Famous Hope Diamond Is Working Its Spell Again

At Leas Madcap May Blames It for Her Newest Troubles and the Baleful Gem Seems to be Good Publicity Agent for the Now Aging May

By ROWLAND WOOD
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New York, Nov. 25.—The fa- ous Hope diamond, long ranked a talisman of evil second per- ps only to the great Koh-I-Noor, On the rampage again. No less ersonage than May Yoba—deap May" who danced her into possession of it as the Re le of Lord Francis Hope, only r vol her way out of it again an elopement—rises in Bos to blame it for her latest troubles, the mysterious shooting her current husband, Captain John A. Smuts, a cousin of General Jan Smuts of Africa.

From the days the precious bauble as wrenched from its setting in the forehead of a Hindu idol and taken by the French traveller, Tavernier, back to France to become the gem of the French crown collection, the "French blue" as it originally was known, has traditionally blasted the life of everybody into whose possession it came.

But as May Yoba said a year or so ago, "I'm like a rubber ball—the harder I fall, the higher I bounce. So Broadway is wondering if the famous stone may not be a blessing in disguise to "Madcap May." The latest exploit of the baleful gem has been a great little publicity agent for the ageing May. And the sequel of the latest exhumation, Broadway thinks, may be an exclusive little "blue diamond club" or something of the sort. May operated a "blue diamond inn" near Boston until recently, when it burned and left her and her husband "broke" once more. But right now, the Hope diamond, even though it had long since passed out of her possession, ought to be a good "stake" to set her up in business once more.

The victorian era gem expert Streeter, who wrote a book about the Hope Diamond and other famous gems, certainly had the right dope whe he wrote "it as if the dimond needed even in history, a dark background to show up its fascinating hues."

The Koh-I-Noor faded into the legendary realm when it came to Queen Victoria's possession and was prudently tucked away into the crown jewel collection. The dark back ground had been removed.

Not so with the Hope diamond. Events have multiplied about it, to make it perhaps the world's best known diamond, though it is far less valuable than the Koh-I-Noor, being worth a mere quarter of a million or so.

Tavernier, who took it from France to India, where the superstition of the baleful influence of gems originated—not without reason as India's history shows—was torn to bits by dogs shortly after he sold it to Louis XIV.

Nine D. Montespan, who fell out of Louis XIV—and shortly lost her place as court favorite, Louis XV, who inherited the stone, ducked trouble by locking it away among the lesser used court jewels.

Louis XVI brought it forth to adorn his consort, Marie Antoinette, and both lost their heads, as did Princess Lamballe, who had been tormented by Marie Antoinee to wear it.

The gem was stolen during the French revolution and did not appear again until 1830 when it had been cut down to disguise it, until it weighed only its present 44 1-2 karats. Daniel Eliason sold it to Henry Thomas Hope, whose daughter, the wife of the duke of New Castle, left it to her son, Lord Francis Hope.

Then, back in the late nineties, "Madcap May," in the height of her glory as a musical comedy star, landed in London and captured Lord Francis—and the diamond.

In 1909 she eloped with Major Putnam Bradlee Strong, son of a former mayor of New York. She left the Hope diamond behind, but went through with a half million in gems which her husband had given her. Then Strong deserted her.

"Madcap May" went to the bottom—but the India rubber was working and she came up again. In Africa she met and married Captain Smuts, followed him through the war as a Red Cross nurse, and then brought him to America. Ups and downs continued. Once "Madcap May" was reduced to the ranks of scrubwoman. Last year she made a "come-back" in vaudeville. The "Blue-Diamond Inn" now destroyed by fire followed.

Mean time, the Hope diamond changed hands several times and stories of its influence continued. To it was attributed by the superstitious the death before an automobile some years ago of the young son of the "Ned" McLeans of Washington, who bought it in 1906.

The gem now belongs to Mrs. Anna Thompson Dodge, wife of Horace Dodge, the automobile manufacturer. But the publicity there of still belongs to Madcap May Yoba, the most spectacular of its latter day owners.

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Delegates to the American Federation of Labor convention in El Paso, Tex., met representatives of the Mexican Confederation of Labor at the American gate of the international bridge. Both American and Mexican flags were flying. The visitors marched three miles on foot from their Juarez meeting place, across the bridge, through the streets of El Paso, to Liberty Hall, where the Americans were assembled.

PLANS SUNDAY EDITION

Salisbury, Nov. 25.—The Post Publishing Company, publishers of the Salisbury Post, the afternoon newspaper of this city, is planning a Sunday morning edition of the paper. It has been announced here by the editor. The Post, which has been published for nearly twenty years, has been expanded rapidly for last few months, it was said, and finds the enlarged issue and Sunday edition made necessary by pressing demands.

The first edition of the Sunday issue, it is now planned, will begin Sunday, November 30. The Post now has the leased wire of The Associated Press and according to the publishers, this service will be extended to cover the Sunday morning edition.

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TURKEYS LOW IN TEXAS

Houston, Nov. 25.—Farmers in the interior of Texas are selling turkeys as low as 12 cents a pound on the hoof. Houston prices range from 18 to 21 cents.

CABBAGE CROP SHORT IN STATE WISCONSIN

Madison, Wis., Nov. 25.—The cabbage crop in Wisconsin this year was 162,000 tons, or 20 per cent under 1923. Floods and heavy rains in the Racine-Kenosha district were responsible for the lower yield.

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