

LIMITATION.  
For all philosophy may teach,  
Only so far can knowledge reach.  
All that we know, from breath to breath,  
Is life and its great question—Death.  
—Frank D. Sherman in Lippincott's.

### PASTE OR DIAMOND?

"Yes, it belonged to poor Turenne," said Wyse as he pulled the ring from his finger and handed it to us for inspection. "He left it to me by his will, and I keep it in memory of one of the best actors and one of the best men I ever knew."

Meanwhile the ring was passing from hand to hand, and the universal verdict was that none of us had ever seen a finer stone.

"Turenne was rather a wealthy man," said one of our little circle, "but I didn't think he could have afforded or would have cared to spend so much money on an ornament as that ring must have cost."

"He wanted it for some special purpose which afterward fell through," rejoined Wyse. "I know all about it, for I bought it for him myself. I had quite a little adventure on the occasion."

"Tell us the story," we cried.

"Well," said Wyse, taking a pull at his cigar and settling himself back in his chair, "it is a good many years ago now. I was playing high comedy characters at the old Princess, and as I had been working very hard I set off for the south of France as soon as the season closed. It happened that Turenne, who had proved himself a true friend to me, wanted a good diamond for a purpose I needn't trouble you with, and before I set out on my travels I told him that if I met with a particularly fine one at a moderate price I would buy it for him, and he, being too busy at the time to attend to the matter himself, gladly consented. I was staying at Nice when there came to the hotel one of those tall, loquacious Americans who are now so plentiful all over Europe. There seemed to be nothing objectionable about the man, except that he was vulgar and eternally talking about the United States.

"On the evening after his arrival a few of us happened to be sitting in the billiard room, and by some chance or other the conversation turned on the subject of diamonds.

"I don't know much about the business myself," said the American, "but I'm told by good judges that there's about as good a stone as you'll see in a day's round."

"So saying he drew a ring from his finger and handed it to me, who happened to sit next him. It was indeed a magnificent brilliant, set in a ring of a peculiar pattern. When the lamp was removed, it seemed to gather into itself the light out of the semi-darkness and glittered like a bit of broken glass in the sunlight. 'What is it worth?' asked one of the men present.

"That I can hardly tell you," answered the American, "and a friend at home sent it to me direct, and I had 't cut myself. But I'm tired of it and seldom wear it."

"Would you sell it?" I inquired out of curiosity.

"I might," answered the American, "especially as this European trip is clean me out faster than I expected, and I don't want to go home to Vermont skinned as neatly as a cod. Yes, you may have that diamond for \$80 of your money, stranger, and dirt cheap at that, I should say."

"I looked at the stone again, and the longer I looked at it the more I liked it. Eighty pounds was quite as much as my friend wished to pay for a stone, but what if I could get one for him worth \$100 for \$80?"

"Will you trade?" he asked.

"I am not a judge of diamonds myself," said I, returning the stone to its owner. "I'm afraid I couldn't buy without taking a lapidary's opinion as to its value."

"All right," said the American carelessly; "if you care to buy it, we can go round to a jeweler's in the morning. And if he puts a lower value on the stone than I did you can buy it at the price he names, if you like to buy. I can't say fairer than that."

"The offer did indeed seem a very fair one, and I went to bed that night determined to secure the jewel for my friend if the expert reported favorably on it.

"Next morning the American and I strolled down to the shop of the chief jeweler of the town, and when we entered the place I first of all paid my footing by purchasing some trifle, and then taking the ring from the hand of my new acquaintance I placed it before the jeweler and asked him to give me an opinion as to its value.

"A ver' fine stone, sir," said the Frenchman. "I congratulate you on the possession of so fine a diamond."

"It is not mine. It belongs to my friend here."

"Ah, if that be the case, then I congratulate him," said the polite tradesman.

"What do you suppose it is worth?" I asked.

"Oh, it is difficult to say," said the Frenchman, shrugging his shoulders. "You gentleman sinks von pride more for him; another sinks."

"Yes, but what would you give if you were to buy it? Would you give 1,000 francs?"

"The jeweler did not reply for a few seconds. He popped his microscope once more into his eye, held the ring up to the light, examined the setting and fell to making laborious calculations with a pencil on a sheet of paper.

"I do not often buy such large stones, but I will give you 2,500 francs for this one."

"The Yankee did not reply, and the Frenchman, assuming that his offer was accepted, placed the ring on a little ledge behind him and opened his desk for his checkbook.

"Not so fast," said Brother Jonathan. "The diamond's not for sale."

