PRECIOUS STONES.

Interesting Talk With a Diamond Importer—Diamond-Cutting.

"Most of the diamonds found in the trade," said a member of one of the largest diamond firms in this city, "come from the cape mines at the southern end of Africa. These mines number four or five, the largest being the Kimberley, covering eighteen acres. For the last ten years they have yielded largely, many large stones having been taken out, though these, with the exception of the Porter Rhodes stone, are not of proportionately good quality. The Porter Rhodes diamond (named after its owner, an Englishman) weighs about 150 carats in the rough, and is highly valued. It is said that the owner once refused an offer of £30,000 for the half interest in the stone. Latterly, I understand, he has been offering it for £50,000. This is the diamond which Mrs. Mackey, of Paris, was said to have thought of buying last year, you may remember. But most of the Cape diamonds of large size (and they get them as high as 300 carats) are only worth cutting into smaller stones. The amount of trade there? It is estimated that each week's cargo of rough diamonds sent to London represents a value of $50,000. As to other sources of supply, India no longer enters into trade consideration. A new mine was discovered last year in Brazil called Cannaireres, but its yield is small as yet. The Brazilian diamonds, I may say here, are usually found in the sandy beds of rivers, while the cape diamonds are dug out at a depth of from 300 to 500 feet. They are usually found imbedded there in a kind of soft, soapy muck, called 'blue earth.' Some are almost round, but most have eight sides. In weight they run, in the average, from two to ten carats, comparatively few stones above ten carats being found. This is in the rough, remember. Cutting reduces them about one-half. The ten-carat stones, thus reduced by cutting to five, average about $750 each in value. This carat weight that I speak of is one peculiar to diamonds, rubies, opals and sapphires. It takes over seven carats to make one pennyweight in Troy weight."

"Can you tell me something about diamond-cutting?" asked the reporter.

"Most of the stones sent to London from the Cape are reshipped to Amsterdam and Antwerp, the great cutting places. Cutting is done also in this country, though only within the last few years. I suppose there can't be over three dozen cutters in the whole country, and of these we have one dozen, all foreigners. On this point, it is to be noted, however, that the demand here for fine cutting has about revolutionized the style of cutting abroad. As to any principles in cutting, there is the general rule that one-third of the stone should be above the girdle and two-thirds below it. This proportion is sometimes sacrificed in order to avoid imperfections in a stone—such as black spots and feathers (and at least one-half of the stones are more or less imperfect). Again, the size and shape of the stone in the rough will determine whether it shall have a single cut or the full cut, or the rose cut. The operation? You know the old saying, about 'diamond cutting diamond?' It is literally true with us. The workman simply rubs one rough diamond against the other. Polishing is necessary afterward, and is done by holding the cut stone down against a wheel revolving at an extremely rapid rate. Of course, in examining the wheel from time to time we must look out for flaws, or the diamond will be caught on some rough point and be smashed in less than the traditional jiffy. As to the time taken to cut and polish, one cutter will do work enough to keep a half dozen polishers busy, and a good polisher will polish about twenty carats a week."

"About the color of diamonds?" suggested the reporter.

"There is every imaginable tint, but the principal trade colors are the standard white, the bluish tint, the yellow and the brown. The white, most valuable, is not always the most brilliant. The bluish tint is much sought after now. Yellow is the most common of the four. Apparently there is a growing taste for fancy colors in diamonds—a dark brown, bright yellow, or canary, as it is called, and other natural colors. Yes, artificial coloring has been done by the use of aniline. A yellow stone dipped in this receives a bluish tint, but this comes off by exposure to the air or by use. There was great excitement about the matter last year, you may recall, both here and in Europe. I don't think it is practised much now.

"Of the other colored stones," continued the speaker, "rubies and pearls are now the most fashionable. The finest rubies come from Ceylon and Siam. They are more expensive than diamonds of the same size, owing to their scarcity. The standard color for a ruby is pigeon-blood, but there are very few perfect specimens. Pearls are white, black, gray and bronze. A good many of the colored pearls come from Panama. Black pearls are rare, and after all are not jet black, but a sort of smoky hue. The finest white pearls come from Australia. We have pink pearls also. The best opals come from Hungary, but opals sell rather poorly now, though a trifle better in popular favor than a few years ago. The Empress Eugenie in her time did much to discourage the sale of the opal, as she subscribed to the superstiton that it is the 'Mother of Sorrows.' The Central American opal is affected by heat, so that if it has a seam it will be likely to split. As to the sapphire, more reasonable prices prevail now, due to the discovery of a new mine in Ceylon. The color of the stone found there is lighter than that at Burmah, but it is more brilliant. We have very little call nowadays for emeralds. There are imitations, you know, of sapphires and emeralds, and the French imitate pearls also in a composition that almost defies detection by the untrained eye."—*New York Tribune.*

Largest Ranch in the World.

