

HER PECULIAR RING

What Happened When Robina's Sister Wore Her Engagement Band.

By MOLLY M'MASTER.

Bradley strolled along the darkened street of London finding a certain pleasure in the mystery surrounding all things. He compared the dimly lit thoroughfare with the glare of his native city, and found the enforced darkness of London at least more sensational than Broadway under its myriad lights.

However, Bradley realized that he would soon again be back in New York, and that it was a privilege to have seen London during war times and shrouded in its cautious garments of shadows. The city certainly held many interests and Bradley regretted that he had not more time at his disposal that he might prolong his stay.

He drew out his cigar lighter preparatory to enjoying a few puffs of smoke before entering his lodgings on Holland Park avenue. Bradley had scarcely raised his light to his pipe when a voice arrested him—a hysterical voice that came from the complete gloom of the roadway.

"Oh, do please let me have that light for a moment," the girl pleaded quickly. "I have been groveling in the pitch darkness for my ring. I dropped it from my bag and don't dare to leave the spot for fear of not finding it again." Her tone was high-pitched and Bradley knew that she was frightfully upset and on the verge of tears. He knew, also, that she exhaled a delightful perfume, perhaps from her soft furs, but he could get no glimpse of her face.

"We'll find the ring in a minute," he told her with a laugh in his voice. "You just stand still where you are, so I will know where to look." He bent down and with his small benzine lighter managed to throw a tiny wedge of illumination across the path.

The stone walk was icy cold to the touch as he ran his hand over it, and it was some minutes before the diminutive searchlight probed the right shadows and fared over the lost ring.

A little cry of delight left the girl's lips. The ring was an exquisite bow-knot of aquamarines and diamonds. That was all Bradley could see before the benzine lighter fluttered out.

"It has done its duty anyway," he said as he handed the girl her treasure and for a fleeting second touched the cool of her slim fingers.

"But you cannot light your pipe now," she said with sweet apology in her voice. "I'm so sorry."

"Plenty of matches," said Bradley, and would have drawn out his box save that the girl held out her hand to him by way of thanks.

"I would have had to sit here until daylight had you not come along," she told him. "I thank you very much for helping me."

She slipped away into the darkness and Bradley was left with only the realization that her hand was slim and soft, and that it had sent a peculiarly pleasant wave of emotion over him.

"By Jove—I wish I would have got a glimpse of her face. She may be goggle-eyed and squinty for all I know." He managed a light for his pipe while he pondered over the girl and her possible identity. "Sounded a bit Yankee," he decided, and felt more hopeful that she would again be flung across his path since he, too, hailed from the land of American Beauties.

"I will have to find the ring again," he muttered, "and flash my small searchlight on her face." Bradley hoped the girl was not engaged, but he felt reasonably sure that she would not have been practically in hysterics over the loss of any but a betrothal ring.

However, the interests of business and the return trip to New York dispelled all memories of mysterious nights of darkness and the entrance of the girl into his horizon. She might have been a myth springing from darkened London, and Bradley had soon forgotten the incident.

He had not been home three weeks before the scene was flung vividly across his brain. Bradley was attending an engagement party at the home of one of his friends when he suddenly caught sight of the ring he had picked up for the girl in London. At least Bradley supposed it to be the ring, and in a second he was at the side of the girl who wore it. He was in no way attracted to the girl, and her hair was not golden nor were her eyes violet—two essentials of feminine beauty in Bradley's eyes.

He took out his small benzine cigar-lighter and flashed it on the girl's face who was wearing the ring. After that he waited for the start of surprise from her.

Robina Bassingford looked askance at Bradley.

"I am not a battleship on the coast," she said with a laugh, "nor am I the enemy's encampment, so why turn the searchlight on me?"

"Have you ever been in London?" Bradley asked her.

"Never—we are going on our honeymoon though." Robina blushed prettily as she said it.

Bradley sighed. Perhaps he was glad that Robina Bassingford was not the girl whose hand had thrilled him in the dark of London. It was strange

that there were two rings of so peculiarly attractive design, and Bradley wondered if he would ever see the other one again.

Suddenly, as he sat at the dinner table, a most familiar scent was wafted to him. He drew in a deep breath and again felt himself plunged into the darkness and a girl whose furs exhaled just such an odor stood beside him. More than ever was he inclined to disbelieve Robina. The ring and the scent both pointed her out as that girl of shadows.

