

The FLAMING JEWEL

by ROBERT W. CHAMBERS
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Alone in her step-father's camp in the Odronadaka, with STAYE THROTT, the beautiful EYE STRAYER, the nymph of the forests and the sole influence for good in the prime-stained career of her step-father, EYE CLING, under Eve's pillow was the gem of priceless worth, the flaming jewel, first stolen from the COINTEGRITY OF EUSTONIA by the international thief, QUINTANA, and stolen in turn from Quintana by Mike Clinch. And now, outside in the forest, men tracked one another with rifles. Quintana had returned to regain the jewel. Clinch had sworn to wipe out his gang. And there also was JAMES DARRAGH, under the name of HAL SMITH, who had sworn to restore the gem to the now beguiled countess. Creeping like a snake outside was the murdered EARL LEVERETT, who had betrayed first Clinch and then Quintana to gain the jewel for himself. Dreaming of no harm, Eve thought of the new emotion in her heart, her sudden love for Trooper Stormont.

CHAPTER V

She saw him walk away—saw his shadowy, well-built form fade into the starlit mist. An almost uncontrollable impulse set her throat and lips quivering with desire to call to him through the night. "I do love you! I do love you! Come back quickly, quickly!" The girl turned from the window, looked at the door for a moment, then her face flushed and she walked toward a chair and seated herself, leaving the door unbolled. For a little while she sat upright, alert, as though a little frightened. After a few moments she folded her hands and sat unstriving with lowered head awaiting destiny. It came noiselessly. And so swiftly that the rush of air from her violently opened door was what first startled her. For in the same second Earl Leverett was upon her in his stockinged feet, one bony hand gripping her mouth, the other flung around her, pinning both arms to her sides. "The packet!" he panted,—"quick, yeh dirty little cat, 'r'll break yeh head off'n yeh damn neck!" She bit at the hand that he held crushed against her mouth. He lifted her bodily, flung her on to the bed, and, twisting sheet and quilt around her, swathed her to the throat. Still controlling her violently distorted lips with his left hand and holding her so, one knee upon her, he reached back, unsheathed his hunting knife and pricked her throat till the blood spurted. "Now, got yeh?" he whispered fiercely, "where's Mike's packet? Yell, and I'll hog-stick yeh fur fair! Where is it, you dum thing!" He took his left hand from her mouth. The distorted, scarlet lips writhed back, displaying her white teeth clenched. "Where's Mike's bundle?" he repeated, hoarse with rage and fear. "You rat!" she gasped. At that he closed her mouth again, and again he pricked her with his knife cruelly. The blood welled up on to the sheets. "Now, by God!" he said in a ghastly voice, "answer or I'll hog-stick yeh next time! Where is it? Where's where!" She only showed her teeth in answer. Her eyes flamed. "Where! Quick! Got yeh, I'll shove this knife in behind your ear if you don't tell! Go on. Where is it? It's in this dump somers. I know it is—don't lie! You want that I should stick you good? That what you want—you dirty little dump-slut? Well then, got yeh—I'll fix yeh like Quintana was almin' at—" He slit the sheet downward from her imprisoned knees, seized one wounded foot and tried to slash the bandages. "I'll cut a couple toes off'n yeh," he snarled,—"I'll hamstring yeh fur keeps!"—struggling to mutilate her while she flung her helpless and entangled body from side to side and bit at the hand that was almost suffocating her. Unable to hold her any longer, he seized a pillow to bury his venomous little head that writhed, biting, under his clutch. As he lifted it he saw a packet lying under it. "By God!" he panted. As he seized it she screamed for the first time: "Jack! Jack Stormont!"—and fairly hurled her helpless little body at Leverett, striking him full in the face with her head. Half stunned still clutching the packet, he tried to stab her in the stomach; but the armor of bedclothes turned the knife, although his violence dashed all breath out of her. Sick with the agony of it, speechless, she still made the effort, and as he stumbled to his feet and turned to escape, she struggled upright, choking, blood running from the knife pricks in her neck. With the remnant of her strength, and still writhing and gasping for breath, she tore herself from the sheets and blankets, reeled across the room to where Stormont's rifle stood, threw it in a cartridge, dragged herself to the window.

