony over and done with, the traveling member of Blins & Backus would call a cab and proceed to office or home according to the time of day or night."

"So you—" I was beginning again, when Manley again took the words out of my mouth.

"So I used the wireless, as you were about to suggest. Result: the box of Perfectos was seized on suspicion, the diamonds were confiscated, Blins & Backus had to pay a heavy fine, and my two years' work resulted in breaking up one of the cleverest smuggling schemes ever devised to beat Uncle Sam's revenue."

Relief of Old Horses.

Every lover of and sympathizer with dumb animals will rejoice at the progress that is being made in the movement for the relief of old horses. It is a pitiful sight to see an aged and decrepit horse dragging his scarred and weary body about as an annex to the ramshackle wagon of some peddler or rag collector who by no chance will properly care for him and bought him for a song only to work him to death. One day the old animal falls in the street and is unable to rise. The bullet that becomes his portion soon after is the most merciful thing he has known for months. The division of old horse relief of the Boston Work-Horse Parade association has been active in securing that horses will not be sold after their value becomes \$50, which is the amount agreed as that at which a horse had really passed his usefulness. The response to the request that when a horse has reached this period he be pensioned or mercifully killed has been very encouraging.—Boston Traveler.

Her Little Mistake.

She weighed 224 if she weighed an ounce, and she did weigh an ounce. The whole rink shook and rumbled as she struggled round in her efforts to master the whirling art. Suddenly a terrific thud—a groan—and there, piled up upon the boarding, lay a heap of overbalanced femininity. A dozen stalwarts hastened to her aid. But her avoidings was too much for their heaving. The woman opened her eyes. "You will have to wait a moment, madam," politely remarked a third. "We have just sent for the crane. I trust you are not hurt?" "N-no, I don't think so," she gasped bravely back. "But, oh, there are some dreadful lumps in your floor!" "Lumps, be hanged, madam!" growled a half-smothered voice from underneath. "I'm not a lump; I'm one of the attendants!"

Clubhouse for Girl Students.

The club women of Boston are interesting themselves in a clubhouse for undergraduate girl students. The clubhouse comprises two separate three-story apartments thrown together. On the first floor are the dining-rooms and offices, on the second are the rest and study rooms and the remainder of the space is given over to sleeping rooms, of which there are 14. At present there are 20 girls living at the clubhouse and paying from seven to ten dollars a week for room and board. The club is open to any girl student of good standing in the higher schools of Boston. Afternoon tea is served free and a member may bring a friend for ten cents extra.

are things now in the mind of the race, because of the teachings of Christ, which were not there in the Old Testament times, and we should bring forward the narratives of the Bible into the theology and morality in which, as Christians, we believe.

He Knew Right Off.

Mrs. Hardup (pausing in her writing)—What is that word for people who come after us?

Hardup—Bill collectors, my dear.—Boston Evening Transcript.

NOTES FROM MEADOWBROOK FARM By William Pitt



Keep your fowls hungry.

Pork is too high not to feed right.

Concrete is an excellent material for silo building.

Examine the eggs with the egg-tester before setting them.

Whatever breed is chosen, a pure-bred ram should be used.

In raising onions for commercial purposes a large bulb is desirable.

In caring for pigeons one should go about quietly and never frighten them.

One of the easiest ways of making money on the farm is by rearing sheep.

In planting a young orchard see that the trees are properly pruned before set.

Hot mashes on cold days are on the feeding program of many successful poultry raisers.

This is a good time to figure up accounts for the year and see what the chicken business has done for us.

Sheep farming is a profitable branch to follow where land can be had for about fifteen to twenty-five dollars per acre.

Do not dispose of too many early pellets for fattening purposes—they are your principal assets for another season.

A hen is a good thing, but too much of a good thing is a bad thing. Two hundred hens are enough for the average farm.

The sow should be given warm milked slop, made fresh for each meal, whole oats and a little sound corn twice a day.

Cows approaching calving should be placed in roomy box stalls, given a good dry bed of leaves or straw and not interfered with.

If the breeders are in poor condition you will get many eggs that do not hatch well or that produce puny or weakling chicks.

The right time to castrate pigs is a week or so before they are weaned, if healthy; if delicate, wait a week or so until they are stronger.

Raw potatoes are greatly relished by chickens and may be fed freely. Cut them in good-sized chunks and let the chicks have them to pick at.

It is very well to sow a piece of rye early in the fall for the ewes that have lambs to pasture off in the spring before grass is ready for them.