He did not press the subject, however, but returned to the dainty girl who was sitting at his right side. Bradley had been falling a ready victim of June McCree's violet eyes and soft smile when the ring incident had claimed his attention. Now, as he turned back to her he seemed to feel that she was going to prove the one and only girl for him.

Later, when they were dancing a slow waltz, Bradley again became conscious that the subtle odor of the myth girl was being wafted to him from June's golden hair.

"Have you ever been in London?" he asked quickly, his heart beating more rapidly than it had when he had put the same question to Robina.

"Yes," June answered, starting out of her rather pleasant sense of rhythm. She felt her partner draw a long deep breath as if of contentment, and if she felt especially happy Bradley did not for the moment know it.

"Have you ever seen a diminutive searchlight seeking to find a lost ring on the London sidewalk? And have your furs ever sent forth a perfume so pungent as to linger in a man's sense for weeks and weeks? Tell me—have you done all these mysterious things?" Bradley had stopped dancing, and June looked straight into his eyes with a light in her own that quite made his head reel.

She laughed softly.

"How strange!" she said, because for the moment no other words sprang to her lips. June had pondered many hours over the personality of the man whose hand she had clasped in London, and now that she had actually found him it seemed suddenly a most romantic situation, and her heart fluttered against her corsage of pink roses. She hoped Bradley would not notice her foolish emotion.

"But the ring—it is not yours—and you are not engaged?" he half demanded.

"It is not mine. I bought it while in London for my brother to give to Robina, and I wore it rather than worry lest it be stolen when not on my finger. Brother does not know about my losing it," she added with a blush. "He thinks me careless enough now. You won't tell him, will you?" June's slim fingers went out in impulsive pleading and rested on Bradley's arm.

Bradley drew a deep breath. The same thrill shot up his arm that her touch had given him once before. He stood looking happily down into her violet eyes. After a moment he spoke.

"I promise," he said slowly, "so long as you let me tell you something—within a week."

June blushed hotly. "You only met me tonight," she parried.

"Girl! I met you weeks and weeks ago—in the shadows of London. Promise me," he said softly.

"I hate to be considered careless," hesitated June.

"How can I wait a whole week?" murmured Bradley.

"I wouldn't do anything I didn't want to," laughed June.

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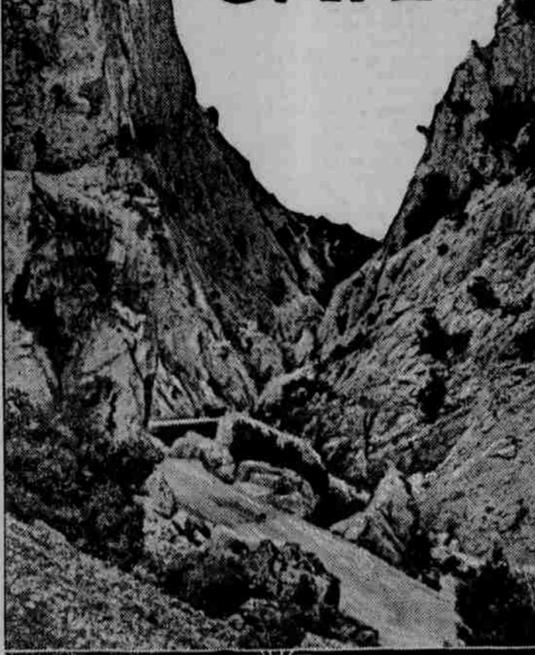
Famous Old Turnpike.

Among the many turnpikes projected in connection with Pittsburgh 100 and more years ago, one crowding on another, was that of one between Pittsburgh and Greensburg. The initiation of this was at a meeting held December 4, 1813, at the house of John McMaster, to consider the question of applying to the legislature for a charter to incorporate a company to build this road. John Wilkins was made chairman of the meeting and Ephraim Pentland secretary. A committee consisting of Dunning McNair, William Steele, John Irwin, William McCandless and Ephraim Pentland was appointed to confer with a similar committee from Westmoreland county. This was accomplished a few days later and steps taken to secure action by the legislature, and the result was the formation of a company and the beginning of operations. At the same time another commission decided to ask for proposals in January, 1814, for the construction of the "Two-Mile Run Turnpike," the road designed to be "60 feet wide, pavement 22 feet wide and two feet deep, the latter six inches to be river gravel, and on each side was to be sufficient space for a summer road."