Dimly she saw a running figure in the night mist, flung the rifle across the window sill and fired. Then she fired again—or thought she did. There were two shots. "Eve! My God!" he whispered, taking her blood-wet body into his arms. "Go after Leverett," he gasped. "He's robbed daddy. He's running away—out there—somewhere—" "Where did he hurt you, Eve—my little Eve—" "Oh, go! go!" she wailed—"I'm not hurt. He only pricked me with his knife. I'm not hurt. I tell you. Go after him! Take your pistol and follow him and kill him!" "Oh!" she cried hysterically, twisting and sobbing in his arms, "don't lose time here with me! Don't stand here while he's running away with Daddy's money!" And, "Oh—oh—oh!" she sobbed, clinging to him convulsively as he carried her to her tumbled bed and laid her there. "Daddy's money was under my pillow," she wailed. "Leverett tried to make me tell where it was. I wouldn't, and he hurt me—" "How?"

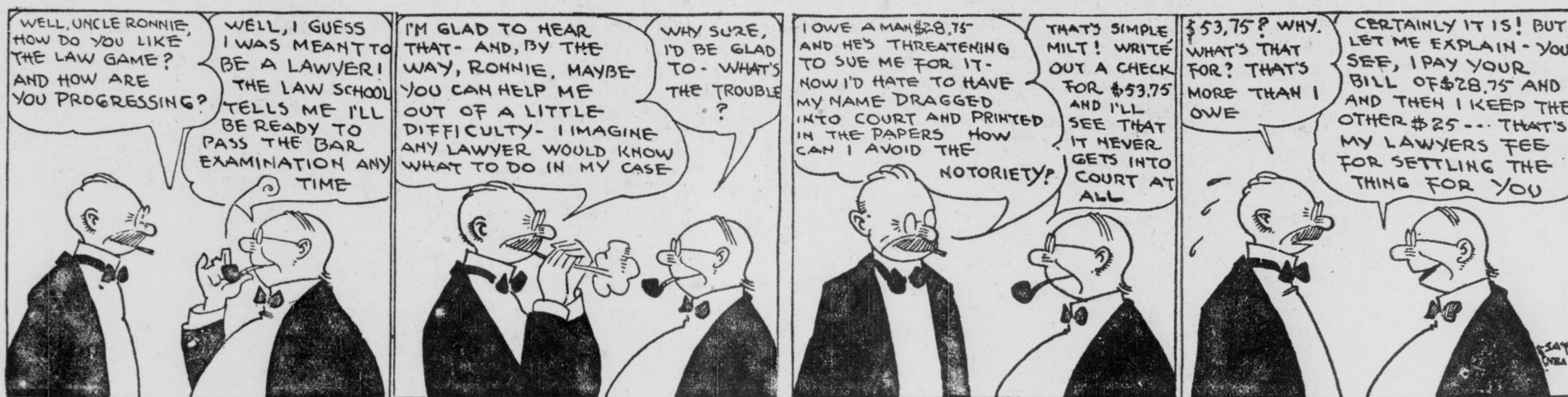
CANADA'S WHEAT CROP STUPENDOUS

Loaded Trains, Five Minutes Apart, Would Take 252 Days to Pass.