A Galveston (Texas) letter to the Chicago *Inter-Ocean* says: The largest ranch in the world is that of Mr. Charles Goodnight, who has 700,000 acres surrounded by 250 miles of barbed wire fence, at the head waters of the Red river in the Panhandle. Mr. Goodnight's cattle are as finely bred as any in the State, as he has graded them up by introducing the best foreign breeds, and in the market these bring fifteen to twenty per cent. more than those from other ranches. His 700,000 acres of land were bought at 50 cents and $1 an acre within the last three or four years, but could be sold readily at double that price to day. When it is considered that the State of Rhode Island contains only 674,000 acres, it will be realized that Mr. Goodnight owns what the ranchmen call "quite a spot of land."

Mr. Goodnight's experience has been quite remarkable. He used to be a banker at Pueblo, Col., and while there bought a bunch of cattle—a thousand or so—and gave them to his wife. It proved a very wise investment and a wiser gift, for in the financial depression that followed the panic of 1873 he failed, and in 1876 found himself penniless, even the ranch on which his wife's cattle were pastured being surrendered to his creditors. After settling his affairs his health was very much impaired, and he drove the cattle down into the Panhandle of Texas, where they could find a free range and he could rusticate a while. While there he discovered what he then insisted, and other people have since acknowledged, to be the finest ranch in the world, and as lands were worth next to nothing he prevailed upon John Adair, an Irish millionaire, to loan him the money to purchase the land and more cattle. The result was a partnership arrangement, by which Adair furnished the funds and Goodnight had a third interest in the property acquired.

Although it was only seven years ago that he failed completely, Goodnight is now worth more than a million dollars and no money would buy him out. Adair comes over from Ireland to visit the ranch every year and finds the $500,000 he loaned Goodnight has quadrupled under the influence of Texas atmosphere. The ranch will carry three times as many cattle as are now pastured upon it—some 60,000—and the herd is being increased and improved in quality each year.

A New Danger to Dudes.

"Here, conductor, this young man's fainted."

The words were uttered in a tone of great excitement by a stout woman in a Columbia avenue car, and as she spoke a slim youth who was seated beside her in a corner of the car fell forward and dropped in a heap upon the straw.

A doctor was hurriedly summoned, and after a disappearance of about ten minutes the young man and physician came out of the room, which had been kept closed, arm in arm. The young man's face was still pale, and he walked with a very perciptible tremor. The doctor said: "That is the fourth case this month I have seen of the deadly effects of wearing tight trousers, and had that young man not been attended to promptly he might have been in great danger."

"Tight trousers?" queried a bystander, incredulously.

"Yes, sir; tight trousers! Why, you cannot imagine how often we doctors have to treat cases of illness brought on by no other cause. Take that young man, for instance; his trousers were at least four sizes too small for him; not too short, of course, but too tight, and for hours and hours he had been walking about with a pressure of at least 275 pounds to the square inch on his olexii vivisectori arteries, which are situated in the calves of the human leg. This tremendous pressure forces the blood into channels not able to carry it without undue straining, and although the victim feels no pain, he is liable at any moment to topple over in a swoon, and unless relief is promptly given a long and serious illness is likely to follow. It is a similar trouble to that experienced when it was the fashion for ladies to wear very tight sleeves, except that in the case of tight trousers the material is heavier, the arteries larger, and the result apt to be more dangerous and difficult to relieve.—*Philadelphia Record.*

The Michigan Pineries.

"When a forest fire occurs in the pineries of Michigan," said a lumber operator from that State, "the pine trees on the burned tracts must be cut within a year if the owner wants to get marketable lumber out of them. The heat of a spent forest fire is not yet out of the air before millions upon millions of large, brownish-white moths appear. One hour there may not be a moth anywhere about; the next hour the air will be filled with them. They lay the egg that produces a worm that bores into the pine trees, honeycombing them with tunnels that ruin them in a few weeks. I have seen these millers covering an area of 10,000 acres of burned woods.

