

# THE DIAMOND RIVER

BY DAVID MURRAY

## CHAPTER V.

The big man finished his big meal and took an armchair by the fire. He unfastened his shoes, pushed them from his feet and put on a pair of slippers, talking all the time in sheer exuberance of spirits.

"And now," he said, "it's your turn, Harvey. Let's discuss your prospects. For my own part, I'm a man of my word, unless I see good reason for going back from it. Unless something which won't be of my making comes it between us, you'll be my heir. How like you are to your poor dear mother: Dear me! I was saying—Come in."

He broke off his speech to answer a knock at the door. A waiter entered.

"Mr. Jethroe, I believe, sir?"

"Mr. Jethroe? Yes."

"I was to say, sir, that a gentleman representing the Ezekiel firm is in the house, and to ask you at what time it would be convenient for you to see him in the morning."

Harvey Martin Jethroe the elder rose. He cleared his throat with a loud, rasping cough.

"What name did the gentleman give?" he asked.

"He didn't give his name to me, sir," the waiter answered; "but the gentleman is staying here, sir, and I believe it is a Mr. Joseph Taylor."

"Taylor?" said Uncle Martin, questioningly. "Taylor? New man, most likely. You said the Ezekiel firm?"

"Yes, sir, the Ezekiel firm."

"Oh, well, tell him to choose his own time between nine and mid-day."

"Thank you, sir."

The waiter vanished, and Uncle Martin resumed his seat by the fire. His manner was so altered that the dullest observer in the world could not have missed the change. He made some attempt to talk in the old way, and, failing in that, he set his nephew talking; but he lapsed into such evident oblivion of what was being said that the younger man went silent in his turn. The cessation of his companion's speech served to awaken him.

"Well?" he said, suddenly. "Go on, Harvey. Go on, lad."

"I am afraid, sir," said Harvey, "you have had some kind of unpleasant reminder. Perhaps you would rather that I didn't trouble you just at present."

"Well, yes," said his uncle, "it's unpleasant. A set of hungry scoundrels! I shouldn't wonder now—"

He sank once more into a complete abstraction, and sat with his big hands clenched between his knees, looking into the fire.

"Look here, Harvey," he said, recovering himself as swiftly as before, "I'll tell you what I want you to do for me. Stay here to-night, and in the morning go down to the bank first thing and see that ten thousand is all right. Don't disturb me before you start. Draw twenty-five hundred in gold, will you? Draw as much more as you like, but have twenty-five hundred dollars ready for me at any moment when I may ask for it. I'm going to my bedroom; I've a heap of things to do and to think about. Good night."

The bank manager, in a new access of bewilderment, rose to shake hands with him.

"If you want anything, ring for it," said Uncle Martin. "The waiter will show you to your room. Good night, again. Don't forget that twenty-five hundred. Gold, mind you."

He gave his nephew another handshake, which was quite limp and heartless, and walked into the next room, where he tramped heavily up and down for a full quarter of an hour. At the end of this time Harvey Jethroe the younger began to feel as if, in lingering there, he were somehow playing the spy, and rang to be shown to his own apartment. Arrived there, he undressed and went to bed, but sleep for a long time failed him.

"I shall wake up in my own room tomorrow," he said to himself, "and laugh at this ridiculous nightmare—murdered man, millionaire, uncle, check book, Ezekiel firm and all."

He was settling down at last, and when he had murmured to himself, "It's too—" he fell sound asleep for half a moment, and came broad awake to say, "Preposterous!" Then he fell asleep in earnest, and forgot even to dream.

The force of custom awoke him at his customary hour. He took a bath, ate a light breakfast and chartered a cab. He was still a quarter disposed to think a part of last night's adventure was a dream, but the smiling entry of the senior partner of his firm made one side of it real enough.

"You must allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Jethroe," said the senior partner, "on your uncle's return."

"He called on me last night, sir," said Jethroe, "and told me—"

"That he had placed fifty thousand dollars at your disposal? That is so, Mr. Jethroe, and you may rely upon us to honor your draft to that amount. I presume you are aware of your uncle's testamentary disposition. No?"

The senior partner smiled. "This is no betrayal of confidence, Mr. Jethroe, no betrayal."

