

THE AMBER BEADS

By ELDREDGE HOLT.

He was a traveling salesman for a toothpowder concern.

She was prescription clerk in a cut-rate drug store. Besides that, she had a creamy, fair complexion and light-brown eyes, shaded, it is true, by a pair of rimless, gold-bowed spectacles. But that was because the light in the pharmacy of the cut-rate drug store was not of the best and there were many prescriptions to fill.

He had met her at the school where they make young men and here and there a young woman into druggists, so they both had their diplomas and would some time have a little drug store of their own, and they would not have to take a clerk, because, no matter what happened, Alice—that was her name—could manage to tend store for a few hours a day. You know there is a regulation that says that every drug store must have a graduate pharmacist in constant attendance during the day and part of the night to put up prescriptions.

Of course one man cannot be at the post all of the time. Alice and Paul—that was the toothpowder agent's name—had it all arranged that they could save money from the first, for since she was a registered pharmacist she could substitute in the store for the few hours that Paul would need to take off. Oh, yes, they were very matter of fact and businesslike about it and had talked over their plans for the future quite frankly.

In the meantime Paul was vending toothpowder, trying to save enough money to buy his own little drug store and by careful skimping, with what savings Alice could add, it would take two years before this purchase could be made. A long time, you think? Yes, but if you had seen the steady, soft light in Alice's bespectacled eyes and the lovely blush that came into her creamy, pale cheeks when those eyes met Paul's, you wouldn't have wondered that he was willing to wait.

Moreover, to Alice and Paul, marriage was, besides being a beautiful adventure and the one and only romance, something of a business undertaking as well.

And there was no reason whatever to be rash and hasty about it. Still, at times when Paul was on the road with his suitcase full of samples and work grew very heavy at the cut-rate drug store Alice's brown eyes grew moist and she had to take off the gold-bowed spectacles and wipe away the tears, tears not of discontent, but just of loneliness and a little impatience. For Alice's mind was full of imagining their new home—it would probably be a little flat over the drug store to begin with—and two nights a week she was taking cooking lessons at the Y. W. C. A. so that she would be able to concoct puddings as well as plasters. And Paul sometimes snarled a little at the necessity that made him wait so long, and when sales were not as good as usual—that meant smaller commissions for him—he would write a letter of impatience to Alice.

One particularly lovely autumn day Paul sauntered into the cut-rate drug store. He had unexpectedly come to town and he wanted to surprise Alice. Alice dropped the test tube she was holding when she heard his voice, and, slipping out of her all-enveloping linen apron, ran out to the counter outside. "I've had a hurry call to New York, Alice," he told her, "and I've only a few minutes before trains. But I stopped over to see you. And, yes, Alice, I've had a specially good run of luck. That new patent cap top on the powder makes a big hit. And I am going to be extravagant. I want to get you something from the big city. I can't afford the engagement ring I ought to have got you, but tell me what piece of jewelry that doesn't cost so very much—say ten or fifteen dollars—you would most like."

Alice clasped her hands before her and thought for a second. "A string of amber beads," she said at last. "I have always wanted them."

Paul's face showed his disappointment. Somehow he had always associated amber beads with the fact that some old woman he had known about wore them around their necks to ward off chills and fever. If Alice had said a gold-link bracelet, with a heart-shaped padlock and a key, he would have been entirely satisfied with her choice. But Alice stuck to her plea for amber beads. "I love the color of amber so," she said, "and all my life I have dreamed of having them some time."

In ten days Paul returned one morning, and, going straight to the cut-rate drug store, found Alice and gave her the beads. Again there was short connection between trains, and in a few minutes he was off again. "I don't really like those beads," he said, "and I can take them back and get the money if you say so. I'll tell you frankly that they cost twelve dollars. I got them at a pawnshop I happened to be passing. I tried to jew the man down, but he wouldn't listen to a cent less. You might take them to some regular jeweler and find out whether I was humbugged or not. Maybe they are only glass."