### THE FIRST IRISH POTATOES.

Mr. Walter Raleigh Planted Them Near Cork, but the People Near Them. Sir Walter Raleigh was an unprincipled adventurer and failed as an administrator and colonizer, but he had a most commendable taste for planting and gardening, and in these branches of effort his influence remains potent. Three hundred years have passed since he lived in Ireland, in the county of Cork, on the vast estate which had been bestowed upon him, but the yellow wall flowers which he brought to Ireland from the Azores still flourish and bloom in the very spot where he planted them.

Near by, at Voughal, near Cork, on the shores of the Blackwater estuary, stands the Affane cherry which he brought. Some cedars which he brought called Tivoli. Four yew trees, whose branches have grown and interlaced into a sort of summer house, are pointed out as having sheltered Raleigh when he first smoked tobacco in his garden at Voughal.

Raleigh tried to make tobacco grow in Great Britain, but the climate was not found suitable to it. He succeeded, however, by introducing the habit of smoking it, in making it grow in plenty in other places.

More important to the world than the spot where Raleigh sat and smoked his Indian weed is another spot in his garden at Myrtle Grove, in this same Voughal. This spot is still bounded by the town wall of the thirteenth century. It was here that Raleigh first planted a curious tuber brought from America, which thrives vastly better than his tobacco plants did.

This tuber Raleigh insisted was good to eat, though common report for a long time pronounced it poisonous. Some roots from his vines he gave to other land owners in Munster. They cultivated them and spread them abroad from year to year.

This plant was the Irish potato. Before many generations it became the staple food of the Irish people—almost the only food of a great many of them.

It was the "Irish potato" which came back to America and became the groundwork, so to speak, of the American farmer's and workingman's daily breakfast and dinner. Sir Walter's curious experiment in acclimatization became an economic step of the very first consequence, and the spot at Voughal which was its scene deserves marking with a monument much more than do the places where the blood of men has been shed in battle.—Youth's Companion.

Ruskin's Methodicalness. Never has a man been more methodical in his work than Professor Ruskin, nor more precise in obedience to the rules he has laid down for his guidance. His working hours have always been from 7 in the morning until noon, and on no account whatever would he exceed the limit. Within those five daily hours has all his work been produced—books, lectures and business, public and private correspondence. Work in the afternoon has always been by himself forbidden, unless it took the form of reading. His earlier works, of course, were written at Herne or at Denmark Hill or while on a tour on the continent. His later ones have been wrought in great part at the flower decked table of his study, overlooking Coniston lake.

A wonderful room, that long study of his, with his Turners upon the walls and ranged in ranks in the great Turner cabinet upon the floor, with its bookshelves of wonderful missals and manuscripts and early black letter books and the original manuscripts of a half dozen of Scott's novels, with his superb Lucretia della Robbia "Virgin and Child" over the fireplace at one end and the mineral cabinet at the other. With what pleasure did Ruskin show them to me on my first visit—the unrivaled collection of agates and the equally perfect collection of gold ores and the rest.—McClure's Magazine.

The Chinese Hunchback. I am reminded of a picture I purchased some time ago. I bought it because I thought it was the ugliest picture I had ever seen. I tried to find out the history or meaning of the thing for some time without any success until a few days ago, while studying Taoism, I found the ugly man was one of the Taoist gods. In his early days his spirit had the power of leaving his body and roaming over the universe alone. When off on one of these trips, wolves came and ate his body. So when his spirit returned it found only a few bones. After hunting around for awhile the spirit found the body of a dead hunchback beggar who walked with an iron cane in his lifetime. The spirit crawled in this body and has lived in it ever since. Tih Kwalei, for that is the god's name, carries a gourd on his back, which, if the breath were blown out of it in the heavens, would bring back his original body. According to last accounts, the breath has not flown out of the gourd.—Canton Cor. Louisville Courier-Journal.

Seen From a Balloon. A remarkable sight to be seen from a balloon is the bottom of lakes and ponds. While over Lake Erie Carl E. Myers, the balloonist, says he saw clearly a wreck lying under 75 feet of water. It was that of a schooner, sunk 40 years ago. At a height of half a mile the entire bottom of a small lake or pond can be clearly seen, and Mr. Myers believes that on a clear day an aeronaut of good vision could see from a height of a mile submarine objects at a depth of 400 or 500 feet beneath the water.

Prize Samples of Bad Grammar. An English paper gives the following sentence as the perfection of bad grammar: "Them sheeps is yours." How about the famous reply by the Yorkshire children when "Dr. Syntax" told them that their mother was calling them? John Leech, we think, reported and illustrated it years ago: "Her ain't a-calling we. Us don't belong to she."—Boston Pilot.

Sweet Childhood. Tommy—Europe's in the east, isn't it, papa?  
His Father—Yes.  
Tommy—And you can get there just by starting west and going far enough, can't you?  
His Father—Certainly.  
Tommy—Well, then, whereabouts on the way round do you stop going west and begin to get east again?—Chicago Record.

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