John Ainsley, Master Thief

BY

Arthur Somers Roche

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TO CATCH A THIEF-

It occurs to me that, for reasons which should be obvious enough, it will be as well if, in these memoirs of mine, I refrain from attempting to set forth my adventures in their chronological order. All policemen are not fools; if I should trace, with too great exactitude, my various movements, dormant suspicions would become wakeful. Moreover, it is not my intention to publish all my adventures. I prefer rather to confine myself to those incidents which have in them something of the unusual. In presenting the history of an artist, one does not deem it essential to relate where he purchased his brushes. And I am an artist.

Behold me, then, seated at a table on the terrace of the Cafe de Paris, sipping my coffee. It was the atrocious decoction, rather, which the French call coffee. It is, this coffee, the only blemish upon an otherwise charming people. And I will confess, with what hesitation may seem suitable to the prejudices of the day, that I had mitigated its bitterness with some fine champagne. Moreover, I had dined at Ciro's, and nothing could efface the memory of that marvelous repast.

The air was balmy. The tables were crowded. It seemed as if all the world had run away from his wife and brought his sweetheart here. For there was an air of excitement, of careless gayety, that unfortunately is not too closely associated with respectable domesticity. I could hear every tongue save German, spoken; and I strongly suspected that the guttural French essayed by certain ostensible Swiss had been learned in Berlin. For though the German is not given, even at this time in the world's history, to denying his nationality, Monte Carlo is worth a gallant treason.

For a moment I felt lonely. I wished that I, too, were accompanied by a charming lady into whose ears I could whisper flatteries and into whose hands, too, I could press the inlaid plaques wherewith one stakes at roulette or chemin de fer. But I put the thought from me. The artist in crime must be like Kipling's cat; he walks alone.

And it is exactly at times these, when I read that certain things are desired, I seek for change, for relaxation. And before me, outlined in electric lights, and shone cynically upon by the careful stars above, loomed the great bulk of the Casino. Excitement was not far to seek.

I paid my waiter; my waiter came to my side and presented the small bill.

"Monsieur plays?" he smiled.

"Out of gratitude to the authors of these gay surroundings," I told him. "One does not play; one enters the Casino and pays for the privilege of being there."

The waiter's smile was swiftly sympathetic. "Monsieur is unfortunate?"

I shrugged. "Does anyone ever win here?" I asked.

"Ah, yes, monsieur. The good luck smiles on many," he assured me.

"I'll believe it when I see it," I retorted.

"Then Monsieur would be well advised if he watched the play of the Baronne d'Esterelle this evening. Her luck has been phenomenal for the past week. I know, for one of my cousins is a croupier, and he has told me. If Monsieur will note the lady, at the second table to the right, he will see."

I followed the direction of his glance. Of course the Baronne d'Esterelle would be fortunate at games of chance. God had given her neither beauty nor charm; she was a grossly overfed woman, who radiated vulgarity. I suppose it is only fair that such persons, devoid of all other gifts, should be lucky. I felt an instant desire to relieve her of some of the priceless baubles that, beautiful in themselves, pitilessly contrasted with her own ugliness.

"So the little god smiles on her!" I said to the waiter.

"Luck, like love, is blind, monsieur," he replied. I like the French. Even their lower classes are deft of speech.

I looked at him. "You recommend the Baronne's good fortune to me, and yet that fortune does not seem to please you."

Had we been anywhere else, I think he would have spat upon the ground. "I gave two sons to France, monsieur," he said. "The Baronne gave none. Her sons were occupied in the production of munitions. France has her profiteers, monsieur. Those jewels which she wears were bought with money made in the war. Ah, well, she has one jewel less than she had last week." The lackey frowned even as it smiled.

"She lost a jewel?" I asked.

He spread his palms and pursed his lips. "Who knows? Monsieur does not read French, perhaps. Our newspapers printed much about the Baronne's pearl necklace. She wore it one night in the Casino. She went back to her hotel without it. The papers say that detectives from Paris are investigating the matter. The clasp may have become unfastened; it may have dropped to the floor. But Monsieur is aware that strange people come to Monte Carlo. Bonne chance, monsieur!"

I tipped him, and with my coat over my arm, I strolled across the square to the Casino. And as I walked, I frowned. As the waiter had said, strange people came too Monte Carlo. I would like to meet that strange one who had taken the Baronne's necklace. It took genius to abstract a necklace from a woman's throat in the halls of the Casino. And I was grateful to the garrulous little waiter. I have come to the Riviera for rest, with no intention of practicing my profession. Now, forewarned, I would not, no matter what the temptation, permit my holiday to be infringed upon by business. The Parisian detectives have brains.