Pigeon Flying in Belgium.

Pigeon flying is forbidden in this country just now, but it is doubtful if even the horrors of war will keep the Belgians from what is their nearest approach to a national sport. It has been said of the Belgian workman that he divides his wages into three parts, one for his family, one for himself and one for his carrier pigeons. The extent to which the sport is practiced may be gathered from the fact that the railways reap 3,000,000 francs a year from the carriage of the baskets in which pigeons are conveyed to and from the race meetings. Large prizes are offered by various clubs and at a great race a few years since 100,000 birds competed.

THROUGH the CILICIAN GATES



THE CILICIAN GATES, FROM THE SOUTH

WE felt a tingle of expectancy from the moment our Turkish wagon started to trundle over the series of mud holes and hillocks which pass for streets in Tarsus. For we were to go right through that most famous pass in history, the Cilician gates, over the crest of the Taurus mountains, on to the high plateau of eastern Asia Minor, writes Basil Mathews in the Quiver.

Alexander the Great poured his hosts onto the plain of Cilicia and into Syria through this narrow, profound gorge, which could be barred by the single gate of an ordinary castle. Cyrus and his 10,000 Greeks plunged from the great road on the Anatolian plateau which lies beyond the snow ridge of Taurus down on to these plains. Later the Roman legions thundered down this road to Tarsus. This, too, is the gorge into whose shadow Paul passed, to come out on the shining tableland of Anatolia, where Iconium and Derbe and Lystra, with Pisidian Antioch, waited for his word. Through these "Gates" also, Frederick Barbarossa poured his hosts to join Richard the Lion-heart at Acre.

The araba or Turkish wagon (which was to be our home for the next two days) is a seatless spring carriage, covered from end to end with a hood borne by eight supports. From the hood hang curtains which can be rolled up in fine weather and dropped to keep out rain and wind. You lay your bedding on the floor of the wagon, your steamer rugs on the bedding, your traveling cases at the back to lean against; and in this oriental repose look out on the scenery—or sleep.

Our wily, slight horses pegged on, breaking into a trot on the occasions when the road really was a road. Their bridles sparkled with blue beads, which are most powerful in averting the evil eye. The araba-i (wagon-man) was a stoutly-built young fellow, who drove with one leg curled up under him, and made slow, large gestures when he spoke, with a rare mixture of unconscious dignity and oriental leisure.

Across the Plain.

For an hour or more we drove across the plain, the arched hood of the wagon framing the huge white bulwark of the Taurus. The range lifted itself as though to bar the way. The great, brown, comfortable Cilician plain, fertile with the deposit of a thousand centuries from the mountains, was broken here and again by the uprising of the sharp conical mass of some hill-like that of the Seven Sleepers with its cave. Every here and there sprays of anemones (of every tint from palest heliotrope to deep purple) were scattered among crocuses whose white and yellow heads broke—almost stalkless—through the earth.

We took a backward look at the great plain, flooded with afternoon light, caught the distant glint of the sea over Mersina, and drove on northward. A short, precipitous, forbidding ravine of brownish-gray scarred rock, so sheer and steep that it looked as though some angry god had hewn it open with an ax, was the one striking break in the normal gradual rise of the road, up and on, twisting and receding, but always finally moving north.

Swinging round a rocky corner, we made a narrow plain—a miniature plateau of the hills, where, behind a khan, the camels were grouped in brown circles, heads down as though settling into a Rugby "scrum," but actually just feeding from a sackful of fodder thrown down.

Then we turned sharply into the gateway of Yenikhan (New Khan). The adjective "new" sounded good to

travelers who had been told with cheerful iteration of the vermin-haunted dirtiness of the old khans. It had all the primitive antiquity of appearance that the most enthusiastic hunter for the real eastern life could desire.

Up the Pass.

By the time the next morning was fully fledged our wagon was creeping once more up the pass. A new note of wild grandeur began to sound in the ravines. The road now clung to the almost precipitous sides of the gray rock, which lifted itself in jagged, swift leaps a thousand feet above us, while beneath, the icy, tumbling stream filled the whole valley with the sound of running waters. Some peaks were bare, with the stark, unclad grimness of mountains of the moon; others were covered even to the dizzy peaks with pines which clung to the rock with tenacious roots. Ancient hollow sycamores, as gray as the rocks in which they were rooted, thrust their gnarled trunks over the stream.