Alice held the beads up to the light and revealed in the soft, golden radiance that she had been told. "I am sure they are real amber," she said. "They are beautiful. But perhaps you had better take them back. Twelve dollars would be just so much more toward the store."

"That's right," said Paul, "but I'm no Indian giver. They're what you wanted and they're what you shall have." And in another minute he was off with his suitcase full of samples for the next train.

At noon that day Alice hurried her sandwich and hot chocolate, hastily taken at the fountain counter of the cut-rate drug store, and with her beads in her hand she went to a neighboring jeweler—not the best in town, but one who was reliable.

"I am pretty sure they are real amber," she said, "still if it would not be too great a favor may I ask you to examine them and tell me what I should have paid for them?" The jeweler looked at the beads, but apparently shared none of the joy in

their golden radiance that Alice's eyes indicated.

"Where did you get them, may I ask?"

"Oh, not in town. It was in some pawnshop in New York. I suppose we should have known better than to trust such a place. But they were so bright and pretty I thought they were real amber."

The jeweler eyed her narrowly. "Your idea is to sell them?" he asked. "No, I just wanted to see what they are worth. I thought you would tell me."

The jeweler lowered his voice. "I can't tell you just the maximum price that you might be able to get for them. Of course in Europe they would pay more, but traveling is dangerous. I would be willing personally to pay you five thousand dollars for them, perhaps a little more. Of course, if you went to New York you might get more, but then there would be the risk, and you might find a dishonest dealer."

Alice thanked the jeweler and fairly staggered out of the store, clasping her precious beads in her hand. She had been teasing her, making fun of her glass beads, or whether she had been insane, or at least dreaming. She made her way to the most conservative and most expensive jeweler in town, unmindful that the clock on the corner pointed five minutes to the time that she ought to be back at the prescription counter.

Ten minutes later she was in the darkened examination room with two jewel experts. She seemed to come to a full realization of the situation when she heard one of them explaining: "If you will look through this bead you will see the first letter. Now hold this bead up to the light and see the next letter—marvelous, marvelous. This bead is a real gem. They are royal ambers, one of a few strings of beads that Louis XV had made for his favorites. They are found only in the largest museums now. Perhaps the full value of this string has not been known for a hundred years or more. I will be willing to let you have six thousand dollars for the beads. Of course in Europe they might fetch more. If you wish to accept my offer we will have the check sent to your bank tomorrow or give it to you personally. Of course, in making such a large transaction we have to go through the form of consulting the treasurer of the concern. He is out at luncheon at present."

Somehow Alice got back to her post. She was 15 minutes late—heard of breach of office regulations—but she did not explain. That afternoon she sent a telegram to Paul asking him to return at once to hear the good news. And that is why Alice and Paul didn't have to wait two years. In fact, they waited only long enough to find just the coziest little drug store for \$5,000 that you could imagine. And the amber beads—when they have been restrung and properly mounted—will be on exhibition in one of the big museums, although to any but an expert they look much like any other string of amber beads.

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Preparation Hard to Beat.

The two commercial travelers were boasting to each other of the merits of the respective fireproof safes for which they were agents. "I guess," said the first, "that we've given our safe 'some' test, and I reckon that our best trial was when we heaped up a collection of combustibles round it which took a week to burn out. Inside the safe was a little dog provided with food and water. At the end of the week we raked away the embers and opened the door of the safe which had been in the middle of that blazing bonfire for a week. Out jumped the little dog, well and happy, wagging his tail with delight. 'Yours is a good safe,' said the other, 'but it isn't in the same block with ours. We adopted the same test precisely, and when we raked away the embers and came to the safe at last we opened the door and our little dog—' He paused dramatically. 'Was dead,' interrupted his rival. 'Yes, sir,' was the reply. 'You've hit it. Frozen to death!'

Age's Handicap.

"This advertiser says gray hairs are often a handicap in social and business life."