Still, as I checked my hat and coat, and sauntered through the outer rooms into the Cercle Prive, the more exclusive salons, and beheld the precious stones that gleamed from the throats and arms and hair of the women here, I could understand that not even the Casino's force of detectives, or the importations from Paris, could deter attempts at theft. Also I speculated on the difficulties that might be involved in a raid upon the cash of the Casino itself. But that was a job for an organization. And I, as I have said before, walk alone.

I went to a booth and exchanged half a dozen mille notes for chips. Then I slipped into a vacant seat at one of the tables, glanced at a card kept by the man next to me, saw that red had been turning up with great frequency, decided that it was black's turn, and began backing up my judgment. I had made three successful coups, when an exclamation from my left-hand neighbor made me turn and look at her.

She was well worth the glance I gave her. I have seen few lovelier women than this young American—she was patently that—who sat beside me. Black hair and blue eyes lent to her an exotic air that was enhanced by the olive hue of her skin. I judged that in her ancestry might be found some grandee of old Spain. She was dressed prettily, but not nearly as expensively as most of the other women present. And she wore no jewelry whatsoever, save a narrow gold wedding ring. Nevertheless she was the most striking-looking woman in the room.

The wife was frantic in her pleading.

But it was not her beauty alone that made me stare at her. It was the expression of despair upon her face. Her exclamation had been one of almost hysterical dismay. Beyond her sat a youth of twenty-five, good-looking, with that fresh complexion so common to the English. His color was more florid just now than usual, I imagined. For he was crimson with embarrassment at his wife's cry. As I looked, he placed a hand upon her wrist. It was this action that made me assume they were husband and wife.

"Don't, Margaret," he said to her. "We'll get it back in a moment." As he spoke, he placed plaques aggregating six thousand francs on the red.

"Jack, you mustn't! Take it back!" She was frantic in her pleading.

Behind her stood a tall, black-bearded man, broad-shouldered and powerful. His huge nose, mottled skin and pouched old eyes of a man who knew no restraint upon his desires. He leaned over now.

"But what does it matter, Mrs. Beresford?" His accent told me that he was Russian.

"It matters tremendously," she retorted angrily. And then the croupier droned his cry as the little ball settled into Number Eleven.

"Onze, impair, noir et manque." Eleven, odd, black, and the first eighteen. His cry was music to my ears, for I had staked two thousand on the black. But as I reached for my winnings, I wished that red had come. For I was near neighbor to one of those all-too-common tragedies of Monte Carlo, the proofs of which are to be found in the defalcations, forgeries and embezzlements that fill the Continental papers, and in the hushed-up suicides of the cliffs.

"How can it matter?" demanded the Russian. "I am here, and I have money."

She flashed a look of scorn at him. I could read the little story as easily as if it were set before my eyes in print. I have seen too many elderly gentlemen befriend young wives.

She rose from her seat. "Come, Jack," she said.

Her husband looked at her in desperate appeal. "That's all we have, Margaret," he told her. "Unless the Prince lends money, we have nothing."

Horror leaped into her eyes. She looked accusingly at the prince. "You encouraged Jack."

(To be continued.)

Henry Ford seems to have a passion for all old-fashioned things except the horse and buggy.

Suitor: "Tommy, does a young man call here in the evening to see your sister?" Tommy: "Not exactly to see her, because there's no light in the room when he's there."

She: Do you think it's unlucky to get married on a Friday? He: Of course! Why should Friday be an exception?

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One Lost Art of the Kitchen

A civil war veteran sat on the steps of the general store in a New England village, sunning himself and thinking of other days. "Before my time comes," said he, "I wish I could have just one more big bowl of boiled-cider applesauce.

"It's a lost art," he continued. "I can half close my eyes now and see my old grandmother stewing the Winter's supply. Along about the last of October, after the cider mill on the hill had been pressing out apple juice for a week or so, father would say to gran, "Well, Grammie, it's most November. Time to be making the boiled-cider applesass." And she would nod and answer, 'Any time you say, Silas.'

"The way I remember it, she quartered and cored the apples, but didn't pare them. We always had a small barrel of the sauce each Fall to last through the Winter, so it took three or four cookings to make up our usual supply. I remember there was a monster black kettle, an 'iron set kettle,' they called it, that would hold twenty gallons at a boiling. It was built on a brick foundation with a fire-arch under it, connected with the chimney.