"When the war broke out forest land could be bought in Michigan for less than $2 an acre. I purchased 5,000 acres in 1860 for $9,000. Last month I sold the tract for $250,000. I think the biggest pine tree in Michigan is on that property. It is eleven feet through at the butt, and must be 150 feet high. A New York man once offered me $100 for fifteen feet of the trunk from the ground up. He wanted to exhibit it at the Centennial exhibition in Philadelphia. I refused the offer. Michigan now produces one-quarter of the pine used in the country. Over $160,000,000 a year is received by the operators for the product of her forests. In ten years from now, however, there will be very little, if any, pine left in the State."—*New York Sun.*

WORDS OF WISDOM.

To enjoy a good thing exclusively is very often to exclude yourself from the true enjoyment of it.

Friendship is the only thing in the world concerning the usefulness of which all mankind are agreed.

We must, if we are wise, make some calculations in our life, and say what we shall keep for the future.

Mark this well, ye proud man of action! Ye are, after all, nothing but unconscious instruments of the men of thought.

Coolness, and absence of heat and haste, indicate fine qualities. A gentleman makes no noise; a lady is serene.

A wound from a tongue is worse than a wound from a sword, for the latter affects only the body, the former the spirit—the soul.

Exploding many things under the name of trifles is a very false proof either of wisdom or magnanimity, and a great check to virtuous actions with regard to fame.

We should manage our fortune as we do our health—enjoy it when good, be patient when it is bad, and never apply violent remedies except in an extreme necessity.

The most censorious are generally the least judicious, who, having nothing to recommend themselves, will be finding fault with others. No man envies the merit of another who has enough of his own.

There is no virtue that adds so noble a charm to the finest traits of beauty as that which exerts itself in watching over the tranquility of an aged parent. There are no tears that give so rich and sweet a luster to the cheek of innocence as the tears of filial sorrow.

Civilized Indians.

There are wide differences among the Indians of the present. There are first the so-called civilized Indians. These are found in fragments scattered through the older States. Such are the Oneidas, of New York, and the Miamis, of Indiana. To these, too, belong the copper-faced individuals whom the summer tourists find selling beads at Niagara Falls, or dwelling in shanties at Petoskey, Mich., and along the shores of the lovely Mackinac Island. Among all the civilized Indians, however, those of Indian Territory are pre-eminent. There the Creeks, Cherokees and other tribes have dwelt for half a century under the direct protection of the government from which they draw abundant pensions.

Many of them are men of wealth and intelligence. They live in a style superior to that of the white settlers by whom they are surrounded. They are dressed in fashionable clothing, and understand, not merely the comforts, but the luxuries of civilized life. Their sons are sent East to be educated in the leading colleges, and their daughters sometimes show the results of the young ladies finishing schools. A lady from Fort Scott told the writer of a public banquet and ball tendered by the citizens of the place to an excursion of leading Creeks from the Territory. The visitors wore full dress, and danced with an ease and elegance which the young men of Fort Scott hardly rivaled. They were courteous and accomplished, polished in manners and easy in conversation. Their dark skins and black hair and eyes gave them the appearance of distinguished foreigners, an illusion materially assisted by their accent. Of the 40,000 Indian children now living in this country, over 10,000 are being educated in government schools.

Next to the civilized Indians come the semi-civilized. Unlike the former, these have not arrived at their present condition through intercourse with the whites. The Pueblos of New Mexico have considerable knowledge of the mechanical arts. They build houses, constructed irrigating canals, dug cisterns, planted trees, raised crops of grain, vegetables and fruit, made pottery, wove cloth and blankets long before the white invaders began to trouble them.

Next to the Pueblos rank the Navajoes, followed at a still greater distance by certain bands of Apaches, whose home is in the mountains. Indeed, we have already passed the line of semi-civilization, and find ourselves among the genuine wild Indians, to whom belong four-fifths of all living red men. Some of these we have already met. There are the Ojibwas in the North, around Lake Superior, the Sioux, Arrapahoes and Cheyennes, known generally as the "Plains Indians;" the Commaches and Kiowas of Texas, and the Digger Indians of California and the Western coasts. The latter are lowest of all the tribes. The name is given promiscuously to the Utes, Shoshones, and others who live on snakes, lizards, grasshoppers, and such roots as they can dig, for which purpose the poor wretches carry sharpened sticks.

The Finger Nails.

Most persons are familar with these troublesome bits of skin which loosen at the root of the finger nails; it is caused by their adhering to the skin along with it, stretching it until one end gives away. To prevent this, the skin should be loosened from the nails once a week, not with a knife or scissors, but with something blunt, such as the end of an ivory paper cutter. This is best done after soaking the fingers in warm water, then pushing the skin back gently and slowly. The white specks on the nails are made by scraping the nail with a knife at a point where it emerges from the skin.

The temperance reformer Booth has persuaded 700,000 persons to sign the pledge in Great Britain.