"My uncle asked me, sir," said Jethroe, "to take him twenty-five hundred dollars in gold this morning."

"Certainly," said the senior partner, "certainly. Give me your check, Mr. Jethroe."

There never was a man more astonished in this world than Harvey Jethroe when, having signed his name to a check, he saw the senior partner carry it to the cashier. He made some pro-

test, but was smilingly waved back to his own official armchair, and in a minute or two the senior partner was back again.

"There is a bag, Mr. Jethroe," said the great man, "containing the exact amount."

He wore a comedy manner the manager had never seen before, or expected to see, and this increased the bewilderment of the whole bewildering business of the last fourteen hours.

Jethroe took the solid, heavy little bag of gold, climbed into the waiting cab and drove back to the hotel.

"Mr. Martin Harvey Jethroe," he said to the servant in the hall, for he had not remarked the number of his uncle's room.

"Mr. Jethroe has gone away, sir," said the man.

## CHAPTER VI.

"Gone away?" asked Harvey.

"If you are Mr. Jethroe's nephew, sir, I believe there is a note waiting for you at the office."

"Thank you. I will ask for it."

He was still nursing the solid little bag of gold when he demanded his letter, and it occurred to him that it would be wise to deposit it in safe keeping. He surrendered it to the clerk, took a receipt for it, and then opened the letter, which had been already placed before him. It had evidently been written in great haste, and it ran thus, without date or preface:

"I am going away to lie low for a while. I have good reason, and you shall know about it by and by. Meantime do one thing for me. Stop on in my rooms here under your own name."

The last four words were heavily underlined.

He was wondering what new development in his strangely altered fortunes this might portend, when he found on the inside of the envelope flap the words, "You may hear from me at any moment."

He walked upstairs, pondering deeply, but beginning to feel as if the bottom had fallen out of his portion of the universe. Standing upon the hearth rug with his back to the fire, and nursing a polished silk hat in both hands, was a stranger, who bowed ceremoniously and silently.

"May I ask if you have business here, sir?" asked Harvey.

"I have, sir," the stranger answered, with a certain brisk politeness. "I believe this room is occupied by Mr. Harvey Martin Jethroe."

"That is my name," said Harvey.

"Excuse me," said the stranger, "but you are not the man who took these rooms?"

"The rooms were taken for me, sir," said Harvey, "and, as you see, I occupy them."

"I must really beg you to excuse me, sir. My name is Taylor—Joseph Taylor. I have business, serious and important business, with Mr. Harvey Martin Jethroe, late of Brazil. That is a portrait of the gentleman, and that is the gentleman who took these rooms."

Harvey took from his outstretched hand the cabinet portrait of the other tendered to him, and looked at it, and as he knew very well without raising his eyes to verify his own certainty, Mr. Joseph Taylor looked at him, and looked hard. The young man took his line with little more than a second's hesitation. For one reason or another his uncle had been profoundly agitated by the mention of this man's name and business. He had evidently gone away to avoid the man, and had evidently had in his own mind some hint of the stratagem which his nephew had put in practice.

"You are quite right, sir," he said, handing back the photograph. "That is the gentleman who took the trouble to retain these rooms for me."

"This is the person with whom I have business, sir," said Mr. Taylor, with considerable asperity.

"If you have business with that gentleman," Harvey returned, "I shall be very glad to convey to him anything you may say, or any communication you may confide to me."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Taylor. "You may tell him from me that the Ezekiel firm is not likely to put up with any subterfuge, sir. You may tell him from me that he was accompanied on his passage from Brazil by a member of that firm. You may tell him from me that the firm will insist upon its rights, and that if its ends are not to be secured by peaceable means, it is prepared to leave no stone unturned in order to achieve them. You may go so far as to tell him, sir, that Little William is on the warpath."

Mr. Joseph Taylor, who was a red-haired man of sanguine complexion, had talked himself into a red heat by this time. He snatched his hat from the table and waved it to his head with a gesture which bespoke finality.

"Little William, sir," he repeated; "don't forget Little William. Perhaps Mr. Jethroe may see fit to change his mind when he hears of Little William."