"That's true," replied the thoughtful man. "I don't know which is the more pathetic figure, a gray-haired office boy, or an old chap, white of poll and stiff in the joints, trying to appear youthful by doing some of the latest dances."

The Inevitable Quarrel.

"I'm glad I was married in June instead of October," said the bride. "Why?"

"Because if we'd married in October we'd have scrapped over whether or not we were going to spend Thanksgiving with my people, and then our honeymoon wouldn't have lasted a month."

Enriching the Language.

Recently, two dusky maidens were overheard on a street car discussing their acquaintances. Said one, "I suddenly do like Mr. Smithers; he's so pleasant."

A Fine Digestion.

"He says he hates from the pie belt."

The Oldest Town in America



Typical Indian Village in New Mexico.

THREE hundred and sixty-six years ago the intrepid Spaniard Coronado marched a little army northward from Mexico across the deserts of Sonora and Arizona until in what is now the western part of the state of New Mexico, he found and conquered and occupied a group of Pueblo Indian towns whose fame had reached him under the designation of the "Seven Cities of Cibola," or Zuni. As the years went on one or another of the seven all-time towns was abandoned and its inhabitants moved to the central one of the group, Halona, "Place of the Ants." For over two hundred years now, the whole Zuni tribe has concentrated itself in this settlement which is known to Americans as the Pueblo Zuni, and to its inhabitants as Iltiwawa, "The Middle Place," for in native belief this site marks the exact center of the earth, writes A. L. Kroeber, professor of anthropology in the University of California, in the American Museum Journal.

With the possible exception of two or three other Pueblo settlements, Zuni is thus the oldest inhabited town in the United States, far surpassing in antiquity Jamestown, Plymouth and other early English settlements, as well as Santa Fe and St. Augustine of Spanish foundation. The tribe numbers 1,600 souls or as many as it could muster after it had gathered itself together after the first disastrous shock of Spanish contact. The houses are still built in the prehistoric way of stone masonry, mortared and plastered with clay, and rise densely clustered, terraced one above the other to a height of four or five stories.

Live Life of Long Ago.

The life of the Zuni, runs in the current of long ago. They have borrowed from the American his shirt and his overalls, and have learned to like his coffee and sugar, his bacon and wheat flour. Sheep and donkeys they obtained long since from the Spaniards, and many today can boast of owning horses and wagons. But inwardly and in all his relations with other Indians, the Zuni is still purely aboriginal. He does not know whether today is Sunday or Wednesday, whether it is January or July, or what the American names of the store keeper, missionary and government agent are. He knows these people by nick names which he or some friend has given them, and he reckons time by the number of days to the next ceremonial dance ordained by his priests. He supports himself as his forefathers did, through raising corn by hand culture in sandy patches where it would seem that the grain would not even sprout. In the middle of the plaza around which his town is built stands a de-caying, roofless and ruttled Catholic church, which his forefathers built of adobe under the direction of Spanish missionaries; but two centuries of Christian regime have not influenced the inward spirit of the Zuni. He knew that soldiers stood back of the priest and therefore he obeyed him; yet he hardened his heart against him; and no sooner did Spanish and Mexican authority relax than the Indian quietly shook off the hateful yoke of imposed religion, and reverted openly to the ancient native ceremonials which he and his fathers had kept alive by secret practices in hidden underground rooms within fifty yards of the walls of the mission.

Such tremendously tenacious conservatism has kept the Zuni substantially where they were before Columbus discovered America. They are not hostile to Americans, in fact their native code of politeness requires that every one should be treated with courtesy. They are merely indifferent to ourselves. All that every Zuni asks is that he should be left alone to support himself, to practice his religion, and to live his life as his fathers did, without interfering with anyone and without being interfered with.

It is no wonder then that these remarkable people have long attracted extraordinary attention from anthropologists and students of the aboriginal. Frank Hamilton Cushing, whose genius in certain directions has never been equaled among any of his colleagues, took up his residence at Zuni nearly forty years ago, and became in

Perfect Ventilation Scarce.

