

The Chronicles of Addington Peace

By B. FLETCHER ROBINSON
Co-Author with A. Conan Doyle of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, etc.
Copyright by W. G. CHAPMAN

MR. TAUBERY'S DIAMOND

"Hi, young fellow! Does inspector Peace live here?"

He spoke roughly enough, and I returned his stare with equal irritation. When a man may not indulge in day dreams on his own doorstep the state of society wants mending. He was a big bully of a fellow, with a red face, a curled, white mustache, and a single eye-glass, through which he regarded me with an air of extreme ill-temper.

"The inspector lodges on the third floor," I told him coldly.

"Do you live here too?"

I had a mind not to answer him, but, after all, it was not worth while making trouble over an impudent question.

"Yes," I said; "I rent the ground floor and the studio behind. My name is Phillips. I am an artist. For the past four years I have studied abroad. If you would like to see my birth certificate I will go and fetch it for you."

To my surprise, he burst into a shout of laughter, swaying his body from side to side. It was quite a time before he recovered himself.

"Good, lad—good, lad," he chuckled; "Gad! but I deserved it. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Gunton, sir—Colonel Theophilus Gunton—and I'm very pleased to meet you."

He held out his hand, which I shook, without any great degree of enthusiasm.

"Is this Addington Peace at home, do you think?" he continued.

"I don't know," I told him. "I should walk upstairs and find out if I were you."

"There I recognize the practical head. You know him?"

"Yes."

"Then, we will go together. You can introduce me."

I was offended at the noise and bluster of the man; but he had grabbed my arm, and I didn't want a scene at my own door. I led him up the stairs, his voice growing silent as his lung capacity weakened. The inspector's voice cried an invitation to my knock, and I entered, with the colonel puffing at my heels like a locomotive on a stiff incline.

"Sorry to disturb you, Peace," I said; "but this is a gentleman by the name of Gunton, and he appears anxious to make your acquaintance."

The little man rose from his easy-chair, and stood looking at the stranger with an expression of great good-humor.

For myself, I was about to withdraw when the colonel's hand dropped heavily upon my shoulder.

"Don't you go," he said. "A cosmopolitan, a detective and a man of the world, as I am, form a unique combination. And, by Gad! gentlemen, we shall want all our brains over this affair."

I glanced at Peace, who smiled and nodded. So I stayed.

The colonel kindly consented to take the most comfortable chair, sighed, stretched out his legs, lit a cheroot and then, without further introduction, plunged into his story.

"Perhaps you have heard of Julius Taubery? No? Well, it's a name as well known throughout India as the viceroy's. He is the head of one of the richest firms in Calcutta. Went out there as a young man, worked well, married well, and ended well in all things, save his constitution, with which he played the very devil. In 1906 he returned and took a fine London house in Portland place, together with an old hall down in Devonshire. A month ago the doctors ordered him out of England for life. Rough on him, wasn't it, seeing that he had spent two-thirds of his time out of it already? But the south of France is his only chance, they tell him; so, like a wise man, he is selling off his sticks, and settling down at Mentone, without squealing to show how much it hurts him."

"Julius and his wife—she's one of the kindest-hearted women—have been giving some farewell parties to their old friends. They had a lunch today, one-thirty sharp, and a lot of people turned up. After the ladies had left us, the talk, as luck would have it, fell on precious stones; and Julius Taubery is a crank on them if there ever was one. His wife wears the finest jewels in London, and the old man is supposed to have many thousand pounds' worth more locked away, which he won't trust even her with the handling."

"Gentlemen," says he, "I will show you something that may interest you."

It is a new purchase of mine, and it happens to be a remarkable stone!"

"He pulled a green case from an inside pocket, flipped it open, and there the thing was as big as a walnut. The lights were on, it being dull weather, and the stone blinked and sparkled like the sun on dancing water."

"My word, Julius," I said. "But that's a risky bit of stuff to carry about with you."

"It's going to the bank this afternoon," he answered. "So if you want to examine the pretty pebble, gentlemen, this is your last chance."

"And with that he took it from its case, as proud as a young husband of his first baby, and sent it round the table."

