

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 semidarkness and glittered like a bit of broken glass in the sunshine. 'What is it worth?' asked one of the men present.

"That I can hardly tell you," answered the American, "seeing a friend at Buenos sent it to me direct, and I had it 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 in 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 £90 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 hev it, we can go round to a jeweler's in the mornin. And if he puts a lower value on the stone than I did, you can hev 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 heem," 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. "Von gentleman sinks von price mor' for him; another sinks"—

"Yes, but what would you give if you were to buy it? Would you give 1,800 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 elaborate 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."

"Two thousand six hundred francs," was the Frenchman's reply.

"The American shook his head.

"Seven hundred—eight hundred!"

"No!"

"Nine hundred—3,000 francs! That is my last offer. Pause, I beg of you, monsieur, before you refuse it. It is a large sum—3,000 francs." And as if he were convinced that no one could refuse such a price he put the stone once more among his own treasures and again turned round for his checkbook.

"Thunder," exclaimed the Yankee,

"what do you take me for? I tell you I can't and I won't sell you the ring. It was as good as sold to this British gentleman last night, and it isn't mine to sell any more. Give me the ring."

"So saying the American took the ring rather sharply from the jeweler's hand and replaced it on his finger. The Frenchman next made me an offer for the trinket, but as I had not bought it for myself of course I could not sell it, and we left the shop.

"My mind was clear now as to the prudence of giving £80 for the diamond. I had heard the best jeweler in the town offer 3,000 francs, or £120, for it."

"Well, I must say you have acted most honorably," said I to the American when we reached the street. "After all, a bargain can't be all on one side, and I had never promised to buy the ring, so you had a perfect legal right to sell it to the Frenchman."

"You needn't say no more, stranger," said the Yankee as if he were tired of the subject. "You can hev the stone now if you choose at the price we fixed on last night." And he held the ring out to me.

"But I had to get my letters of credit cashed, and I agreed to meet the American in the billiard room in an hour's time and conclude the transaction."

"No one was in the billiard room when I entered it, for it was still early in the day, except the American, who was standing by the empty fireplace. The transfer did not occupy more than five seconds, and the Yankee immediately proposed drinks. These being discussed, we separated, and I saw no more of my friend from the States that day."

"That evening after dinner I happened to be sitting not far from the fireplace in the billiard room when I noticed a small round object lying just inside the marble fender. Curious to know what it was, I left my seat and picked it up. It was a jeweler's ring-case, not an uncommon article certainly, yet hardly the sort of thing one often sees on the floor of a billiard room."

"Suddenly I remembered that the American had been standing close to the spot where I found it when earlier in the day I had exchanged my 2,000 francs' worth of notes for his diamond. An uncomfortable feeling crossed my mind. What did he want with a ring-case? He had been wearing the ring he sold to me. He might have kept a case for it of course and might have thrown it away when he parted with the ring."

"I opened the case. The maker's name was inscribed in gilt letters inside the lid, and the address given was Paris. 'Paris!' said I to myself. 'He said the ring had been bought in Brazil.' There was no real ground for suspicion, yet I was uneasy. I went up stairs and took out the ring. The pattern—you see it is a peculiar one—I remembered well. Somehow I judged or fancied that the diamond did not shine as brightly as it had done the night before."

"Next morning I took the ring to a second jeweler and asked him his opinion as to its value. He examined the diamond carefully and laid it down on the glass case before him with one contemptuous word:

"Paste!"

"Paste!" I echoed. "Impossible!"

"Certainly paste, and a very good imitation," he replied, turning away. "My heart sank within me. Eighty pounds was a sum I could ill afford to lose."

"With a faint hope that the second expert had been mistaken, I took the ring to the jeweler who had offered the American 3,000 francs for it."

"He seemed pleased to see me, but as soon as he had glanced at the ring his face changed."

"This is not the same ring you showed me yesterday," he said in a tone that made it plain that he thought I meant to cheat him. "At least," he added, "it is not the same stone. This is not a stone at all—it is paste."

"So I have been told," I said sadly. "Are you sure the jewel I showed you yesterday was a genuine diamond?"

"I am certain of it," he answered.