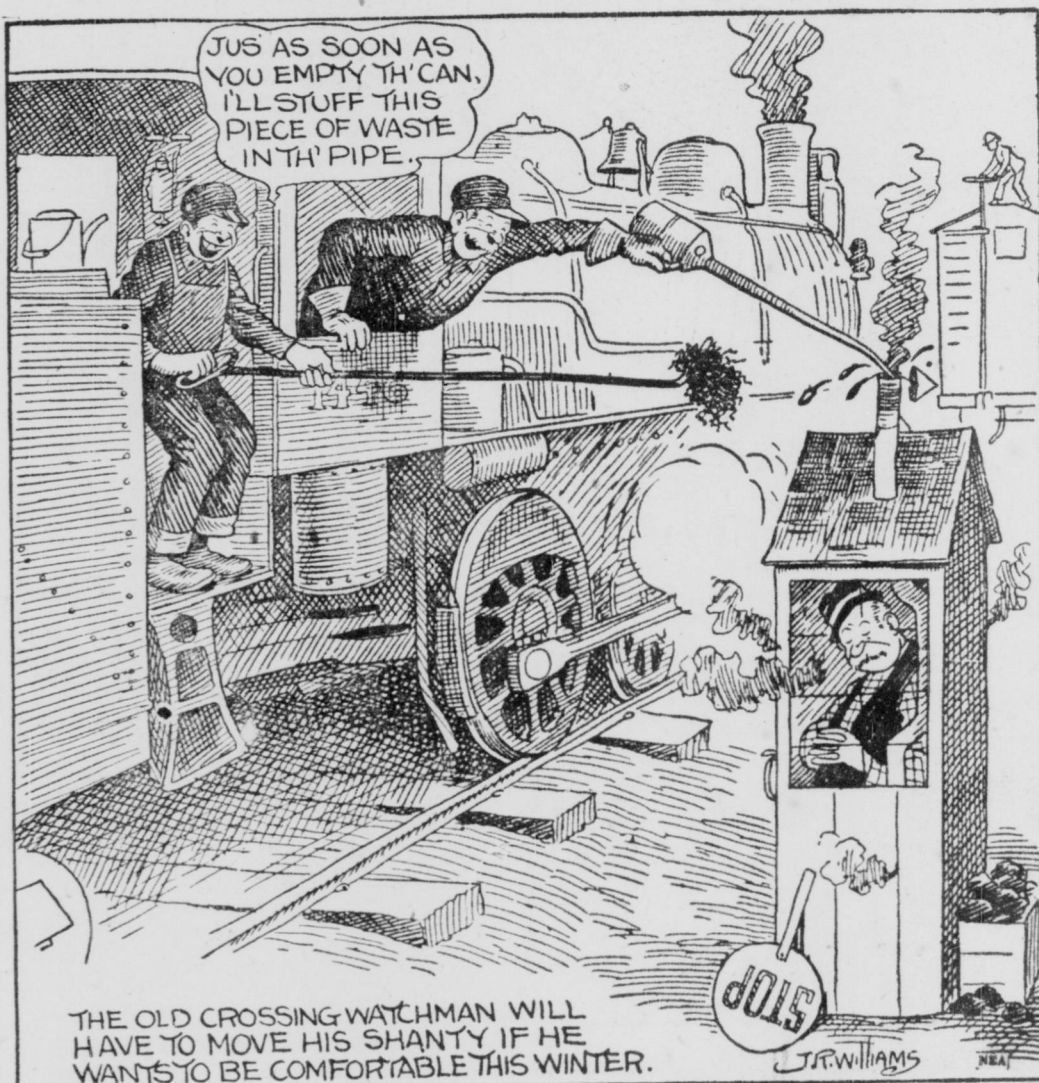
MONTREAL, Oct. 24.—How large is Canada's wheat crop this year? To the man on the street the fact that Canada has a crop of over 340,000,000 bushels means little more than a mere jumble of figures. But, if you were to tell him that if Canada's crop of wheat this year was ground into flour and made into bread, there would be enough to supply every man, woman and child in England with a loaf of bread for a whole year, or a similar ration to the entire population of the United States for four months, he would gain a clearer idea of the enormous crop of wheat that Canada has produced. With a minimum wheat yield of 343,000,000 bushels, statistics show that this quantity is equivalent to 20,580,000,000 pounds of wheat, or 10,290,000 tons, or 73,500,000 barrels of flour, which could be made into 12,862,500,000 loaves of bread, weighing twenty-four ounces each. Nearly everybody has read of the march of the German soldiers through Brussels and how it took several hours for the troops to pass a given point. This event was said to be unique in the annals of military history. Imagine 7,350 trains running at intervals of five minutes apart, taking 252 days to pass a given point. That is just how long it would take 257,250 forty-ton grain cars loaded to capacity to move Canada's 1922 wheat crop. Placed end to end, these cars would make a train 1,946 miles long, or one extending from Montreal to a point twenty-six miles west of Swift Current, Saskatchewan, or from New York to Denver, Colo. Allowing thirty-five cars to a locomotive, it would require 7,350 to haul 257,250 cars, which would make a total length of cars and locomotives combined of 2,660 miles. The largest trans-Atlantic freight carrier of the Canadian Pacific Steamships, Ltd., is the S. S. Bosworth, with a capacity of 352,000 bushels of wheat. It would take 974 steamships of the Bosworth's capacity to carry the wheat crop of the prairie provinces across the ocean. Taking the Bosworth's gross tonnage at about 6,600, this would mean a fleet of 5,844,000 gross tons, of the largest fleet in the world with the exception of the United States and the United Kingdom.

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