Absolute dryness and perfect ventilation, the two conditions necessary for the prevention of rot and decay in building timbers, are seldom, if ever, obtained. To ventilate the floor and wall construction of a house properly would render it a veritable fire-trap, through which fire, once started, would sweep from top to bottom and end to end.

Therefore the only practical solution of the problem is to adequately protect and ventilate those timbers that come in contact with masonry or are exposed to ground moisture. All timbers in contact with masonry should be heavily coated with asphalt or tar.

The seepage of air through the cracks and joints of the framing will usually be sufficient to ventilate the inclosed timbers of walls and floors.

Power Carried Far.

Current is being transmitted from Sweden to Denmark through a submarine cable between Helsingborg, Sweden, and Elsinore, Denmark, a distance of about ten miles. The power comes from waterfalls in southern Sweden.

Safety First.

"When Mrs. Trouble speaks with an air of finally you get the impression that there is nothing more to say."

LEGEND OF FONTENOY BATTLE

Historian Shows It Was the English Who Requested the French to Fight First.

Is it possible that Monsieur Clemenceau, himself so lettered, so learned, has pronounced this phrase: "At Fontenoy our fathers said to yours, 'Gentlemen the English, fire first!' And it is thus that M. Clemenceau expressed himself before the English. How could he lend the authority of his name to so evident a historic error?"

It was an Englishman who, at Fontenoy, requested the French to fire first. Were it nothing more certain, Voltaire, informed by his friend, the Marquis d'Argenson, has related the scene in his "Summary of the Century of Louis XV."

The English officers, lifting their hats, saluted the French. The count of Chabanes, the duke of Biron, who had gone forward, and all the officers of the French guards returned the salute. My Lord Charles Hay, the captain of the English guards, cried: "Gentlemen of the French guards, fire!"

The Count d'Anteroche, then a lieutenant of grenadiers, afterward a captain, said to them, in a loud voice: "Gentlemen, we never fire first. You will please fire."

It was a principle of the French infantry to draw the first fire from the enemy. Marshal Maurice de Saxe, who commanded at Fontenoy, vigorously prohibited his army from firing first. His officers were simply obeying his orders in refusing the proposition of the English.—Le Cri de Paris.

For the Defense.

The present fashion of exceedingly short skirts, says a French paper, quoted by the New York Post, is a cruel one, because it uncovers such a multitude of too solid ankles. The chief beneficiary in the case is the shoemaker, whose job it is to bring to the aid of nature and create the illusion of charming lines where nothing of the sort exists. But the shoemaker's task is not always an easy one. In Paris especially those substantial lady patrons of his expect a great deal. Therefore a certain fashionable artist of boots in the Rue de Rivoli has adopted a precautionary policy. Upon his circulars and upon placards in his shop there is printed a notice conceived in the following terms:

"M. L. respectfully reminds his patrons that shoes cannot be held responsible for the defects of the foot or ankle of the wearer. They cannot therefore be taken back after the customer has once put them on."

Strange Signs on Ships.

Strange signs frequently hang from ships which puzzle even dwellers in seaport towns. A basket slung from the mainmast head is a sailor's sign to notify that the cargo has been loaded or discharged, as the case may be, and that the ship is ready to start on her next trip. This she cannot do until the usual board of trade formalities have been observed, and the ship's papers which, while a ship is in port, are deposited with the board of trade, have been returned to the captain. A generally mysterious emblem is a beam lashed to a mainmast or bridge railing. This is to signify that the vessel is for sale. Occasionally a dark blue stripe may be seen running for and aft on a vessel; as a matter of fact this is a sign of recent bereavement. Blue is the sailor's mourning, and the stripe of this color takes the place of the black margin or band used by the landman as a notification of death.

May Have Woman Curates.