"The honorable conduct—as I had thought it—of the stranger in refusing to sell to the jeweler was now intelligible. The jeweler meant to keep the real stone. It was not difficult to see how the fraud had been managed. The swindler had had two rings made exactly alike of a striking and peculiar pattern. In one of them he had placed a genuine and very fine diamond. This was the decoy. In the other he had put a false diamond, closely resembling in size and shape the genuine one in the first ring. The one he wore and offered to sell was the true stone. When he got it back from the jeweler, he had kept it and had given me the sham one in exchange for my £80. What was I to do?"

"The first thing was to ascertain whether my friend had left the hotel. Of course he had—on the afternoon of the previous day. Still the scent was so hot that I fancied I should have little difficulty in tracing him. But when I found him my difficulties would only begin. Of course he would swear that he had sold me the ring with the stone which the jeweler had declared to be genuine. I might conceivably have substituted paste for the true gem as well as he. In any case, when I thought of the difficulty of getting back my money from an American wandering about Europe, my heart sank within me. Even if the police consented to help me, taking my word against his, even if the rogue were convicted, how was I to recover the 2,000 francs?"

"These thoughts passed through my mind as I hurried back to the hotel. Certainly the prospect was gloomy."

"I easily ascertained that the American had taken the train for Paris the day before, and I determined to follow him at once. I did not despair of finding him, as he would probably put up at one of the good hotels."

"On the way up to Paris I could think of nothing but my loss. This fellow I saw had hit upon a very safe and profitable method of swindling. In nine cases out of ten the cheated man would not discover his loss for years after he had seen the last of the American, if indeed the trick was discovered at all, for the paste was quite good enough to deceive a casual observer, and the owner would of course be actuated by a profound faith in his diamond straight from Brazil. Had it not been for the incident of my finding the ringcase, which the rogue had accidentally dropped, I should in all probability have unwittingly cheated poor Turenne out of his money, and he might afterward have been supposed to be trying to palm off a spurious diamond for a real

gem. In all probability the fellow made a living, and a very good one, by going about Europe and practicing this trick."

"This idea sent off my thoughts on a new track, and by the time I had arrived in Paris I had decided on my course of action."

"First of all, I made careful inquiries at the railway station as to a tall American who had arrived from Nice by a certain train on a preceding day, and by the help of some 5 franc pieces I found the cabman who had driven him to his hotel—the Continental."

"This being ascertained, I chose a quiet, unpretending hotel for myself near one of the railway stations. Then I emptied the contents of a light bag on my bed, and taking it empty in my hand went to a theatrical costumer's, and saying I intended to take part in some private theatricals I hired the costume of a French abbe. It was a part I had often played in a piece that had a pretty long run in London some eight years ago, and I had little doubt that I should be able to acquit myself in it fairly well. I got the proper dress, wig, powder and everything complete, and having put all the articles into my bag I went to one of the railway stations and took a return ticket for a station a little way out in the country."

"To my disgust I found it impossible to get a compartment to myself. The train was too crowded, but I reflected that the trains returning to Paris would probably be much less crowded in the afternoon than those going into the country."

"In this supposition I was right. I hung about the suburban railway station till a return train was about to start. It was nearly empty, and a douceur to the guard secured me the privacy I needed. By the time I returned to Paris I was a stout, benevolent looking French priest in comfortable circumstances. My suit of tweeds I had placed in my bag, which I took care to leave at the railway station. Then I made the best of my way to the Hotel Continental."

"I was just in time for the table d'hôte, and as I took my seat I noticed with great satisfaction that my transatlantic friend was sitting not far off, and that he had not a suspicion of my identity. Nothing, I knew, could be done until after dinner, so I waited through the tedious procession of courses as patiently as I could, and when at last they came to an end I followed the American and a little group of men who surrounded him to the smoking room. It was not exactly the place for a priest, but I could not help that."

"I sat down by a little round table near the American, but slightly behind him, so as to be able to hear the conversation without joining in it unless I wished. From time to time I offered a remark, speaking of course in French, to the man who sat next me, but for the most part I smoked my cigar and sipped my coffee in silence."

"As I expected, it was not long before diamonds became the subject of conversation."

"I don't know much about diamonds myself," said the American, speaking in his native tongue, "but I'm told by good judges that there's about as good a stone as you'll see anywhere round." Almost exactly the phrases, I said to myself, which the fellow used to me at Nice!

"You kin take a look at it," he added carelessly, drawing off the ring and handing it to one of the group. I bent forward, so as to see more clearly what was going on. One after another the men who were sitting near examined and admired the ring. The man next me was the last to look at it."

