

Knave of Diamonds

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one minute." He stepped into the back room and shut the door.

His hand trembled as he dialled Roffmeyers. . . . The owner of the stone was in his shop now; did they think it would be safe for him—Levinstein—to give a thousand? . . . Roffmeyers were noncommittal, but they thought so; their client, they felt sure, would even go to eleven hundred if the stone was in all respects a perfect match. . . . Yes, they were quite willing to do nothing until they had seen him in the morning.

He came back to find a patiently disinterested Ladislav leaning against the counter.

"My friend is crazy," he announced, "I told him that you would not sell; no, not even for nine hundred pounds, but he said, and here Mr. Levinstein paused dramatically. "He said to me, 'Solly, I want that stone; offer him a thousand.' Such a price, such a price, but what can I do? It is his money. Tst, tst, tst, one thousand pounds for a seven-fifty diamond." Heads of moisture covered his forehead.

Ladislav judged the time to be ripe.

"It's a thundering big price," he admitted. "I suppose he'd better have it since he's so jolly keen. It's sheer robbery, of course."

Mr. Levinstein almost snatched the case. "I will write you a cheque," he began when the other laid a hand on his arm.

Ladislav was smiling. "Notes," he said gently, "I should prefer notes." And he was still smiling as he got into his waiting taxi.

LADISLAV paid his third and last visit to Roffmeyers soon after that establishment opened its doors the following morning. In the show-room he buttonholed the manager.

"I've come round to settle my account," he explained. "Five hundred, isn't it?" While his receipt was being made out he drew the other a little to one side. "I'm afraid I've put you to a great deal of trouble for nothing," he said apologetically, "but I have decided not to buy that other stone. The truth of the matter is I've got to economise, and the lady I'd intended giving it to is very much opposed to my spending such a lot of money just now."

The manager stroked his chin. "That's really rather awkward. I've a man coming to see me this morning—he should be here at any moment—"

"You haven't bought—" Ladislav interrupted hastily. "Certainly not; only I must confess I gave him to believe that we were likely to purchase this stone."

"Yes, that's very unfortunate," Ladislav agreed, "but you're not under any liability, I hope?"

"None whatever," the manager rejoined. "I was particularly careful not to make any definite statement."

Ladislav was moving away when the door opened to admit the panting figure of Mr. Levinstein.

"Good morning," Ladislav said politely. "I hope your friend was pleased with his diamond."

The pawnbroker muttered something and turned to the manager. "My name's Levinstein. I have an appointment with you for nine-thirty."

The manager was visibly embarrassed. "I was just going to ring you up and say that the deal was off. Our client," he waved his hand towards Ladislav, "Mr. Baronovski, has decided not to make a further purchase."

"You mean you don't want my stone now?"

"Roffmeyers," the manager corrected him, "were never in the market. We have been acting merely as intermediaries between two principals."

Mr. Levinstein gulped. "Him buying diamonds?" he pointed at Ladislav. "Why it was him as sold me this one," and he thrust the jewel case under the manager's nose.

It was the latter's turn to be surprised. "It is certainly the same stone," he acknowledged. "Perhaps Mr. Baronovski can explain?"

Ladislav was watching the pawnbroker with a quizzical smile.

"Of course," he volunteered. "Although there's really nothing to explain. Mr. Levinstein offered me a thousand pounds and I accepted his offer. I was under the impression that he wanted the stone for a friend. There never was any question of price versus value, and the fact that he chose to give such a large sum was entirely his own concern. As the stone is paid for," he glanced at the receipt in his hand, "I cannot understand what all the fuss is about."

"But I cannot understand why you took it there in the first place," the manager spoke in puzzled tones.

"There were reasons," Ladislav said loftily, "which I have no intention of discussing in public."

Mr. Levinstein's face was working queerly. "I've been swindled," he shouted suddenly. "If one of you don't take it back I'd like to know

who's going to buy a seven hundred quid diamond for a thousand? You're no more than a dirty thief," he roared at Ladislav, "for all your silk hats and white spats."

The man was shocked; "That'll do, Mr. Levinstein," he interposed, "We will keep those remarks for another time. I haven't got this straight yet, but it seems to me that there's no law preventing any one accepting a thousand for what is worth seven hundred, provided both parties are aware of that fact, and I gather that your only object in coming here was to dispose of this particular stone for a still higher figure. Frankly," he turned to Ladislav, "I am at a loss to understand why a man in your position should find it necessary to pawn a diamond for a hundred after depositing two hundred on the same stone," his last words embraced them both. "It appears to be a case of diamond cut diamond and one, moreover, where the less polished stone has failed to make much impression."