Contrasted with the valleys and plain behind us, it was as though we had swept from the alluring harmonies of a Beethoven symphony into the wild and crashing discords of a Wagner overture—with all the strident glare and appeal of brass and string and wood. Yet through it all like a strange haunting theme from a folk-song as old as men, strode the tinkling strings of camels, sounding bells that varied from the tiny neck bells in the high trebles to the bartone of the long bronze bells that swung from their sides.

Precipitous bluffs, their gray and white thrown up defiantly against the blue of the sky, gave a strange feeling of castles built by giants to defend this eerie pass against armies of jinn. At last it looked as though the end had come. The gray bulwark was hurled in front of us, an unbroken, impenetrable, unscalable mass. Suddenly a thin edge of light appeared; there, cloven in the rock, was a passage—narrow and between sheer precipices, with sharp-edged summits.

The Split Rock.

All the thunderbolts of Olympus must have riven the rock that the stream of water and of humanity might pour through it. In the world there are few places suggesting so wonderfully the power of the simple physical facts of hill and mountain and plain to control history. A split rock, through which a loaded camel could barely pass (till Ibrahim Pasha blasted away the rock to give passage for his artillery), has deflected the flow of the contest and contact of East and West in history. And, as scenery, the "Gates" are the crashing climax of the Taurus overture.

Passing out of their shadow, we came out into open valleys running north and northwest, on a rise so gradual that, when the actual watershed was reached, it could barely be discerned. And, curiously enough, the waters that flow north and south from this point do not reach sea distant from one another, each finally reaching the Mediterranean.

Our road ran north and west, dropping now gradually, now steeply—till, passing the last string of tired camels as the sun set ahead of us, we reached the old khan at Bosant. Ahead lay the caravan road, along which Greek and Roman and Crusader have come. They have come, but they have passed—and the eternal East remains. The Oriental, swinging his legs astride his tiny donkey and leading his line of lather camels, holds the road, just as he held it when Paul, in his company, came along these valleys to that "shining tableland" where Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Antioch were to be immortalized by his passing.

PURIFYING INFECTED STABLES AND BARN



Building Prepared for Disinfection—In This Case the Disinfecting Was Done by Fumigation—Openings in the Barn Were Closed by Paper to Prevent the Escape of the Gas.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)
Inspectors in the United States department of agriculture have found in the course of their work that ignorance or carelessness on the part of stock owners has frequently led to fresh outbreaks of infectious disease after it had been supposed that the previous ones had been completely stamped out. Comparatively few farmers, it is said, realize the importance of the scientific disinfection of premises which have once harbored infected stock.

When it is remembered that the germ which causes tuberculosis in cattle measures about one-thousandth of an inch in length, it is obvious that the "lick-and-promise" method of cleaning is no obstacle at all to the existence of the disease. The germ of glanders is little larger. These two germs are thrown off by diseased animals in large quantities. In the average stable they have no difficulty in finding many lodging places whence any one of a hundred different things may cause them to emerge and start a fresh outbreak upon the farm. When a stable has once harbored diseased animals, therefore, absolute disinfection with sufficiently powerful disinfectants is the only way to insure the stock from another visitation.

In Farmers' Bulletin 480, "Practical Methods of Disinfecting Stables," some of the most easily obtainable disinfectants are named, and the best methods of applying them discussed. In the first place it is imperative that the stable be thoroughly cleaned before any disinfectant at all is applied. The various surfaces such as ceilings, walls, partitions, floors, etc., should be swept free from cobwebs and dust. Where the filth has been allowed to accumulate, this should be removed by thorough scrubbing. If the wood-work has become soft and porous so that it affords a good refuge for the disease germ, it should be torn down and burned and new wood substituted. All refuse of every description should be removed to a place inaccessible to live stock and there either burned or treated with a solution of chloride of lime in the proportion of six ounces to one gallon of water. If the floor of the stable is of earth, the surface soil should be removed to a depth of four inches or more and new earth substituted. It is better, however, to take advantage of this opportunity to lay down a concrete floor, which in the end will be found more satisfactory as well as more sanitary.