"A friend I hev at Buenos Ayres sent it to me, and I had it cut myself."

"At this point I noticed that my neighbor had finished his examination of the diamond, and I touched him, intimating that I, too, would like to have a look at it. He handed it to me as a matter of course."

"It was the very ring which had been exhibited in the same way at Nice. I had the imitation one which had been palmed off upon me ready in my hand, and under pretense of trying the effect of the gem on my finger I easily substituted the one for the other, slipped the false ring on my finger, admired it, as in duty bound, and then pulling it off handed it back to my neighbor, who in turn gave it to the American."

"I put the real diamond, which I had secured, into my pocket and finished my coffee hastily just as Brother Jonathan was making an appointment with a rich young Frenchman to meet at the shop of a fashionable jeweler next morning and take his opinion on the value of the gem."

"And since it has taken your fancy," said the unsuspecting American, "you shall hev it for the same sum the jeweler offers me for it. I can't say fairer than that now, can I?"

"I went back to the railway station, got my bag, changed my hat and coat in the waiting room, slipped into the hotel and next day set off for Cannes."

"My only regret was that I was unable to make a study of the American's face when the Paris jeweler put a price on his beautiful diamond next morning."—Exchange.

Millepeda.

The little creature which possesses the distinction of having more legs than any other animal is that which belongs to the family of insects known as millepeda, or thousand footed. There are several different species of these, but they all possess the common characteristic of having segmented bodies, each segment of which is provided with its own pair of feet. These are set so closely along the body as to resemble hairs, and when they move one after another with perfect regularity the effect is precisely the same on a small scale as that of a field of oats undulating under the influence of the wind. Some species of millepeda have as many as 350 separate and distinct legs. They are all perfectly harmless, unlike the centipeds, which frequently have the power of inflicting poisonous wounds.—Brooklyn Eagle.

The Old and the New.

Powerful and large as are the greatest of modern United States warships, they are all of low stature compared with the towering structures of 60 or 70 years ago. The United States steamship Pennsylvania, built about 1828 and supposed at the time to be one of the largest warships ever launched, was 220 feet long and 58 broad. She carried 220 guns and towered aloft with five decks. Her complement of men was 1,400.—Detroit Free Press.

HUMAN

Methods of Treating Mental Classes.

Dr. James W. "Defectives" by Pennsylvania, and those members of mental or physical genital or acquired six classes, and, the deaf fourth, the feeble fifth, the inebriate sixth, the epileptic seventh.

Dr. Waik took es and stated w the best way to blind and deaf and feeble mind much claim to and since their from receiving schools it is only be instructed in ed to their cond also a most eco public money, f ing they give the blind and deaf porting in adult

"To fit blind it is necessary while at school impart thorough the few industri music, which as managers of the blind now insist ing, and in this unpopularity and understand their

"For those of cannot maintain competition w there should be industrial homes and labor, the de ing being supp Where such hom they are nearly s

"Under the st interest excited dresses of the grea thea Dix, Pennsy undertook to ma for the insane at first institution a commonwealth w ment of the old b We have now m people, but not e date them all. A regulated that t and be self supp

Dr. Waik thou feeble minded, sh to marry. Of ep same, as their d Inebriates shoul period, during w forced to abstain ment, he said, res nent cure.—Phila

AN OLD P

On This Particular

Do I The crowd had and buggy in the The horse had ba

"Tie a string a one of the bysta something else to it to fail."

A string was p tightly round one It had no effect. "Blindfold him. A bandage was

an effort made to Same result. "Back him."

"He won't back ated owner. "I t "Try him with a The ear of corn obstinate horse.

"I'll see if I can other way," said t of the animal.

He took a whip beast with it till s to have him arreste

Then he kicked b All in vain.

Finally a benevol tleman forced his crowd and said:

"I have seen a horses started by b them. Can you get ings?"

A boy was sent to niture store for s came back presentl

ful. It was placed der the horse and touched to it.

As the first feeble and the smoke legu legs the horse unbent his head, took a call uation, and when t burst into a big bla about six feet, in fu faculties and witho

haste, and stopped a And the elegant b \$25 worth by the f curred to anybody t stuff.

And then an old co ed suit of secondha with half the brim spoke kindly to the mal, rubbed his nose neck, climbed into t and said, "Get along And the horse mo

trot, with head high cago Tribune.

Brown's major county was over 7

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