Woman curates are being suggested in England because so many clergymen have gone to the trenches and because theological students who have not already enlisted will be absorbed under the compulsion act unless they are physically unfit.

For ten years before the war there was a steady decrease in the applications for ordination, owing, in some measure, to the modern recognition of the fact that a young man of what is known as "good family" may engage in commerce without any social disadvantages. Genteel starvation is no longer preferable to getting a good living outside "the professions," and the candidates for the church have gradually been narrowing down to those who feel an earnest call to preach or to undertake the more exacting forms of Christian work. The war apparently has but hastened the process.

Faith of the Druses.

The Druses, whom the commander of the Turkish expedition against Egypt, Djemal Pasha, is reported to have incited to revolt against the government as an act of revenge toward Enver Pasha, are a remarkable sect into whose faith various religious doctrines are interwoven. Among these figures those of the Pentateuch, the Gospels, the Koran and certain Mohammedan allegories. One peculiar feature of their creed is worth noting at the present time. They believe that the resurrection will be ushered in by war between the Mohammedans and the Christians, in which they claim they are destined to take a prominent part.

New Thumb Grown on Man.

George Merrell, president of the Wristle Perfume and Soap Manufacturing company of Chicago, will be able to continue his hobby of piano playing, as Dr. Otto Bryning of St. Mary's hospital, Jamaica, Queens, has succeeded in growing half an inch on Mr. Merrell's thumb, which was amputated in a motor car mishap near Jamaica recently.

By stimulating the formation of granulations on the stump, Doctor Bryning accomplished the task.—New York Dispatch to Philadelphia Bulletin.

Domestic Bliss.

Mrs. Neighbors—Do you and your husband live happily together?

Volcanoes of the Antilles

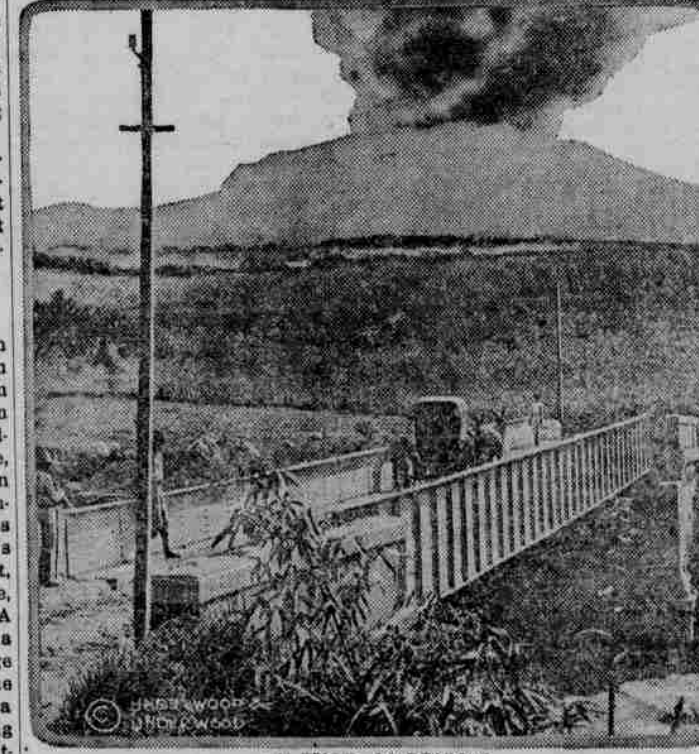


DR EDMUND OTIS HOVEY, curator of the department of geology and invertebrate paleontology of the American Museum of Natural History, has returned from a three months' expedition to the Lesser Antilles. He spent most of his time on the islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Vincent, where he continued the studies of the active volcanoes of the West Indies, which he began in 1902, during the great eruptions of Mt. Pelee, Martinique, and the Soufriere of St. Vincent.

