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**FOUND TIME FOR AMENITIES**  
How British and Boers Exchanged Compliments During the Long Siege of Kimberley.

During the Boer war Mr. Rhodes was shut up in Kimberley, and the Boers constantly shelled the town with long-range artillery. They were not very successful, for with 300 big shells they only killed 12 people.

Meantime, Mr. Rhodes accomplished the extraordinary feat of getting a cannon built at his works inside the town. It was a regular modern rifled gun, and fired shells—also homemade—on each of which was stamped, "With compliments of C. J. Rhodes."

The Boers themselves were not without a sense of humor. During Christmas, 1899, they were besieging Ladysmith, and on Christmas eve they fired ten plugged shells into the town, each with a piece of plum pudding inside, and each bearing the words, "With the season's compliments."

Two of the shells were found by the garrison, and it was discovered that, like Mr. Rhodes's, they were homemade, having been cast in a foundry at Johannesburg.

**A Substitute River.**  
One of the perplexing problems encountered by coaches of the various "varsity" racing shell crews, that of providing better means for winter training than is offered by the ordinary rowing machine, has been met satisfactorily at Syracuse university through the installation of an indoor rowing tank, provided with mechanical means for simulating the passage of the boat through the water.

This provides what might almost be called actual rowing, besides keeping the men in condition.—Popular Mechanics Magazine.

# The Mystery of the Boule Cabinet

BURTON E. STEVENSON

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CHAPTER XI—(Continued).

Rogers was still sitting dejectedly on the cot and looking at him more closely, I could see that he was white and shaken. His trouble, whatever its nature, plainly lay heavy on his mind.

"Have you anything to tell us this evening, Rogers?" I asked, kindly, but he only shook his head.

"I've told you everything I know, sir," he answered in a low voice.

"I'm not going to hurry you, Rogers," I went on, "but I want you to think it over. You can rely upon me to help you, if I can."

He looked up quickly, but caught himself and turned his eyes away.

"Thank you, sir," was all he said.

"And now," I added, briskly, "I'll have to ask you to get up. Move the cot away from the door, Parks. Parks obeyed with astonished face.

"You're not going in there, sir?" he protested, as he turned the knob.

"Yes, we are," I said, and opened the door. "Is—is—"

"No, sir," broke in Parks, understanding. "The undertakers brought the coffin and put him in it and moved him over to the drawing room this afternoon, sir."

"I'm glad of that. I want all the lights lit, Parks, just as they were last night."

Parks reached inside the door and switched on the electric. Then he went away, came back in a moment with a taper and proceeded to light the gas lights. A moment later the lights in the inner room were also blazing.

"There you are, sir," said Parks, and retreated to the door. "Will you need me?"

"Not now, but wait in the hall outside. We may need you. I had a notion to tell him to have an ax handy, but I saw Godfrey smiling."

"Very good, sir," said Parks, evidently relieved, and went out and closed the door.

I led the way into the inner room. "Well, there it is," I said and nodded toward the Boule cabinet, standing in the full glare of the light, every inlay and incrustation glittering like the eyes of a basilisk. "It isn't too late to give it up, Godfrey."

"Oh, yes, it is," he said, coolly, removing his coat. "It was too late the moment you told me that story. Why, Lester, if I gave it up I should never sleep again."

"And you don't, you may never wake again!" I pointed out.

He laughed lightly.

"What a dismal prophet you are. Draw up a chair and watch me."

"I pulled back his shirt sleeves and placed his electric torch on the floor beside the cabinet. Then he paused with folded arms to contemplate this masterpiece of M. Boule.

"It is a beauty," he said at last, and then drew out the little drawers one after another, looked them over and placed them carefully on a table.

"Now, he added, "let us see if there is any space that isn't accounted for."

He took from his pocket a folding rule of ivory, opened it, and began a series of measurements so searching and intricate that half an hour passed without a word being spoken.

Then he pulled up another chair and sat down beside me.

"I seem to be pretty much up against it," he said, "no doubt just as the designer of the cabinet would wish me to be. The whole bottom of the desk is inclosed and those three little drawers take up only a small part of the space. Then the back of the cabinet seems to be double—at least there's a space of three inches I can't account for. So there's room for a dozen secret drawers, if the Mateo span required so many. And now to find the combination."

He adjusted the steel gauntlet carefully to his right hand and sat down on the floor before the cabinet.