Harvey thought he had heard a tap at the door through the storming voice of Mr. Taylor, and as that gentleman turned to go he walked straight into the arms of last night's inspector. The officer was in plain clothes now, but Harvey recognized him in a flash.

"Good morning," said the inspector, marching straight to business. "I'm afraid this is a little bit of an indiscretion on your part, Mr. Jethroe. I warned you last night, sir, that if you wanted to make any sort of a move it might be sensible to let me know beforehand."

"I think," said Harvey, "we can dispense with this gentleman's presence."

Good morning, Mr. Taylor. You may rely upon me to deliver your message."

Mr. Taylor withdrew, having apparently exhausted the resources of diplomacy for the moment, and the inspector went on impassively:

"I'm afraid you've made an error in running away from inquiry, and it will be my duty to see that the maneuver isn't repeated. There's my warrant for the action I am taking, Mr. Jethroe."

"But my uncle is alive!" cried Harvey, when he had mastered the contents of the half-printed, half-written document the inspector held out to him. "He arrived last night, and these rooms are his."

"The gentleman at the morgue isn't alive, you know," said the inspector. "Now, don't make a song about it, Mr. Jethroe. As soon as you care to make yourself ready, Mr. Jethroe, we'll make a start."

"Where do you mean to take me?" Harvey asked, with a tightening at the throat.

"Well," the inspector answered, "it's central station, as it happens."

"I suppose," said the prisoner a minute or two later, as he and the inspector drove together, "you can recommend me to a lawyer?"

"Well, that's not a part of my duty, Mr. Jethroe," the inspector answered, "but I don't think you'll find a smarter man than Hargraves."

"Can I send for him?"

"Certainly, if you wish it. I dare say you might get a cheaper man, if that's an object."

"I'll get the best man I can," said Harvey. "It's not worth while to spoil this ship for a halfpennyworth of tar."

He laughed as he spoke, though he was by no means in a laughing humor. He checked himself, but the laugh came back, and he had hard work to fight against it. "This is a curious affair," he said, with another spurt of laughter.

"If anybody had told me last night—" "You take my advice," said the inspector. "You keep a tight hand on yourself. Keep what you've got to say for Mr. Hargraves. Anything you say to me I'm bound to repeat in evidence."

With this they came to the station, and Harvey, trying to look as if he were not under arrest, but persuaded of extreme failure, walked up the steps into the building, was formally handed over to the officer in charge, and then left for some three-quarters of an hour to his own reflections. At the end of that time the lawyer was announced—a quiet, gray, keen looking man of fifty—and to him the prisoner told his story. Everything was clearly narrated until the moment when Harvey had reached his home for the second time; but then, remembering his uncle's evident desire for secrecy, he began to boggle and to hesitate and stammer.

"Now, Mr. Jethroe," said the lawyer, "there is no sounder axiom in the world than that a patient should tell his doctor everything. The same rule applies with equal force in such a case as this."

"Very good, sir," said Harvey; "I must trust to your discretion."

This time he disguised nothing, and the solicitor listened with a growing interest until he had reached the end.

"Your employers, Messrs. Perrott, Perrott and Lane, will confirm that part of the business in which they are concerned?" Hargraves asked.

"Certainly."

"Very good. Now, have you any clue to the character of the claim this Ezekiel firm professes to have upon your uncle?"

"Not a shadow of a clue."

"Your uncle's manner led you to think that it was something of a disturbing nature?"

"It conveyed that impression strongly—very strongly."

"And in this morning's interview with Mr. Joseph Taylor, you gathered that some serious threat was conveyed by him?"

"From the man's manner I was inclined to think that he meant me to understand a threat of violence."

(To be continued.)

## Queer Facts About Steel.

Although the steel and iron industry is one of the mightiest of the world and offers such rewards that some of the greatest chemists and other scientists study nothing else, there are lots of apparently simple puzzles about it that no one has been able to solve yet. The man who discovers the right answer to one or more of them may make \$1,000,000 out of it.

Every one who handles steel knows that it gets "tired" at times. After a piece of steel has been subjected to a severe strain for a certain period it may suddenly show a decided weakness. Then the experts say that it is tired; and so it is, for if it is allowed to rest a while it regains its old strength.