Doctor Hovey spent 15 days on the island of Guadeloupe, three of which were spent on the summit of the Soufriere, where temperature observations on the fumaroles were made and samples of escaping gases collected. These fumaroles have been active, with varying degrees of strength, during all the historic period of the volcano. A marked increase of discharge of sulphurated steam took place at the time of the eruptions of Martinique and St. Vincent, and an area several acres in extent was then added to the active region. The vents maintain the force of their discharge, but the temperature does not in any case exceed 100 degrees C. (212 degrees F.)

On Martinique he devoted most of his time to Mt. Pelee itself, and the ruined city of St. Pierre, and spent several days in camp on the old summit plateau of the volcano, which is 450 feet above the sea, and which formerly bordered the pool of fresh water known as Lac des Palmistes. The new cone, which stands as the enduring

monument of the great eruption, nearly fills the old crater adjoining the plateau, rising some 600 feet above it. The famous spine, or obelisk, which rose some hundreds of feet further into the air, disappeared entirely nearly ten years ago through disintegration, and the cone, as viewed from the sea, presents a flat top, whose apparent smoothness does not prepare a visitor for the actual ruggedness of surface which he finds on climbing the mountain.



MT. PELEE, MARTINIQUE

which retains water better than the coarse material, and suffers more rapid decomposition. This fine ash is now coated more or less thickly with moss and lichens, and often bears, in addition, bushes, trees, and ferns. The outer limits of the original zone of annihilation showed merely a destruction of the vegetation then coating the mountain slopes and did not suffer destruction or deep burying of the soil.

Palms and tree ferns have regained their pristine development and beauty in this region, and forest trees are growing. On the east side of the mountain the sugar cane plantations which flourished before the eruptions are now largely restored to cultivation and present a heavier growth of cane than before, while on the west side the peasant proprietors are already taking up "provision ground" on the lower slopes of the volcano itself.

The great crater of the Soufriere is beautiful enough to repay the lover of scenery for a special trip to the island. It is about nine-tenths of a mile across from east to west and three-quarters of a mile wide from north to south, and a lake approximately half a mile in diameter now occupies its lower portions as its predecessor did in the days before the eruptions which changed the whole appearance of the mountain. In 1902-3 there was a little pool of muddy water in the bottom of the bowl through which disturbing columns or puffs of steam were continually rising. In 1908 the pool was much larger, was yellowish green in color, and was not disturbed by any eruptive discharges, but did not fill the bottom of the crater.

BETRAYED BY HER RULERS

France Unprepared for Great Struggle With Germany That Was Undertaken in 1870.

"France was beaten in 1870," wrote Prof. Charles Downer Hayden in the American Magazine, "because she was hopelessly unprepared for the elemental contingency that may come to any people, as all history and all reason abundantly prove. Her unpreparedness pervaded every aspect of the national life. Her government, her administrative system, her diplomacy, her army and navy all bore cumulative witness to the truth that a successful war cannot be improvised, but is the reward of long, patient, intelligent labor. Her unpreparedness was none the less because her rulers announced that she was absolutely ready. Ollivier, the head of the ministry, declared in the chamber of deputies that he accepted the war 'with a light heart,' a phrase he was destined to be still explaining until his death. The minister of foreign affairs, Gramont, let the chamber understand that a triple all-

iance would within a few hours be concluded with Austria and Italy. Moreover, 'after a victory we shall have all the allies we want.' The minister of war, Marshal Leboeuf, declared that the army was ready, more than ready, and that 'if the war should last a year we would not have to buy a single gaiter button.'"

Warlike Cake Decorations.

A feature of present-day London weddings where the bridegroom happens to be a fighter, is cake decoration symbolic of his branch of the service. Toy cannons done in sugar, aeroplanes or battleships of minute proportions are used, as the case may be.

A powerful overhead structure, capable of handling many tons of ore at once, used for unloading vessels at Duluth, was not strong enough to resist the winds at that place, and was brought down by a storm.

Optimistic Thought.

A wise man pays homage to worth; a fool to wealth.