The squab of the best breed is ready for market when about four weeks old. At this age it is in prime condition. It does not gain much afterward.

Forage or salad crops for poultry greens should preferably be grown with stable manure. This applies to clover, cabbage, lettuce, salad turnips, mangels, etc.

Infertile eggs from the incubators tested out on the fifth to seventh days can often be sold to bakers if sold for just what they are. They are good for cooking purposes.

This is the time to give the boy a few acres to farm with a team, and seeds, and see what he will make of it. It will make him feel like a man and bind him to the farm.

It will not be long now till the first haying. Get all of the haying machinery and tools ready for the work, so that there will be no delay when the hay is ready to harvest.

Many farmers say there is no money in raising ducks and geese, but F. S. Jacoby, assistant in poultry husbandry at the Kansas State Agricultural College, says this is a mistake.

Mr. C. O. Garrett, of Iowa, says: "Lime-sulphur is the best stock-dip I have ever used. It is very much superior to many dips now on the market, being more effective and more durable, and it is absolutely not injurious."

Breeding birds which begin the work of egg production near the time the eggs are required for incubation will ordinarily give stronger germs and better chicks than can be obtained from hens which have been laying for months.

Sign Posts for Aviators.

A German aeronaut has devised a system of orientation which will help the German aviator, at least, in finding his way through the air. Each German province is provided with a number, and every community is provided with a letter. A guide book to be carried by the aviator contains a list of provinces and towns similarly designated. Thus, if an aviator sees the character "40 A 1" painted upon the roof of a house in Rhineau he knows immediately where he is by

Sheep increase the value of a farm.

Ducks and geese are easier to raise than chickens.

Breeding young ewes leads to a weakening of the flock.

The lack of protein is a direct cause of mature pullets not laying.

Dairying is one of the profitable lines in which a farmer can engage.

Assorting market eggs according to size and color is a good business move.

Sheep will eat many kinds of wild grasses. They thrive in dry, mild climates.

If protein is supplied freely there will be abundance of eggs from the same flock.

Use a good lice paint on the roosts in the morning and repeat every two or three weeks.

Make up your mind to grow at least a part of the poultry food on the home farm this season.

If the hens do not lay well it may be solely because they are not intelligently managed or fed.

A bull tied in the stall will get lazy and useless, besides making extra work in his care and feed.

A few ears of corn laid in the oven and allowed to parch gives a good occasional variety to the feed.

No matter what kind of floor there is in the poultry house, the main thing is not to let it get damp.

In the production of eggs, as in that of milk, proper feeding is essential to attaining the best results.

A flimsy fence will not restrain a bull—and will cause no end of annoyance especially in a busy season.

Oats will do better on sod land than barley, but neither of them do as well on a tough sod as after corn or potatoes.

Don't sell eggs for hatching until you have tried out eggs from the same pens at home and know they hatch well.

Select out only good, trustworthy hens that can be relied upon as being good sitters. They should be well feathered.

Misshappen eggs will sometimes hatch good chicks, but it is better to choose well-formed eggs with clean, smooth shells.

Handle eggs carefully and avoid rough handling. A bad shaking up of eggs during handling or shipment has spoiled many a hatch.

If you must feed soft food provide a small trough in which to feed it. It becomes a starter of disease when thrown on the ground.

A good way to test a chick food is to place a small quantity on a dish before some husky chicks and note what they leave of it.

Strongly fertile eggs from good, healthy stock will often hatch well and produce good chicks under apparently unfavorable conditions.

The mixture of poultry manure with such materials as sand plaster and kainit or acid phosphate is almost imperative for satisfactory preservation.

The young chicks which are to make our winter layers should be hatched from the middle of March to the middle of May, depending on the breed.

Other things being equal, the breeds belonging to the Mediterranean class of fowls, namely the Leghorns, Minorcas and Hamburgs, are the greatest egg producers.

Hen nests should be cleaned and whitewashed after each hatch before starting another and the old nesting material should be burned. Fight lice now and all the time.

It is all right enough to rear turkeys with the chicken hen if the fool hen wouldn't wean them so early. Then lice are always more troublesome than with turkey hens.

Undoubtedly one of the most remunerative branches of the poultry business for the average poultryman is the production of eggs, combined with the sale of market broilers as a side line.

Land plowed last fall may be sown to oats without again plowing. If sown broadcast sow two bushels to the acre over the plowed ground and harrow them in both ways, then roll to level the land.