"The best at the bottom," he said. "If there is any spot I miss, tell me of it."

He ran his fingers up and down the graceful legs, carefully feeling every inequality of the elaborate bronze ornamentation. Particularly did his fingers linger on every boss and point, striving to push it in or down; but they were all immovable.

Then he examined the bottom of the table minutely, using his torch to illumine every crevice, but again without success.

"Another half hour passed so, and when at last he came out from under the table his face was dripping with sweat.

"It's trying work," he said, sitting down again and mopping his face. "But isn't it a beauty, Lester? The more I look at it, the more wonderful it seems."

"I told Phillip Vantine I wasn't up to it and I'm not," I said.

"Nor I, but I can appreciate it to the extent of my capacity. It's the Latin XIV ideal of beauty—splendor carried to the ninth degree. Look at the arabesques along the front—can you imagine anything more graceful? And the engraving—nothing cut and dried about that. It was done by a burin in the hands of a master—perhaps by Boule himself. I don't wonder Vantine was rather mad about it. But we haven't found that drawer yet," and he drew his chair close to the cabinet.

"I'd point out one thing to you, Godfrey," I said, "if you go poking about with the fingers of both hands, as you have been doing, you are just as apt to get struck on the left hand as on the right."

"That's true," he agreed. "Stop me if I forget."

There were three little drawers in the front of the table, and these Godfrey had removed. He inserted his hand into the space from which he had taken them, and examined it carefully. Then, inch by inch, he ran his fingers over the bosses and arabesques with which the sides and top of the table were incrustated. It seemed to me that, if the secret drawer were anywhere, it must be somewhere in this part of the cabinet, and I watched him with breathless interest. Once I thought he had found the drawer, for a piece of inlay at the side of the table seemed to give a little under the pressure of his fingers; but no hidden spring was touched; no drawer sprang open; no poisoned fangs descended.

"Well," said Godfrey, sitting back in his chair at last, and wiping his face again, "there's so much done. If there is any secret drawer in the lower part of the cabinet, it is mighty cleverly concealed. Now we'll try the upper part."

The upper part of the cabinet consisted of a series of drawers, rising one above the other, and terminated by a triangular pediment, its tympanum ornamented with some beautiful little bronze. The drawers themselves were concealed by two doors, opening in the center, and covered with a most intricate design of arabesqued incrustations.

"If there is a secret drawer here," said Godfrey, "it is somewhere in the back, where there seems to be a hollow space. But to discover the combination—"

He ran his fingers over the inlay, and then, struck by a sudden thought, tested each of the little figures along the tympanum, but they were all set solidly in place.

"There's one thing sure," he said, "the combination, whatever it is, is of such a nature that it could not be discovered accidentally—by a person leaning on the cabinet, for instance. It isn't a question of merely touching a spring; it is probably a question of releasing a series of levers, which must be worked in a certain order, or the drawer won't open. I'm afraid we are up against it."

"I can't pretend I'm sorry," I said with a sigh of relief. "As far as I am concerned, I'm perfectly willing that the drawer should go undiscovered."

"Well, I am not," retorted Godfrey, curiously, and he sat regarding the cabinet with a half-dazed expression. He rose and began tapping at the back.

"I don't know what it was—for I was conscious of no noise—but some mysterious attraction drew my eyes to the window at the farther side of the room. Near the top of the wooden shutter, which Parks and I had put in place, was a small semi-circular opening, to allow the passage of a little light, perhaps, and peering through this opening were two eyes—two burning eyes.

"They were fixed upon Godfrey with such feverish intensity that they did not seem my own, and I lowered my head in disgust.

"Godfrey," I said, in a shaking voice, "don't look up; don't move your head; but there is some one peering through the hole in the shutter opposite us."

Godfrey did not answer for quite a minute, but kept calmly on with his examination of the cabinet.

"Did he see you look at him?" he asked, at last.

"No, he was looking at you, with his eyes almost starting out of his head. I never saw such eyes!"

"Did you see anything of his face?"

"No, the hole is too small. I fancy I saw the fingers of one hand, which he had thrust through to steady himself."

"How high is the hole?"

"Near the top of the window."

Godfrey came back to his chair a moment later, sat down in it, and passed his handkerchief slowly over his face. Then he leaned forward, apparently to examine the legs of the cabinet.