"Into this kettle grandmother put her quartered apples until it was two-thirds full. Then she turned in enough water to prevent scorching and filled it up with good cider about two or three weeks old. She would cook the mixture slow-like for not less than twenty-four hours, stirring with a long wooden paddle occasionally. Finally, she would get us boys to turn the contents of the kettle into the barrel to cool, and she would make another lot. For sweetening she used old-fashioned dark brown sugar. We youngsters helped her to weigh it out, but when we'd come to one of those hard lumps, like candy, I'm afraid it didn't go into the kettle.

"The applesauce barrel was set in the cellar where it would keep good and cool, but not freeze, although freezing didn't hurt it any. You could eat nearly a quart of grandmother's 'sass' and it wouldn't do you anything but good.

"I read a recipe in a paper the other day for making boiled-cider applesauce. It said to take sweet cider and hard cider and boil them together until they got pasty, like applesauce, then put in a cool place. That is no more like the real thing than near-beer is like old-fashioned cream ale. Sounds more like a drink than it does like applesauce. No, sir, making the kind grandmother used to make is sure enough a lost art."

Easy Up!

Paris—Daily airplane flights over Mont Blanc for those who wish to avoid the fatigue of climbing the mountain are being organized for this Summer.

Near St. Gervais-les-Bains, at the foot of Europe's highest mountain, an airdrome has been constructed and equipped by the Mont Blanc Aero Club, and on and after June 15, weather permitting tourists will be able to "climb" the mountain in all comfort and without tiring themselves.

Later it is hoped to install a landing place on the summit.

Airplane Radio Laboratory Is First of Kind

Pilot Now Operating Stinson Monoplane Equipped for Aviation Research

An airplane for the specific purpose of research in airplane radio telephone and telegraph equipment, a big 1-passenger monoplane, built by Eddie Stinson for the Pilot Electric Company of Brooklyn, was exhibited in the recent airplane show at Detroit, Mich. This flying radio laboratory, sister ship of the one used by Messrs. Stinson and Haldeman when they recently broke the world's endurance record, has many unusual features which make it distinctly unique.

The machine embodies every modern feature, from the newest type of Wright Whirlwind motor to special springs-in-oil landing gear. Balsam wool sound insulation, packed in the walls of the spacious cabin, gives sufficient quiet for ordinary conversation. All windows are of shatter-proof glass.

A radio antenna, designed for short wave transmitting and receiving, distinguishes the airplane radio laboratory. It is stretched across the 45-foot span of the single wing. In addition, a trailing wire can be let out through the cabin floor to be used on wave lengths of 600 meters or more.

All the ignition system is shielded to prevent sparking interference with the receiving instrument. Every metal part is wired together, and grounded to the welded steel tubing which comprises the framework. Because of the unreliability of air-driven generators, a special gearing was built for this plane by the Wright Company, by means of which a generator can be driven from the motor.

Instead of the aluminum paint ordinarily used to cover the wings, lacquer is employed. That is to reduce the capacity of the short wave antenna stretched across the wing. Behind the cabin is a large compartment which is arranged as the radio laboratory, entrance to which is obtained through a large door. There is also a door in the side of the fuselage, opening into the laboratory, to be used when the machine is on the ground.

According to Mr. Sleeper, under whose supervision the airplane radio research will be carried on, the immediate problems to be solved include the development of successful receiving equipment for telegraph, telephony and visual indicating, the determination of suitable antenna arrangements, most efficient wave-lengths, and the design of low-power transmitters for communicating with the earth.

It may seem as if it should be an easy matter to design airplane receiving equipment, but the fact is that ordinary methods which are entirely satisfactory for operation on the ground do not stand up under flying conditions. Most sets fail before the plane gets into the air, from jerks and bumps as the plane taxies across the field. In the air there is a continual vibration under which wiring connections fail. If the apparatus lasts through the first flight, it may break down in a rough landing or taxiing back to the hangar.

Radio equipment to be commercially successful must stand up under continued flight, month after month. It must be more free from maintenance repairs than radiocast receivers, for pilots would rather do without radio than be concerned about its possible failure in time of need.

Fare Collectors Count On People's Honesty

It does not happen once in a blue moon that a bus collector will ask a passenger for a second fare, and since folks are getting on and off at every stopping place, and dress much alike, his ability to remember who has paid is almost uncanny. Sometimes he is on top the bus when passengers climb on, and must get a mental picture of them from what he sees of their hats. Sometimes, indeed often, passengers change seats, so that mentally checking off those in this seat or those in that is of no aid to him.