"I was sitting on Julius' left. Between us was a fat old boy, who was a stranger to me. He took a long stare at the stone, whistling softly between his teeth, before he passed it on. It went from hand to hand, never out of sight, so far as I could notice, until it came to Sir Andrew Carillon, who fancies himself an expert on gems. They say that when Lady Carillon is in the stalls, the play is finished to the women sitting behind her, for they can't keep their eyes off her pearls. Sir Andrew pulled out a magnifying glass, and began examining the diamond."

"I congratulate you, Taubery," he said, after about a minute. "You have acquired a historical stone!"

"Old Julius leant back, with a smile half-way round his head, but he didn't say a word."

"This stone," said Sir Andrew, in the heavy, pompous way that he has, tapping it with his magnifying glass to attract attention, "this stone is the celebrated Hyderabad diamond, to which first historical reference is made in the year 1584. It was captured by the Rajah of Hyderabad from a ruling chief in the Deccan after a battle, in which four thousand men lost their lives. In 1680 it was stolen from the rajah's palace by a Spaniard, who escaped to Bombay, where he was robbed and murdered. The stone disappeared for about sixty years."

"It subsequently came into the possession of one of the East India company's agents, who was stabbed to death in his bungalow near Calcutta about 1760. The diamond, which is held to have inspired the attack, was saved from the robbers by the appearance of his guests and servants. The widow brought it to Europe and sold it to the Duc d'Alembert, who lost his diamond and incidentally his life in the French revolution. It turned up again at the court of Napoleon III., being then in the possession of Henri Marvay, the well-known financier. Until today I thought it was still in his family."

"It is one of the very few large diamonds that is absolutely without a flaw, and its value in the open market today would be approaching thirty thousand pounds. Any one who takes an interest in historical stones might be tempted to give even a higher price; for there has been enough blood split over it, gentlemen, to fill the bath of its fortunate possessor."

"He laid down the diamond on the table and looked at his host with a malicious grin. But all connoisseurs are alike; they are as covetous of each other's pet treasures as so many cats."

"All the time that Sir Andrew had been speaking, the fat fellow next to me had been snorting and swelling until, 'pon my soul, I thought he was in for a stroke of apoplexy. I am the best-tempered of men, but I have my limits, and the old grampus was one of them."

"Are you in pain, sir?" I asked him.

"Yes, I am, sir," he said, in such a high, squeaky voice that all the table could hear him. "I object to listening to the definitions of so-called experts, who cannot tell a diamond from a glass marble. Experts? Humbug, that's what I call them!"

"Do you refer to me, Professor Endicott?" began Sir Andrew, leaning forward, with a very red face.

"Most certainly I do."

"Then I must ask you for an explanation or an immediate apology."

"A man who can make so ludicrous an error deserves neither the one nor the other," cried the professor, in great excitement. "That stone has been in the possession of the Princes of Pavaloff for three hundred years. Prince Peter, the present head of the family, kindly allowed me to examine it when I was in Moscow in 1894. I was not aware that he had sold it. I trust, Mr. Taubery, that you obtained it from a respectable source; if not, I should be no true friend did I hide from you my belief that it had been stolen."

"If a man had said such a deucedly insulting thing to me I should have

knocked him down there and then. I would, 'pon my soul, without thinking more about it. But Julius lay back in his chair, smiling all over his face. I suppose those collectors get accustomed to each other's little ways; they're a queer lot, anyway."

"You can be quite easy on that point, Professor Endicott," he said. "Prince Peter was, unfortunately, involved in the late Dolorouski conspiracy, but had time to slip across the Russian frontier before the police could arrest him. I bought the diamond from his agent in Paris."

"You interest me deeply, Mr. Taubery," struck in Sir Andrew, speaking very softly, though we could all see he was in a devil of a rage. "Even I was not aware of the existence of the Pavaloff diamond. If my memory does not fall me, it is slightly disfigured by a flaw on the eighth facet."

"Certainly, Sir Andrew," said our host; "if you examine the stone you will see that such is the case."

"There is no such blemish on the diamond I have before me. Therefore I humbly suggest that you have been deceived by this Parisian agent as to its origin."

"Professor Endicott climbed to his feet with a grunt of dissatisfaction, and leant over the table, thrusting out his podgy flat to receive the jewel. He remained standing, with his body swayed forward, so that the electric lights above the silver center piece might shine the brighter upon what he held. Presently he dropped his hands to his sides and stood staring about him like a plowman lost in Piccadilly."