THE point was a fine one and was duly thrashed out in the subsequent suit of Levinstein v. Baronovski, when the only fresh evidence brought to light was a brief but illuminating note from Count Baronovski in which he expressed both ignorance of, and lack of interest in his son since the beginning of the current year.

Nor was the summing-up of the Learned Judge who ultimately dismissed the case dissimilar from the opinions passed by the manager of Roffmeyers.

(THE END.)

She Was Self-Conscious

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In the six years since then, they have corresponded regularly and frequently. She has sent him perhaps 500 photographs of herself. Not even trying rehearsal periods, difficult working schedules, have delayed her prompt reply to his weekly letters. It isn't in the nature of the girl to discard old friends for new ones or to transfer allegiance.

Sagas about this girl's talent for friendship have already begun in Hollywood. There is the story of the dancing class she formed composed of electricians and "prop" men and labourers. One day an electrician came to her, asked her if she would teach him a "time" step she was doing. He was afraid of being teased by the rest of the crew, so she took him behind a set and began instruction. Soon others came to her, with the same bashful plea, and so she organised a class of 10, which met after working hours, and learned routines under the tutelage of the world's greatest feminine step-dancer.

Eleanor Powell has set a swift pace for future aspirants to overnight stardom. For this girl has just about everything in the way of talent. She is a splendid comedienne, a fine classical dancer, she sings, and is a top-notch mimic. Her tap-dancing, of course, is matchless. She has, also, dramatic powers, which the camera will doubtless further develop.

Her next picture is to be "Broadway Melody of 1937," and audiences throughout the world may well be grateful for this new and scintillating personality.

Her dancing doesn't stop at the studio. For every hour of tap-dancing, she had to do an hour of ballet work to keep her legs in condition.

Naturally, many people ask her how to become a good tap-dancer. Her answer is always the same: "Get a basic training of ballet."

She did, and so did Fred Astaire.

Her friends say that only one thing will get the Powell temper to a red-hot point; people who don't think that she makes up all of her steps herself. Once she read in a newspaper column that some instructor was helping her figure out the steps for her new picture. She was so hurt that she cried for an hour.

She's really the pet of the studio. When the chorus men and girls discovered that she had purchased a new car they put their pennies together, and bought her a radio to go with it.

She doesn't go in for a very social life. She says she's too tired after dancing all day.

When she rented her new house the first she has had since her arrival in Hollywood, she told her mother that she wanted to give a party right away.

Her guest list was unusual in that it listed her hairdresser, her make-up boy, her wardrobe woman, and her pianist.

'Plane's Value In Defence

Lessons Of Singapore "Battle"

LONDON, By Air Mail.

Conclusive evidence that aeroplanes can locate enemy surface and underwater warships at such distances from the homeland that effective counter-attacks can be launched at the will and leisure of the defending commander is provided by the combined air, sea, and land manoeuvres around Singapore. For four days, recently, 25 naval units, 4000 troops, and more than 100 aircraft were engaged in mimic war.

This is the conclusion of the Society of British Aircraft Constructors, which surveys the manoeuvres from the point of view of aviation. The success of aerial patrol and search over large sectors of sea radiating from Singapore, and the swift and damaging attacks by torpedo-planes and bombers on warships, which were yet several hours from their objective, have, it is stated, deeply impressed the strategists.

Governing the course of the manoeuvres was the assumption that Singapore (Red Land) was menaced by an expedition, comprising warships, troop transports, and aircraft carriers sent against her by an imaginary State called Blue Land, located some 1200 miles to the south-east. The two countries had always lived on friendly terms, but on January 6 the Red Land command headquarters received notification, which was not believed at the time, that Blue Land had resolved on an attack.

Six days later indisputable evidence reached Red Land that a hostile expedition was being prepared, and was expected to sail towards the end of the month. Definite news of the sailing was flashed to Red Land headquarters on January 31, and protective measures were at once begun.

Official statements reveal that aerial participation in the exercises covered three main phases, only one of which, the third and last, was concerned with the war between Red Land and Blue Land. The first phase saw reinforcement of the Singapore squadrons by formations from Iraq and India—a difficult task which was performed to schedule and with smooth efficiency between January 17 and 26. The second phase, occupying the period January 25 to 29, was one of combined training for the squadrons.