"I saw him," he said. "Or, rather, I saw his eyes. Rather fierce, aren't they?"

"They're a tiger's eyes," I said, with conviction.

"Well, there is no use going ahead with this while he is out there. Even if we found the drawer, we'd both be dead an instant later."

"Do you mean he'd kill us?"

"He would shoot us instantly. Imagine what a sensation that would make, Lester. Parks hears two pistol shots, rushes in and finds us lying dead. Grady would have a convulsion—and we should both be famous for a few days."

"I'll seek fame in some other way," I said drily. "What are you going to do about it?"

"We've got to try to capture him; and if we do—well, we shall have the fame all right! But it's a good deal like trying to pick up a scorpion—we're pretty sure to get hurt. If the fellow out there is who I think he is, he's about the most dangerous man on earth."

He went on tapping the surface of the cabinet. As for me, I would have given anything for another look at those gleaming eyes. They seemed to be burning into me; hot flashes were shooting up and down my back.

"Why can't I go out as though I were going after something," I suggested. "Then Park and I could charge against the corner and get him. Look at you—you wouldn't get him, he'd get you. You wouldn't have a chance on earth. If there is a window upstairs over that one, you might drop something out on him, or borrow Parks' pistol and shoot him."

"That would be pretty cowardly, wouldn't it?" I suggested, mildly.

"My dear Lester," Godfrey protested, "when you attack a poisonous snake, you don't do it with bare hands, do you?"

"I couldn't help it—I glanced again at those eyes."

"He's gone!" I cried.

Godfrey was at the window in two steps.

"Look at that!" he said, "and then tell me he isn't a genius!"

I followed the direction of his pointing finger and saw that, just opposite the opening in the shutter, a little hole had been cut in the window pane.

"That fellow foresees everything," said Godfrey, with enthusiasm. "He probably cut that hole as soon as it was dark. He must have guessed we were going to examine the cabinet tonight, and he wanted not only to see, but to hear. He heard everything we said, Lester!"

"Let's go after him!" I cried, and, without waiting for an answer, I sprang across the ante-room and snatched open the door which led into the hall.

Parks and Rogers were sitting on the couch just outside and I never saw two men more thoroughly frightened.

"For God's sake, Mr. Lester!" gasped Rogers, and stopped, his hand at his throat.

"Is it Mr. Godfrey?" cried Parks.

"There's a man outside. Get your pistol, Parks!"

"Yes, sir," and he took it from his pocket.

I snatched it from him, opened the front door, leaped the railing, and stole along the house to the corner.

Then, taking my courage in both hands, I charged around it.

"There was no one in sight; but from somewhere near at hand came a burst of mocking laughter."

little hotly. "I heard it quite plainly. He can't be far away."

"Too far for us to catch him," Godfrey retorted, and, torch in hand, proceeded to examine the window-sill and the ground beneath it. "There is where he stood," he added, and the marks on the sill were evident enough.

"Of course, he had his line of retreat blocked out," and he flashed his torch back and forth across the grass, but the turf was so close that no traces of footsteps were visible. We went slowly back to the house, and Godfrey sat down again to a contemplation of the cabinet.

"It's too much for me," he said, at last. "The only way I can find that drawer is to smash it with an ax. But I don't want to smash the thing to pieces—"

"I should say not! It would be like smashing the Venus de Milo."

"Hardly so bad as that. But we won't smash it yet awhile. I'm going to look up the subject of secret drawers—perhaps I'll stumble upon something that will help me."

"And then, of course," I said, disconsolately, "it is quite possible that there is not any such drawer at all."

"I don't agree with you there, Lester. I'll wager that fellow who was looking in at us could find it in a minute."

"He seemed mighty frightened lest you should."

"His real reason to be," Godfrey rejoined grimly, "I'll have another try at it tomorrow. One thing we've got to take care of, and that is that our friend of the burning eyes doesn't get a chance at it first."

"Those shutters are pretty strong," I pointed out. "And Parks is no fool."

"Yes," agreed Godfrey, "the shutters are pretty strong—they might keep him out for 10 minutes—scarcely longer than that. As for Parks, he wouldn't last 10 seconds. You don't seem to understand the extraordinary character of this fellow."

"During your period of exaltation last night," I reminded him, "you referred to him as the greatest criminal of modern times."