"This is not the stone I examined five minutes ago," he muttered.

"Nonsense," said old Julius, with a shadow of fear in his eyes. "Nonsense, Endicott; look again."

"Can it be that two such famous experts have made a mistake?" sneered Sir Andrew. "Can it be that a humble amateur like myself is right and that they are wrong? As I told you, gentlemen, the Hyderabad diamond—"

"Hyderabad diamond be d—d!" squealed the fat man. "This thing is a fake, a clumsy imitation. Taubery, you have been robbed!"

"We were all on our feet in an instant amid a clamor of tongues. But there was one man amongst us that kept his head; one man who realized that his honor was in peril; that immediate action was necessary. His name—if I am not too egotistical—is Theophilus Gunton."

"Fortunately I have a voice of some power, and a manner that, when my feelings are strongly moved, is perhaps not unimpressive. I commanded

and obtained silence. I begged them to resume their seats; they obeyed."

"Julius Taubery," I said, "has your diamond disappeared?"

"He answered that it had, looking at the imitation stone, which they had returned to him, in a silly, scared way."

"Julius Taubery," I continued, "we, your guests, lie under a stigma, an imputation. We cannot leave the house under such circumstances. Some one must have brought the imitation stone with him for a purpose that it is needless to define. The real jewel must be in his pocket at this moment. Let us, therefore, be searched."

"They all sat silent as mice under my eye, save the professor, who grunted as if in dissent."

"Do I understand that you object to my plan, sir?" I asked him. "Do you refuse to be searched? And if so, may I ask why?"

"He gave me an angry look, but he had not the courage to contest the point."

"Then, I may take it that we are all agreed. Taubery, you have a library upon this floor. As I passed the door before lunch I noticed that there was an excellent fire there. Professor Endicott and myself will retire to that room. I will search the professor; the professor shall search me. After that the rest of the guests will come, one by one, into the room, where we will search them in turn. Let us have no delay. Professor Endicott, I am very much at your service."

"I went through that party, gentlemen, as our Transatlantic cousins would express it, with a fine-tooth comb. And I feel it my duty to say that not one of them raised the smallest objection to the severity of my methods. They were like lambs, gentlemen, they were, by thunder! But I obtained no result. The Taubery diamond had disappeared."

"Poor old Julius was quite broken down about it. He placed the whole matter in my hands. On my way to Scotland Yard I remembered what an old friend of mine had told me about you. 'If you are ever in a hole, Gunton,' he said, 'get Addington Peace—he is the man.' You were off duty. I inquired your address; I am here. And now, what are you going to do?"

"Can you remember who it was that introduced the subject of precious stones at your luncheon party?" asked Inspector Peace.

"'Pon my life I don't know," said the colonel, polishing his eye-glasses with a red silk pocket handkerchief. "It was one of the fellows at the other end of the table, but I can't say which of them."

(CHRONICLES TO BE CONTINUED.)

WHEN THE MIND FAILS

MAN WHO SUFFERED CALLS ATTENTION TO WRONG METHODS.

Prevailing Attitude Toward Insanity Ridiculous, if Not Disgusting, He Declares—Mental Disorders Should Be Looked To.

"In every line of mental research it is admitted that prevention is more important than cure—with the exception of mental diseases," says Clifford Whittingham Beers, who created a sensation a few years ago when, under the title *A Mind That Found Itself*, he published a record of his years of insanity and of his awakening from mental death. "Our scientific attitude toward diseases of the mind is truly amazing. We consider them as something unavoidable. We watch stupidly the disease running its course from a slight disturbance of mental processes until the first violent manifestations of insanity."

"If a man presents the slightest symptoms of pneumonia or even measles he receives immediate treatment of some kind. On the other hand, a patient who is suffering from disease of the mind, the most threatening calamity of life, must be so far advanced in the disease and so disordered in action or in speech as to satisfy a lay tribunal of the necessity of justification of the forcible deprivation of his liberty, must be told that he is 'insane,' must be 'adjudged insane' and 'committed' by a court to an institution for the insane before he can receive the treatment best adapted to the restoration of his health."