Individual and "combined synchronised" attacks were practised against armoured high-speed target boats. Dive-bombing attacks were made on a sea-borne marker. By day and night the warplanes sought destroyer and submarine forces, and attacked them out to sea, this phase culminating in a successful night attack against warships 120 miles from Singapore.

NEW AIR FORCE STATION

Coincident with the beginning of "war" was the opening of the new Royal Air Force station at Pengah. Three squadrons were sent there immediately. Air headquarters knew that the Blue Land forces would not be within 250 miles of Singapore before 9 a.m. on February 1.

During the day a protective patrol was established by six flying boats 200 miles from Singapore, under orders to report all enemy vessels by radio, and to shadow the enemy carrier, which, for the purposes of the manoeuvres, was considered equivalent to two carriers. No enemy vessel was sighted all day. With nightfall patrols were established to cover the entrances of the Singapore, Rhio, and Durian Straits, but the following day there was still no sign of the invader.

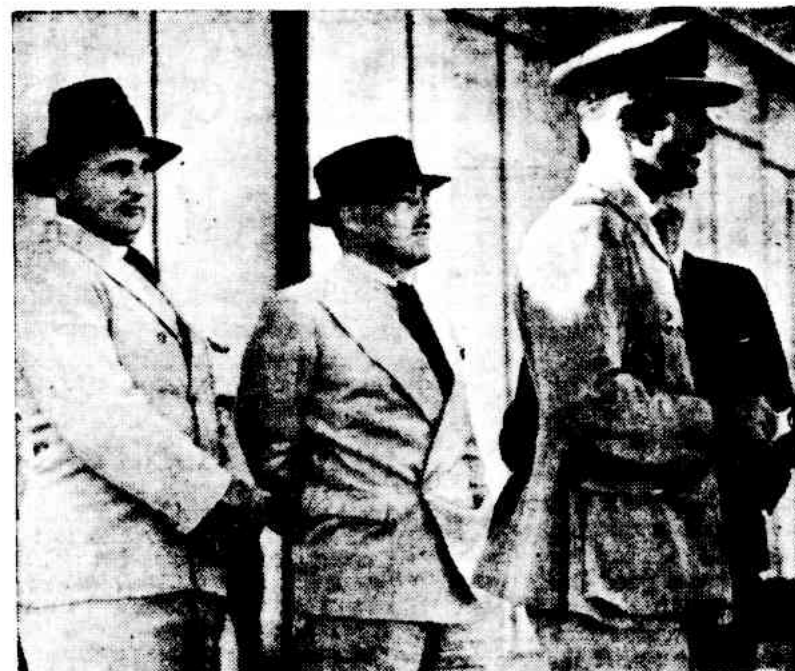
On February 2, the opposing forces made contact. From dawn to mid-day seven flying boats patrolled on "narrow sector" search 220 miles from Singapore; from mid-day to dusk "wide sector" searches were established 150 miles from the city, and special air patrols watched the Malacca Straits. Six enemy destroyers, one aloop, and four submarines were sighted and reported.

All through the night close patrol was maintained over the entrance to the Singapore, Rhio, and Durian Straits. One destroyer was reported. With the dawn, the larger vessels in the enemy fleet were reported close at hand. A cruiser was twice reported in the early hours, and the aircraft carrier force, attended by two destroyers, was sighted 220 miles east-north-east of Singapore.

In succession four flying boats shadowed the carrier force, which continued steaming on a direct course for Singapore. Warned by radio, Red Land headquarters planned immediate counter measures. When the carrier force was still 90 miles from Singapore, two squadrons of aeroplanes met it with dive bombing and torpedo attacks.

An hour later a squadron of torpedo planes delivered a second devastating

FLYING BOAT TRAINING IN ENGLAND



Pilots of Qantas Empire Airways, who left Brisbane by air last week for England, where they will receive training in the handling of the Empire flying boats. From left: Captains W. H. Crowther, C. R. Gurney, and L. J. Brain (flying superintendent).

The Republic of Victoria

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offensive. A squadron set out to hunt for diggers who had no licence. The crowd intervened and stoned the police. One or two shots were fired. At this stage Commissioner Rede attempted to read the Riot Act; he was told by a hundred voices that he might do so if he liked, but that the licences were all burned. He was assured that if he preferred it the whole camp would surrender itself.

Obviously he could not accept this sardonic offer on the part of the diggers, for it was impossible to guard so many prisoners. Accordingly the soldiers were withdrawn while the diggers gathered for a fresh discussion of their wrongs.