Recently it has been found that a steel beam can be made stronger by increasing the load on it gradually—in other words, by exercising it just as a man exercises his muscles when he wishes to make them stronger.

Very often new steel will not pass tests that it should pass, but after a few weeks it is found that it has grown better and passes the tests beautifully. Then, again, steel that was perfect when it was tested often gets "sick." It cracks or becomes brittle, although other steel made at the same time in the same way remains perfectly so. No man knows to-day why these things happen, but lots of people are trying to find out.

## Truth and Fancy.

"Verses" rhymes well with "purses," but that's just a rhyme, you see; and it also rhymes with "curses"—That's more truth than poetry.

—Detroit Tribune.

# Topics of the Times

Oregon apples have been sold in England as high as \$0.15 a bushel.

The population of Costa Rica last December was estimated at 340,000.

American horse blankets are much worn by Japanese coolies in cold weather.

The growing popularity of Switzerland as a winter resort is alarming the hotel keepers of Rome and other Italian cities.

The first cherries appeared in the Paris market this year on March 11; there were thirty-eight of them, and they were sold for \$15.00.

Muir glacier, in Alaska, is the largest in the world. It equals in size all those of the Alps put together, and covers 1,500 square miles.

In Manchuria, Siberia and North China much use is made of Chinese brick tea, not as a beverage, but as a vegetable, boiled with rice and mutton.

All idiots or cretins in the Alps are to be treated, at government expense, with tablets of extracts of the thyroid of sheep and other domestic animals, says the British Medical Journal.

An old man named Kuss was buried in Egregy, Hungary, with his fortune of \$17,500 in his coffin. His relatives heard of it and exhumed the body and divided the money. He was a mean Kuss.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Fattening hogs on pinon nuts is the latest money-making method in Colorado. Half a dozen hog farms have been started in Conejos County this year, with the pinon nut as the staple feed. A quarter a pound for bacon is the net result.

An ordinance for an appropriation of \$10,000 for a combined playground and school garden in Waterview Park, Philadelphia, has been introduced in Select Council. Besides the garden, a playground with gymnastic apparatus, swings and games, there may be a wading pool for the children.

Missouri produces 80 per cent of all the zinc and 90 per cent of all the nickel mined in the United States, while the percentage of lead taken from its mines is nearly as great. The demand for all of these metals is increasing rapidly, and new districts in Missouri are being developed every year.

The "ladies" belonging to the wealthier classes of Ebingen, in Wurttemberg, petitioned the municipality to reserve the public markets for one hour daily for them, in order that they might do their marketing "undisturbed by women of the poorer classes." The municipality declined to accede to this request.

Postal conditions in the interior of Turkey are still in a patriarchal stage of evolution. When a postman arrives in a village, on muleback, he distributes the letters in a public place, giving each his own, and then putting the undelivered ones in the hands of relatives or acquaintances of those to whom they are addressed. Yet it is said that 99 per cent reach their destination.

Two stamps were once put into an offertory box by a lady in Georgetown, says the Philadelphia Ledger. They were two-cent stamps, issued in British Guiana in 1850. The lady had come across an envelope among her papers bearing two of these stamps. The incumbent, Canon Josa, sold the envelope with the two stamps on it by auction and it realized \$1,000. The following year the same two stamps changed hands at \$3,250. The new purchaser sold them for \$3,900 to a German dealer, who sold them to a Russian nobleman for \$5,000.

The record of Japan's recent material progress is, it seems, as remarkable as her progress in military achievements. The increase of postal savings during the first eight months of the war, for example, shows an increase from \$15,380,000 to \$18,312,000, indicating an astonishing increase of the sources from which such savings are drawn—the incomes provided by industrial employment. The savings bank deposits have increased 21 per cent during the same period. There has also been an increase of bank reserves amounting to 5.5 per cent, an increase of 10.5 per cent in rice production, of 8.2 per cent in exports and of 6.2 per cent in imports.—Harper's Weekly.

Peon of the Republic Can Endure the Hardest Kind of Drudgery.