"The public should be convinced that insanity is a disease like any other disease; people must be taught to seek intelligent advice promptly whenever something 'seems to be the matter with their nerves,' instead of concealing their fears for mere shame."

"Had I, for instance, at the age of eighteen, when I began to worry myself into a state of depression, had access to advice and information, and had I, as a result of an established and widespread interest in mental hygiene, sought such advice as a matter of course, as persons threatened with tuberculosis now seek the help and advice they need, I am confident that I should not have suffered the affliction of mental disorder. Though I took medicine for 'nerves,' I did not find the remedy I needed, which was a verbal corrective for thought and fears which were to prove my temporary undoing."

"It may take some time before a sick man is no more ashamed of calling on a physician for incipient insanity than for a cold in his head, but let us hope that time will arrive eventually. A campaign of education is sorely needed to dispel the superstitions still prevalent in the public mind as to the cause of insanity."

Apple Tree Holds Record.

An apple tree growing in the Walla Walla Valley, Washington, holds the fruit-yield record. It produced nearly 200 bushels of apples last season, thus breaking its own record of 126½ boxes in 1907, the highest production, we are assured, from a single tree known anywhere in the world. This tree bore 70 boxes in 1906, 42 boxes in 1908 and 45 boxes in 1909. More than 500 barrels of fruit have been picked from it since it came into bearing in the spring of 1871.

The tree was grown without irrigation from a seedling planted in 1866. It is forty-two feet in height and its branches spread fifty-seven feet from tip to tip. The trunk is seven feet in circumference at the base and measures six feet six inches just below the first limb, which is four feet from the ground and measures four feet seven inches. The tree is sound and healthy despite the fact that it has produced fruit every season for nearly forty years.—New York Press.

Why He Was Popular.

The man with a natural aptitude for mechanics received so many invitations to take automobile trips with friends who acted as their own chauffeur that he came to be envied by his less popular acquaintances. One day the popular guest condescended to enlighten them on his true status.

"You fellows needn't get green-eyed," he said. "I haven't got such a snap as you think I have. What they want me to go along for is to blow up the tires and make repairs in case of accident. I wouldn't be such a hot favorite if I wasn't so proficient in that line. The knowledge that I wouldn't be somewhat galling, but as I enjoy the trips I swallow my pride and accept the invitations."

Fortunate.

Kitty—Isn't it a most fortunate thing?

Ethel—What?

Kitty—That people can't read the kisses that have been printed upon a girl's lips.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

The only way to keep a man is to let him go.



GREAT IS THE BUCKWHEAT! WATER PORTERS OF QUITO

Only Pumpkin Pie May Be Likened to the Tasteful Cereal Cakes, Says Rhapsodist.

This modest flowering plant makes but a poor showing in our annual crop returns—some 10,000,000 bushels, perhaps. As a grain it figures insignificantly, outside of New York and Pennsylvania. But it is to be noted that the honey bee is aware of its peculiar virtue, preferring alone the white clover to the buckwheat blossoms. Farmers who keep beehives know this and plant patches of the grain.

Wise as the bee is the man who awaits the honey from the hive, the flour from the buckwheat; then follows the griddle cake.

Its time is at hand. It goes with sausage or Philadelphia scrapple. There are such distinct American products that one reads with keen sympathy in the latest life of the expatriated genius, Whistler, how he was so devoted to buckwheat cakes that "he insisted almost at the price of friendship that others share his enthusiasm." How could others be expected to do so born outside the buckwheat belt? Wretched, homesick artist.

Other countries are blessed with special foods, from the caviare of Russia to the macaroni of Italy, but they are beyond the miss, pitifully ignorant of what they miss and of what we are about to enjoy. In America there is nothing sectional about the buckwheat cake; it springeth up as a lowly flower, and, in the common taste for it, is to be likened only to the unpretentious pumpkin pie.—Philadelphia Press.

Stitch in Time.

A Los Angeles brain specialist says that all Americans will be baldheaded within 300 years because of their intense brain activity. Editor Ake of the Iron County Register, at Ironton, saw the item, and with more or less caution tells his subscribers: "I will begin at once to curb the too, too lively tenor of the gray matter which fills my cranium. Forewarned is forefended, you know."—St. Louis Republic.