Now it was that the Republic of Victoria was born, with Peter Lalor as its first and last head. Members of the Republic solemnly swore to stand by each other and fight to defend the common rights and liberties. Peter Lalor began at once to drill his forces and to strengthen his fortifications. Unfortunately, in the hurry of the moment the commissariat had been overlooked; consequently, the stockaders found themselves without either food or ammunition. Many men ventured abroad in search of these things; and on the evening of December 2 scarcely 200 persons remained in this smallest of republics.

This depletion of the garrison forces was immediately reported by spies to the Goldfield Commissioner. Early on the morning of Sunday, December 3, 276 soldiers silently approached the Eureka Stockade. The diggers had but 50 rifles. The Californian diggers were armed with revolvers, and many of the Irish among the stockaders were provided with pikes.

Most were soundly sleeping when the alarm was given. They scrambled up to find a storming party rushing upon them. Several volleys were fired, men falling on either side. But the advancing bayonets, supported by mounted soldiers and police, proved too much for the defenders of the stockade. Their thin ranks wavered and dissolved. The actual fighting was a matter of minutes. When it was over the little republic was no more.

Of the attacking party Captain Wise and four privates were killed; they suffered also about a dozen minor casualties. On the side of the diggers, 16 were killed outright, and some eight

attack. Significantly, both attacks were launched and concluded before the aircraft borne by the carrier force could take off the flying deck to repel the Red Land's planes.

Later in the same afternoon, the "wide sector" search, established up to 180 miles from Singapore, located one enemy cruiser, a sloop, and the ship Medway, representing the enemy convoy with supplies and ground troops. From midnight onwards "close sector" patrol up to 25 miles from the entrance of the Singapore Strait protected Red Land from surprise. At 2 a.m. on February 4 the Medway was again located and shadowed.

Soon after daybreak fighter patrols were established over Singapore Island, ready to intercept raids by enemy aircraft brought by the carrier force, though the precise strength allocated to that force, following the previous day's successful air attacks, is known at present only to official umpires.

Three facts, it is pointed out, are

or nine others subsequently died of wounds. One hundred and fourteen prisoners were taken, but all were subsequently discharged, with the exception of 13 of their number, who were committed for trial for high treason.

Many of the miners had managed to escape, among them Peter Lalor, who was badly wounded. Two other members of the league, Black and Vern, also escaped. The Government offered a reward of £500 for the capture of Vern, and £200 each for Black and Peter Lalor. Meanwhile the city of Ballarat was placed under martial law. Two days later reinforcements of troops arrived in the command of Sir Robert Nickle. He was a just man, and his tactful handling of the situation soon began to have its effect in restoring order, particularly his announcement that the Government had appointed a commission to inquire into the wrongs of the miners. The trial of the 13 men was begun in February, 1855. All the prisoners were acquitted.

Upon this the rewards for the capture of Lalor, Black, and Vern were withdrawn. Although the police and military prevailed in the fighting at the Stockade, moral victory went to the diggers, for the following year all that they had asked for was granted them.

It is said that the Eureka Stockade and the Ballarat riots were indirectly responsible for the long reign of many of the bushrangers, since the attention of the authorities was concentrated upon the Eureka riots. Peter Lalor, until the ban of outlawry was lifted from him, remained in hiding in Geelong. His able, though brief, leadership was not forgotten by the diggers, and he was elected to the Legislative Council in November, 1855.

In the following year he represented the South Grant constituency in the new Legislative Assembly, and held the seat until 1871. Four years later he regained it, and became a member of Graham Berry's first Ministry, in which he was appointed Commissioner of Trade and Customs. He was Postmaster-General in Graham Berry's second Ministry for about six weeks in 1877. In 1880 he was elected Speaker, which office he held for seven years, until severe illness forced his resignation in September, 1887. At this juncture Parliament made him a grant of £4000 for his services in a public capacity. He was now very sick, and two years later—on February 9, 1889—Peter Lalor died.

especially significant in this brief summary of the greatest combined manoeuvres ever held by British forces outside home waters. They are:—

On the first day defending air squadrons satisfactorily established that no enemy vessels were within the zone of search.

On the second day the air patrols detected a considerable number of surface and submarine craft.

On the third day the location of the aircraft-carrier force 220 miles from Singapore, and subsequent successful shadowing of that force, gave the defending commander ample time to make his plans and enable two heavy attacks to be launched before the enemy carrier-borne planes could join the action.

It is suggested that these facts demonstrate once more the ability of the Royal Air Force to deny enemy vessels undetected approach, and to ensure effective attack on them long before they are within striking distance of their objectives.