One bus conductor said he did not try to remember. "The moment I appear," he said, "the folks who were the last to get on reach automatically for their dimes. It is the honesty of the passengers and not the conductor's smartness that makes fare collecting easy."

But passengers insist on crediting the conductor with being extraordinarily astute.

Plane Service Cuts Two Days

Pilot J. H. St. Martin accepts the first shipments of parcels by the new Canadian Pacific air-express service. Bi-weekly in each direction between Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Rimouski, where the steamers are met, the new service cuts two days off the regular schedule. Domestic traffic between cities mentioned is also accommodated to time-saving advantage.

Unusual Surplus Marks New Budget for South Africa

Income Tax Rebate and Remission of Certain Customs Duties Announced

Cape Town, S. Af.—What has been described as the most spectacular budget ever presented in South Africa was introduced recently by N. C. Havenga, the youthful Minister of Finance, when a surplus of £1,750,000 was announced. The manner in which Mr. Havenga has decided to apply this balance shows a desire to allow the public as much benefit as possible from the favorable condition of the Treasury.

Taxation is to be reduced on a liberal scale. Income tax payers are to receive a rebate of 20 per cent. on their assessments, and the anomaly under which income derived from debentures is liable to income tax is to be removed. Further, there are to be remissions of customs duties, the items—including a reduction of 2d. per pound in the tea duties, and 5 per cent. reductions on hosiery, millinery and cotton piece goods, having been selected to give relief over a wide area.

The budget provides £500,000 for the redemption of debt. This sum, added to the redemption contribution of £435,000 and the fixed annual charge of £650,000, will mean that the public debt during the coming year will be reduced by £1,585,000.

Provision is also made for old age pensions, and, although the amount set aside will only permit this measure to be carried out on a modest scale, it is a small beginning which will probably lead to a thoroughly adequate scheme in the future. Mr. Havenga explained that the Government had no desire to embark upon a socialistic experiment discouraging thrift, or upon a policy of doles. Its purpose is to alleviate the hardship of penury. The scheme makes no provision for natives, but the pensions for Europeans will be £30, and for colored people £18 per annum, the mean limit of income being £54 in the case of white and £35 in respect of colored people. The total cost of the scheme in a complete year will be £780,000, and it will increase annually at the rate of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The most notable feature of the Minister's survey of the trade activities of the Union during the past year was his announcement that the wool export had increased to the value of £17,113,000, or 35 per cent. more than the previous year.

During the four years he has held office Mr. Havenga has always had a surplus in his budget. His first amounted to £800,000, his second to £422,000, while last year it was over £1,000,000.

Church Services on the Great Liners

Aboard the great ocean liners church altars are considered an indispensable detail of the equipment. A generation ago religious services at sea were held irregularly, depending on the chance presence of a clergyman. Now transatlantic liners hold Roman Catholic and Protestant services at sea on Sunday.

Passengers from all cabins meet at the church services. Invitations to the service are commonly posted throughout the ship every Sunday morning. The priest or clergyman officiating is usually assisted by ship stewards acting as sacristans. One large line that operates many steamers in the transatlantic service has a Roman Catholic altar on board each vessel. The linen used on the altars is prepared by Sisters of Charity in the ports of call on either side of the Atlantic. The altar cloths used in the Church of England services are cared for by churches in New York and in the European ports of call.

On great liners the passenger list almost invariably includes priests and clergymen, who volunteer to take charge of the religious services. In the absence of a clergyman the shipmaster or his staff captain, assisted perhaps by the chief officer, conduct the service. The altars are often prepared with candles and banks of flowers. On one of the largest steamers in the transatlantic service there have been celebrated in the past five years 1,453 masses by 290 priests, while 2,856 communions have been received by passengers.

"Now," said the professor when he had finished his lecture on the functioning of the memory, "I want to ask each member of the class to make a note of every point he has remembered. Those of you who can't remember any of the points will please jot down those you have forgotten."

She: "I'm the happiest girl alive! I'm marrying the man I want!" He: "That's nothing to the joy of marrying the man someone else wants."

Youth: "And when the boat went down I was swimming about for two hours before I was picked up!" Maid: "Oh, how lovely! I adore swimming."

King's Doctor Gets 2d Fee On Estate at Sandringham

Sandringham, England—The service of King George's residential doctor for 2d (four cents) a week per family is one of the many advantages of the employes on the royal estate at Sandringham that are due to the benevolence of his Majesty.