The revised version of the Old Testament will be issued complete in September.

Notes On Home Flower-Growing.

Pot primroses do well in shady windows.

In sowing seeds cover to twice their diameters. Pot plants bestow grace on the plainest apartments.

Plants of the German or parlor ivy sometimes flower freely.

The orchid epidendum cilare smells precisely like roasted apples.

Camellias should have their foliage sprinkled or moistened daily.

Every flower looks the best when graced by a setting of its own foliage.

In repotting plants, take care that they stand no deeper in the new pot than before.

Sow mignonette where the plants are wanted, for transplanting them seldom succeeds well.

The begonia welteminsis is one of the easiest grown and freest flowering varieties of these excellent pot-plants for summer decoration:

Sweet peas and morning-glories may be sown very early in the garden; the flowers are the finer for having the roots form in cool weather.

Water heated to one hundred and thirty degrees is one of the best remedies for plant-insects of all kinds. Submerge the plants completely several times, a few seconds at a time.

The sooner dahlias, richardia, caladium and canna-roots, that have been kept over winter, are started into growth, the longer the summer show of these flowers.

Cinerarias, although they will not bear the slightest degree of frost without harm, are impatient of heat. About fifty degrees is the best for them.

Good taste is against the mixture of many different flowers in arranging bouquets. A few kinds, and then different colors of these, produces the most pleasing results.

Wild violets of the different colors, blue, yellow and white, and the trilliums or wake-robins, taken from open woods, thrive in cultivation if planted in partly shaded places.

Temperance and flower-gardening easily go hand in hand. The experience of those who build cottages to let, has proved that the addition of a garden-plat effects a most beneficial influence on the social, moral and religious life of those who occupy them.

If an increase of the hydrangea stock is wanted, propagation may take place within the next few weeks. Slips may be made of young healthy shoots, having half-a-dozen leaves, by removing the two lower ones wholly, and one-half of each of the next two.

A beautiful Jerusalem cheery-tree (Solanum capsicastrum of the seed-catalogues), loaded with red fruit, can be grown by any child, for decorating the window next winter. Procure a packet of seeds and start them in a pot of light earth. They germinate quickly, and in a few weeks from the time of sowing, the seedlings will be fit to pick out into individual pots, as many as you care to have plants of. About June first set these out in the garden. Let them grow there until September, by which time they will be full of green fruit, and then lift and pot them in six-inch pots, bringing them into the house as soon after as frosts threaten.

House-plants thrive better in the kitchen than in any other rooms of the house, because of the moist atmosphere that prevails here, as a result of the steam escaping from the stove or range utensils. In greenhouses similar but improved conditions exist also, which accounts for the comparative ease found in growing plants in these structures. These facts point to the importance of supplying some moisture to the atmosphere wherever there are plants, if we would have fine specimens. Watering as freely as is admissible for their health, sponging the leaves all over occasionally, and sitting some vessels of water among them, are some of the easy ways of accomplishing this. A sufficiency of moisture to suit the plants will be not in the least injurious to the health of persons.

The old and generally successful way of rooting oleander and other slips of hard wooded plants, by placing their lower ends in a bottle of water, suspended in a light place, finds an improvement of much wider usefulness in the saucer-plan of propagation. In this system, any low vessel is filled nearly full of sand, into which slips of every kind of plants may be set, closely together, for rooting. Enough water is then kept constantly in the saucer to give the sand the consistency of mud, and it is then given a light and warm place. By this simple means any one can root cuttings of all kinds quickly, and almost without any loss.—*Youth's Companion.*

Ottoman Poetry.

One rule of Oriental poetry is that in some poems "whatsoever word begins a verse, the same word or a part thereof, written reversely must terminate the same verse." In an old copy of the *Dublin University Magazine* a specimen of this kind of rhyming appears.

ADVICE.

*Tra*verse not the globe for love! the sternest
But the surest teacher is the heart.
Studying that and that alone, thou learnest
Best and soonest whence and what thou art.

Time, not travel, 'tis which gives us ready
Speech, experience, prudence, test and wit.
Far more light, the lamp that bideth steady,
Than the wandering lantern doth *emit*.

Moor, Chinese, Egyptian, Russian, Roman,
Tread one common downhill path of doom;
Everywhere the names are Man and Woman,
Everywhere the old sad sins find *room*.

Evil angels tempt us in all places,
What but sands or snows hath earth to give!
Dream not, friend, of deserts and oases,
But look inward and begin to *live*.

STRANGLED.