"Well," smiled Godfrey, "perhaps that was a little exaggerated. Suppose we say one of the greatest—great enough, surely, to walk all around us, if we aren't on guard. I think I would better drop a word to Simmons and get him to send down a couple of men to watch the house. Yes, the house outside, and Parks on the inside it ought to be fairly safe."

"I should think so!" I said. "One would imagine you were getting ready to repel an army. Who is this fellow, anyway, Godfrey? You seem to be half afraid of him!"

"I'm wholly afraid of him, if he's who I think he is—but it's a mere guess as yet, Lester. Wait a day or two. I'll call up Simmons."

He went to the phone, while I sat down again and looked at the cabinet in a kind of stupefaction. What was the intrigue, of which it seemed to be the center? Who was this man, that Godfrey should consider him so formidable? Why should he have chosen Phillip Vantine for a victim?

Godfrey came back while I was still groping blindly amid this maze of mystery.

"It's all right," he said. "Simmons is sending two of his best men to watch the house." He stood for a moment gazing down at the cabinet. "I'm coming back tomorrow to have another try at it," he added. "I've left the gauntlet there on the chair, so if you feel like having a try yourself, Lester—"

"Heaven forbid!" I protested. "But perhaps I would better tell Parks to let you in. I hope I won't find you a corpse here, Godfrey!"

"So do I! But I don't believe you will. Yes, tell Parks to let me in whenever I come around. And now about Rogers."

"What about him?"

"I rather thought I might want to grill him tonight. But perhaps I would better wait till I get a little more to go on. He paused for a moment's thought. "Yes; I'll wait," he said, finally. "I don't want to run any risk of falling."

We went out into the hall together, and I told Parks to admit Godfrey, whenever he wished to enter. Rogers was still sitting on the cot, looking so crushed and sorrowful that I could not help pitying him. I began to think that, if he were left to himself a day or two longer he would tell all we wished to know without any grilling.

I confided this idea to Godfrey as we went down the front steps.

"Perhaps you're right," he agreed. "I don't believe the fellow is really crooked. Something has happened to him—something in connection with that woman—and he has never got over it. Well, we shall have to find out what it was. Hello, here are the Simmons men," he added, as two policemen stopped before the house.

"Is this Mr. Godfrey?" one of them asked.

"Yes," said Godfrey.

"Mr. Simmons told us to report to you, sir," the other man said.

"What we want you to do," said Godfrey, "is to watch the house—watch it from all sides—patrol clear around it and see that no one approaches it."

"Very well, sir," and the men touched their hats, and one of them went around to the back of the house, while the other remained in front.

(Continued next week.)

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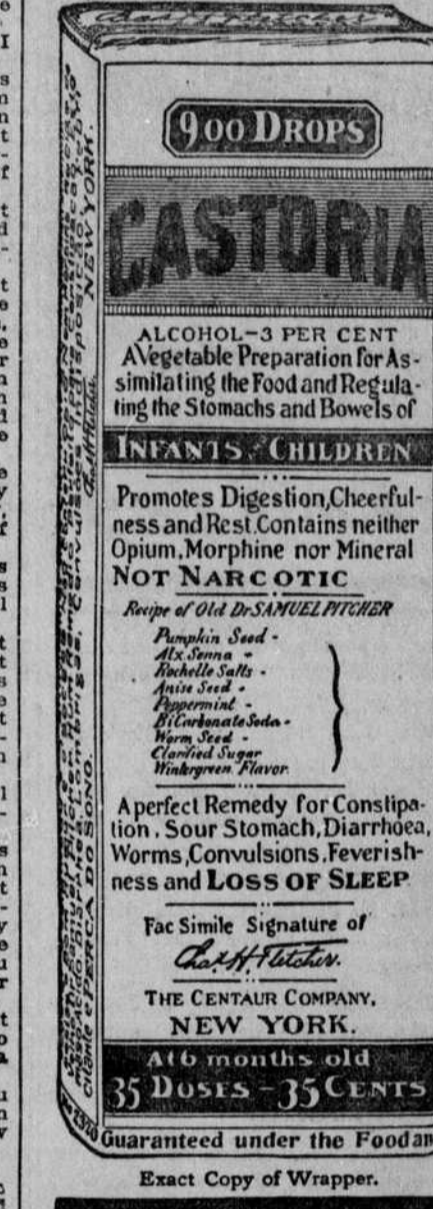
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