The penny is a powerful coin at Sandringham, for this amount each week entitles workers on the estate to use a well-equipped club with billiard room, library and reading room. Beer may be obtained here at reduced prices.

On Saturdays popular concerts are arranged and again a penny covers admission, children one-half-penny. The proceeds go to charity.

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Same Material Is Employed In Concrete and Cosmetics

Elko, Nev.—Diatomaceous earth from Carlin, Elko County, is finding its way to Cape Town, South Africa, where it is reground and used for polishing diamonds. The diatomaceous earth is used to take off the haze that is left on the diamond before polishing, and the Carlin product has been found quite effective.

Through British companies the Carlin plant has received inquiries from New Zealand, Africa and Germany concerning its product. The plant, however, depends largely on the American market. Its fine mesh material is used principally in the manufacture of cosmetics or for fine concrete practice. The coarser product is used largely as linings for furnaces.

(Ed. Owners of such deposits in Ontario, and there are many, should note.)

A Touch of Lemon!

How many women are aware of the magic properties of lemon used in connection with meat or fish? It has a characteristic not possessed by any other seasoning, for it submerges its own identity and acts as an intensifier of the best flavor in roasts, broiled and all forms of seafood.

This is a fact well known by first class butchers, especially in the case of roast beef. The good housewife orders her Sunday roast a week ahead that it may be fully seasoned. Then when the meat man trims and chops it he rubs it all over with the juice of a lemon. This takes away the season-ed taste and brings out as nothing else can the fine taste of the meat.

Now that warmer weather is at hand the housewife should only very occasionally keep the oven going for roasting purposes. Probably she will, if she is a wise woman, plan a series of menus where nourishing and appetizing cold dishes give the cook a rest and herself a much needed rest.

But here again lemon proves a useful friend, for it gives the necessary tang to molded chicken, tuna fish, salmon and shrimps. Masked artistically in lemon jelly, they are not only good to look at, but delicious to eat, and in the case of canned goods they recover most of their original flavor.

The following are a few warm weather recipes which may, if necessary, be made by a busy woman the day before and kept on ice until needed.

Tuna Fish Mold

One large can of tuna fish, coarsely cut, 1 pint boiling water, ½ cup celery cut fine, 2 pimientos cut fine, ½ green pepper cut fine, 1 teaspoon onion juice, ½ teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons horseradish, drained. Dissolve jelly powder in boiling water. Pour thin layer in mold. Chill until firm. Mix celery, pimientos, green pepper, onion juice, salt, cayenne pepper and horseradish. Add half the vegetables. Cover with jelly. When firm add fish and another layer of jelly. When firm add another layer of vegetables and cover with jelly. Chill until firm and turn out on bed of lettuce. Serve with a tart dressing or sauce. Serves eight persons.

Salmon Loaf

Three tablespoonfuls of vinegar plus 1 pint of water, 1 package pulverized lemon jelly, ¼ teaspoon salt, horseradish, drained, 1 cup of salmon, drained, 1 cup of green peas, 1 cup of cooked diced carrots. Pour small amount of jelly (made by dissolving powder in the water and vinegar) into bottom of mold and pack in ice. When beginning to set, put in thin layer of horseradish, then layer of salmon, another layer of horseradish, then layer of jelly. When slightly thickened add peas. When firm add carrots and another layer of jelly. Chill for at least two hours and serve with a tart salad dressing. This will serve six.

Shrimp and Orange Salad

One cup of shrimps, drained and halved lengthwise; 1 cup boiling water, 1 cup shrimp liquor, 1 tablespoon vinegar, 1 package lemon jelly powder, 2 oranges free from membrane, cut and drained. Dissolve jelly powder in boiling water. Drain shrimps, measure liquor and add enough water to make one cup. Add with vinegar to saucepan. When cold and slightly thickened stir in shrimps and oranges. Turn into individual molds rinsed with cold water. Chill until firm. Serve on lettuce with salad dressing. Serves six.

Too Much Motor Horn? But Not in Venezuela

Washington—One horn is not enough for the automoiles of Venezuela. Under the latest law, according to a report made to the Department of Commerce, double facilities for making a noise are required in that republic, a hand horn for the city and an electric horn for the country.

Actual practice shows that the drivers usually do not stop with two horns, but have three, one hand operated and the other two electrical.

The button for one of the electric horns is on the steering wheel, while the other is placed on the left door of the car and is operated by pressure of the driver's knee.

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