The Mexican peon is the backbone of the republic. Without him the great landed estates, or haciendas, would lie in idleness while agricultural and commercial interests would stagnate, says the Pilgrim. Of a cast-iron constitution, he can endure, apparently without effort, the hardest sort of a drudgery. His energy comes from a diet that consists chiefly of ground peppers, beans or frijoles and a large quantity of tortillas. He works from 6 to 6, enjoying in the meantime his two sim-

ple meals. In general, the Indian farm laborers are of a submissive and respectful disposition. Like the negroes of the South, they are not far from the main building, so as to be on hand whenever their services are required. They usually insist, however, on celebrating their holidays, which lessen their real usefulness about 25 per cent. The holidays are numerous and afford the laborer frequent opportunities to quaff from the stupefying pulque bowl. Their stock of surplus change is not apt to be excessive; it cannot be, when most of them receive but little over 20 cents a day. Field hands in the States of Guanajuato, Michoacan and Queretaro receive a cuartillo of corn in addition to their wages of 12 cents a day. One hacienda, who voluntarily raised the wages of his hands to 18 cents a day, found himself without laborers for two days of the week. As the extra wages supplied living means for the entire week, what was the need of working?

These laborers are of all sizes and ages; but whether young or old, all bear alike upon their brow the depressing and degrading leathern thong that makes of them beasts of burden. The effect of this customary strap or the shape of the head is seen in the fact that the peons, the country over have peak-shaped heads, tending toward the shape of the pointed hat. The supply of laborers is, so to speak, perennial. The young muchacho receives his training in watching the sheep and the goats, acting as messenger, or prodding the burros in the pack train. When he is about 16 years old he takes his place with the regular laborers and begins to cast his eye about for a helpmate. The wife may prove useful, and earn a small wage at some operation as sowing seed. Her life will be a monotonous one. A strip of cloth serves as dress and skirt, a strip of leather provides a sandal; and in the hot regions the clothing for the boys is even as simple. All that is required is a jorong, which consists of a yard of cotton cloth with a hole for the head and two depending flaps to cover breast and back. There is no possibility of their clothing impeding their movements. When the woman takes her husband's meal to him far out in the fields she takes the little toddler with her, fastened securely to her rebozo.

His Dream.

What might be termed "a meat trick" was played on a Kansas City young man at the race track yesterday. Monday night he had a dream in which he saw himself wearing a red carnation and playing the races. In the dream he was winning big rolls of money. Yesterday morning he told one of his friends about the dream and said he intended to wear a red carnation and play the races. In the meantime his friend told half a dozen of the young man's acquaintances about the dream, and they all wore red carnations to Elm Ridge. Before the first race one of the conspirators met the young man who had had the dream.

"Say, Joe," he said, "I had a dream last night that if I wore a red carnation out here to-day I'd win. Now I'm not superstitious—"

The young man swallowed the bait. "You did?" he said in amazement. "Well, Tom, we'll clean these book makers up."

As they started for the betting ring five other carnations came in sight.

"Say, Joe," yelled their wearers in chorus, "I had a dream—"

But the young man had fled into the crowd.—Kansas City Times.

His Eggs Different.

A vegetarian had an amusing experience the other morning while at breakfast. His family was out of town, and he went to a restaurant and took a seat next to a stranger.

The vegetarian took occasion to advertise his creed by telling the stranger that all meat was injurious and that the human diet should be strictly vegetarian.

"But," replied the stranger, "I seldom eat meat."

"You just ordered eggs," said the vegetarian. "An egg is practically meat, because it eventually becomes a bird."

"The kind of eggs I eat never become birds," answered the stranger quietly.

"Good heavens!" cried the vegetarian, "what kind of eggs do you eat?"

"Principally boiled eggs," said the stranger.

Joke on the Inquisitor.

During the south African war the censorship of soldiers' letters home was very strict. One soldier, who always sent an account of the doings of the regiment, which account was always blotted out by the censor, laid a plan for revenge. At the foot of his next letter he wrote, "Look under the stamp." The censor did so, after spending considerable time in steaming the stamp from the envelope. And he found these words: "Was it hard to get off?"

It is a criminal offense to stuff a ballot box, but there is no law prohibiting the stuffing of a contributory box.