There is a legend in some Spanish book
About a noisy reveller who, at night,
Returning home with others, saw a light
Shine from a window, and climbed up to look
And saw within the room, hanged to a hook,
His own self-strangled self, grim, rigid white,
And who, struck sober by that livid sight,
Feasting his eyes, in tongue-tied horror shook.

Has any man a fancy to peep in
And see, as through a window, in the Past,
His nobler self, self-choked with coils of sin,
Or sloth or folly? Round the throat whipped fast
The nooses give the face a stiffened grin,
'Tis but thyself. Look well. Why be aghast?

—*E. Lee Hamilton, in Academy.*

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

Sure to follow suit—Costs

For rent—A needle and thread.

The pleasures of pain—The remuneration a dentist receives for his work.

Never kick a man when he is down. It is cowardly. Never kick a man when he is up. It is reckless.

The young lady from Vassar does not speak of a clammy sweat, but of a bivalular transpiration.—*Puck.*

Little Jack—"My mamma's new fan is hand-painted." Little Dick—"Pooh! who cares. Our whole fence is."—*Philadelphia Call.*

"Kiss Me as I Fall Asleep," is the title of a new song. It might work all right with some men, but it would wake us right up.—*Hawkeye.*

Heels over head: "I drop into poetry occasionally," as the office boy remarked when he tumbled into the waste basket.—*Boston Transcript.*

This is the latest riddle: Why does Mr. Gladstone advise the making of jam? Because there are so many "jars" in his cabinet.—*London Truth.*

IN A MEAT SHOP.

"Oh, take back the heart," the young woman cried;
"Oh, take back the heart," I pray you, she said;
"Of course I will take it," the butcher replied,
"And send you a pound of fresh liver instead."

—*Somerville Journal.*

"No," said the schoolboy, "there hasn't one of us boys been licked this term. We kind of stood in on the matter, you see, and always calculate to have two or three mice round our desk somewhere, and the minute the school-ma'am goes to lick a fellow somebody lets one of them mice loose, and then she gets up on her desk and gathers up her skirts and squeals, and by the time the mouse is killed and things is quieted down, the boy she was going to lick has become a hero, protecting her from the furious beast, and she hasn't the heart to lay a hand on him."—*Boston Post.*

"PEANUTS HAS RIZ."

There's trouble in the circus,
The menagerie's in a row,
The camel's got his back up,
Sad is the sacred cow.
The elephant's in mourning,
Worn is the monkey's phiz,
For the fact is very certain
That "peanuts has riz."

The country maid is weeping,
The city bell in pain,
The little lads and lasses
Sigh out their hearts in vein,
Neither the tariff question,
Nor yet the Mormon biz,
Can obviate the statement
That "peanuts has riz."

—*Boston Star.*

The Ruins of Baalbec.

Dr. H. M. Field, says in the *Evangelist*: Everything is colossal. The area is larger than that of the temple at Jerusalem. We may begin with the walls, which are half a mile around, and of such height and depth as are rarely attained in the most tremendous fortress. When from within I climbed to the top, it made me giddy to look over the perilous edge to the depth below; and when from without the walls, I looked up at them, they rose high in air. Some of the stones seem as if they must have be n reared in place, not by Titans, but by the gods. There are nine stones thirty feet long and ten feet thick, which is larger than the foundation-stones of the temple at Jerusalem, dating from the time of Solomon, or any blocks in the great pyramid. But even these are pigmies compared with the three giants of the western wall sixty-two, sixty-three and one-half and sixty-four feet long.

These are said to be the largest stone ever used in any construction. They weigh hundreds of tons, and instead of being merely hewn out of a quarry, which might have been on the site, and left to lie where they were before, they have been lifted nineteen feet from the ground, and there imbedded in the wall! Never was there such Cyclopean architecture. How such enormous masses could be moved is a problem with modern engineers. Sir Charles Wilson, whom I met in Jerusalem, is at this moment in Baalbec. Standing in the grounds of the temple, he tells me that in the British museum there is an ancient tablet which reveals the way in which such stones were moved. The mechanics were very simple. Rollers were put under them, and they were drawn up inclined planes by sheer human muscle—the united strength of great numbers of men. In the rude design on the tablet the whole scene is pictured to the eye. There are battalions of men, hundreds to a single roller, with the taskmasters standing over them, lash in hand, which was freely applied to make them pull together, and the king sitting on high to give the signal for this putting forth of human strength en masse, as if an army were moving to battle. A battle it was in the waste of human life which it caused. These temples of Baalbec must have been a whole generation in building, and have consumed the population of a province and the wealth of an empire