The stable thus thoroughly cleaned and stripped of all its odds and ends and refuse is now ready for the application of the disinfectant. A disinfectant is a drug which has the power of destroying germs merely by coming in contact with them. There are a number of these drugs, varying considerably in efficacy, and some of them dangerous to animal as well as germ life. Bichloride of mercury is one of the most powerful, but it has the great disadvantage of being a violent poison and in consequence great care must be used when handling it to keep it away from all live stock. For ordinary purposes it is probable that cresol, known as liquor cresolis compositus, is best adapted to general use. When the latter is used, it should be mixed with water in the proportion of four or five ounces to a gallon. Cresol is not as soluble as the compound solution and should, therefore, be thoroughly stirred while mixing. If a grade of the drug guaranteed to be 95 per cent pure is secured, two or three ounces to a gallon of water will be sufficient.

To apply the disinfectant on anything but a very limited surface, a strong spray pump is essential. The pump should be equipped with 15 feet of hose with a five-foot section of iron pipe, with a spraying nozzle at one end, attached to it. The entire interior of the stable should be saturated with the solution forced through this apparatus. Special attention should be given to feeding troughs and drains, as it is in these that the disease germs are most likely to find their first resting places. After a thorough spraying with the disinfectant, it is well to apply a lime wash containing four or five ounces of chloride of lime to each gallon. In many cases, however, it will save trouble if this wash is combined with the disinfectant. This can be done in the following manner: for five gal-

lons of disinfecting fluid, slake 7½ pounds of lime, using hot water if necessary to start action. Mix to a creamy consistency with water. Stir in 15 fluid ounces of cresol, at least 95 per cent pure, and make up to five gallons by adding water. In case compound solution of cresol is used, add 30 fluid ounces instead of 15. Stir the whole mixture thoroughly and, if it is to be applied through a spray nozzle, strain through a wire sieve. Stir frequently when applying and keep covered when not in use.

Market for Farm Horses.

Europe's demand for horses will continue, say experts in the United States department of agriculture, long after peace has been restored. War is an insatiable consumer of horses and the available supply must be diminishing so rapidly each day the present conflict lasts that it is inevitable that there should be a great scarcity for agricultural purposes later on. As soon as international commerce can be restored to a peace footing, therefore, the European countries are certain to look to America to supply a great part of this lack.

The department of agriculture, however, does not recommend American farmers to purchase a surplus of horses merely in order to breed them to meet this prospective demand. It is much better to secure good mares for the ordinary farm work and then breed them to good stallions. Only horses of a high quality may be profitably raised today, but there is no reason why such animals should not be used for farm as well as breeding purposes.

While inferior horses are always a drug on the market, the demand for serviceable animals appears to be almost unlimited. Together the United States and Russia possess 53 per cent of the world supply, and Russia will need all that it can raise itself. The United States, therefore, must furnish the bulk of the animals needed to replace those consumed by the present war. War is even more destructive to horses than to men. In his report for the year 1865, the quartermaster general of the United States army stated:

"The service of a cavalry horse under an enterprising commander has averaged only four months." During 1864 there were 500 horses consumed per day in the Northern army, without considering those captured and not reported. During eight months of that year, the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac was remounted twice, nearly 40,000 horses in all being required. During his Shenandoah Valley campaign Sheridan was supplied with fresh horses at the rate of 150 per day. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that the numbers engaged in the American Civil war were small compared with those under arms in Europe today.

Leaving out for the moment the question of remounts for military purposes, it is said that for a complete mobilization the German army requires 770,000 horses and the French army 250,000. The figures for the French army probably include only those for the cavalry and do not take into consideration the needs of the full artillery, the transport service and other military uses to which horses are put. The great majority of these animals are not included in the permanent military organizations but are employed during peace in farm work. Now that they have been withdrawn from the farms to die of wounds, exhaustion or starvation, tremendous imports will ultimately be necessary. Farmers in the United States should prepare to meet this demand.

Weeding Gardens.

The plots where early peas, radishes, etc., were raised, if they have not been planted to late crops (the good gardener will always do this, however), should be cleared of weeds and old vines. These places may serve as weed-breeding grounds to cover the whole garden next year. Finally weed patches serve as hiding places for innumerable insects. Eggs are deposited there and the hibernating insects find such places a refuge from their bird enemies.

Success With Poultry.

Care is that part of the routine of poultry culture which bestows a kind hand on the tender younglings, to supply their little wants with a view of promoting thrift and good health.