When the sow is given a warm, rich slop, or other milk producing feeds just after her pigs are born, a strong milk flow is forced. The new born pigs get too much and have diarrhoea, which often kills them.

It is only through the legumes, and through certain lower orders of plant life with which farmers are not familiar and which we will not discuss now, that the soil has been filled with the nitrogen, which is of the utmost importance in any system of agriculture.

A Good Business.

"Ruggles, you ought to go into the business of raising chickens by hand. It's great."

"I believe I would, Ramage, could by a good incubator cheap (With eagerness)—I've got one, old chap, I'll sell you for what it cost me."



ILLITERATE MAGISTRATE.



New Magistrate—What's the next case?

Police Sergeant—John Smith allas Williams.

New Magistrate—Ladies first, always. Let Alice Williams take the stand.

Bird Jekyll and Hyde.

The catbird is our northern mocking bird. When love attunes its voice, it can warble as sweetly as the nightingale. You must catch it in one of its melting moods if you would know the charm of its liquid notes. It is not at all beautiful—no more is the mocking bird—only a gray-brown, perky, restless thing, of lesser size than the robin, with the soul of song in it.

The wonder of the catbird lies, of course, in this, its dual nature. At one time it hops about screaming complaints against the circumambient air; at another there throbs out from its delicate throat the essence of a divine melody.—Philadelphia Press.

Triumph of Courage.

Courage and the power of the human eye," saved Walter Sargent, a prosperous rancher, in the Redwood district, San Jose, when he was confronted by a hungry mountain lion the other evening. Sargent was driving a herd of cows to his home in the foothills, when he noticed the big cat stalking him. As it crouched for a spring Sargent turned and fixed the beast with his eye. Man and lion remained as immovable as statues for a few seconds and then the animal turned and trotted away.

Too Fresh.

Will you promise to support my daughter in the style in which she is accustomed if I consent to your marriage?" demanded old Skinfint, when Dobby made his formal proposal.

"Well, I'll promise to be tolerably close with her, Mr. Skinfint," said Dobby, "but you know, I'm a soft-hearted cuss, and I'm afraid she'll be able to wheedle a few things out of me that you were strong enough to refuse her."—Judge.

Cure for His Dyspepsia.

Hogan—Phwat makes ye swally all your dinner in two minutes, Grogan? Are ye atin' on a bet?

Grogan—It's for the good av me dyspepsy, Molke. Sure the docther told me to rist an hour after atin', and how else am Ol goin' to git the hour of rist in unless Ol ate loike the devil?"

COFFEE CONGESTION Causes a Variety of Ails.

A happy old lady in Wisconsin says:

"During the time I was a coffee drinker I was subject to sick headaches, sometimes lasting 2 or 3 days, totally unfitting me for anything."

To this affliction was added, some years ago, a trouble with my heart that was very painful, accompanied by a smothering sensation and faintness.

"Dyspepsia, also, came to make harder to bear. I took all sorts of ent medicines but none of them gave me for any length of time."

"The doctors frequently v that coffee was not good for without coffee I felt as if I breakfast. I finally decided years ago to abandon the coffee entirely, and as I had deal about Postum I co that for a breakfast b

"I liked the taste of ticularly pleased to not 'come up' as co bad spells with m and less frequent altogether, and tack of sick hea year. My dig I am thank healthy wor ful restora quitting Name g Creek, "The Coffe with con the

sties a cream or milk.

pleasing change, Post Toasties, or stewed fruit, cream and you small feast.

Memory Lingers"

OSTUM CEREAL CO. Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich.

Bible Study For Children

Educator Gives Reasons Why Stories Should Be Retold for Youthful Minds.

George Hodges, dean of the Episcopal theological school at Cambridge, stated reasons why the Bible stories should be retold for children.

Dean Hodges said that the thing to do with the Bible, when children were considered, was to make it companion-

able. They should recognize it as a friendly book, filled with interesting people whom it was worth while to know. The question arose, he said, whether it was wise to retell the stories of the Bible or leave the children to read the stories in the Bible itself. The fact is, the Bible was not written for women and children. Har-nack has suggested that the epistle to the Hebrews was written by Priscilla,

wife of Aquila, but most of the Bible at any rate was written for men, to be interpreted in the light of their experiences, often of rough experiences. The reason for retelling the Bible is that there is need to correct its imperfect theology and its imperfect morality. It is not wise to permit children to expect to see God walking about under the orchard trees, or to let them believe it is right for the conqueror to dash out the brains of the children of the conquered by hurling them against stones. There