

FRED HEDDE PIONEER EDITOR AND LEADER FOR LIBERTY

How a German Student Found in Nebraska the Freedom Denied Him in the Fatherland, and How He Has Lived and Toiled and Prospered Among the People in His Chosen Home.

GRAND ISLAND has among its 10,000 citizens the oldest editor in the state, if not in the United States—an editor who has fought for freedom of the press and for liberty of speech not only in this, his adopted country, but who began the struggle as long as seventy years ago, as a student in Kiel, contributing largely to the thoughts of that day. This man, Fred Hedde, was born nearly ninety years ago, at Rundsberg, in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. He there grew to manhood, but his restless spirit and his love of freedom was destined to lead him half around the globe, ere life's fitful race was run, and make him a factor in the civilization of a new country, under strange skies, in a land he found savage, wild, desolate and stubborn, and peopled only by the aborigines. And it is both as the oldest editor and as a first citizen that the people of Grand Island and Hall county revere the venerable pioneer. As an evidence of this respect a tribute, paid him during the celebration of the semi-centennial anniversary in that city last July, by the chairman of the day—Mr. Hedde being unable during the hot afternoon to attend the ceremonies—may well find a place here.

Fred Hedde was a college bred man from the University of Kiel. In common with the student body of his day he took part in those turbulent demands and demonstrations of the German universities for freedom of speech and the press and for National Unity, which Emperor Frederick William and the Holy Alliance sought by means of the Carlsbad resolution to throttle and suppress.

But the spirit of the great Stein, which had successfully united North Germany against the tyranny of Napoleon in the zenith of his power, still lived unconquered in the hearts of the German folk, and in the revolution of 1848, Fred Hedde, the erstwhile student of Kiel, then a young lawyer just entering practice, a compatriot of Carl Schurz and Fritz Steiglitz, cast his voice, his future and his fortune with the revolutionists.

The movement failed—for the time—and in 1854, by reason of his political activity, he emigrated to America, stopping for a time in New York and later entering the practice of law at Davenport, Ia., then a frontier city. But the call of the wild seemed to be in his blood and the German revolutionist of 1848, still seeking freedom from restraint and a field for his endeavors, looked toward the great, white, unscarred northwest, as the scene for his life's best work. He was 38 years old at this time, an age when most men pause before entering upon new and untried vocations, when, in 1857, he joined the band of hardy pioneers whose work we are assembled today to testify was well done, and from its very inception took a foreplace in the settlement and building of a great commonwealth, which today is an empire in the west.

For half a century his character has been woven into the social, commercial and political fiber of this community and it is a matter of common congratulation that a Merciful Providence has prolonged the span of his life to witness the triumph of this hour, when all rivalries are hushed, all bitterness forgotten and only good will prevails.

He early took the initiative in the march to the new territory strong, constant and unafraid. He came with his devoted band of fellow-pioneers not as adventurers, seeking fame and fortune, for neither was here, but they came and stayed, while others came and went, clinging close to the soil, and asking of pitiless, untamed nature, that she yield enough for their simple needs and allow them to build homes on these homeless plains.

In that work, as farmer, merchant, editor and citizen, Mr. Hedde held no uncertain place—he never was a negative. The effect or result of a position, once taken by him, never prompted a compromise or gave him much concern so long as his conscience and sense of duty were agreed. Hence it followed that for more than forty years his life was one of conflict, sometimes personal, oftentimes bitter, always strenuous. Yet did the wisdom of years enable him to forecast coming events so clearly that in many great movements he was a generation in advance of his fellow men.

The reverence of age is his. Life still has a flavor that years cannot stale, and while physical weakness forbids his speaking today of the past in which he took so active a part, it does not prevent his sharing in this jubilee. After we were here week or ten days we began to wonder why Mr. Barnard did not send the team back to Omaha for the supplies. Mr. Hedde, therefore, and the writer, went to Mr. Barnard to take up the matter with him. Mr. Barnard was of the opinion that the mule team was not good enough, and had appointed a man who had come out with him to bring a load of provisions out. When Mr. Hedde inquired what security he had for the man—that he would return—Mr. Barnard was of the opinion that he was a gentleman. Mr. Hedde was not satisfied with this, and thereupon four men were sent with an ox team to get provisions from Omaha. When our four men arrived at Omaha they ran across the man who had promised to bring out provisions, walking the streets. He excused himself by saying that his horse was taken sick. In the settlement all the provisions were brought out of the wagons in the meantime, in order to make in-ventories of what there was left, and to gauge the use of them accordingly. It was estimated that at least fourteen days would be required before our team could return. Rations were reduced to one-third of one pound of flour per day for each person, and we would have suffered from hunger the first four weeks of our settlement here. Mr. Hedde thus, from the beginning became to be the advisor of our settlement.

We thereupon began to cultivate the land and to prepare for permanent occupancy by building houses on the four adjacent corners of forty-acre tracts about a mile southeast of the business center of the present city of Grand Island, the purpose being to be close together, in the event the Indians should become troublesome. When, in September, 1857, our team was again sent to Omaha to secure provisions for the winter and when the party going with it arrived in Omaha, there were no provisions from Davenport. In the early part of the morning, Mr. Scherneck and the writer went to Omaha to bring Mrs. Hedde and my wife-to-be to the settlement. Mr. Hedde was sick and could not undertake the trip. Mrs. Hedde took the stage to Grand Island. Mrs. Menck and I were united in wedlock at Omaha and for our wedding trip went to Grand Island, per ox team. But we always look back to the happy days, notwithstanding their hardships, with pleasure.

His Efforts at Colonizing.

While upon this occasion Mr. Hedde was not able, with others, to relate the experiences of the past, some of his colleagues in that pilgrimage from Davenport, Ia., to the then unknown Grand Island have recorded the main events and from these records a glimpse of the hardships undergone is available. Mr. Hedde, Christian Menck and one Barnard were the advance guard of the colony. After passing a few log houses at the present site of Columbus they saw not a single settlement, or trace of white man's habitation. The entire colony located at Grand Island on July 4, 1857. Others came in 1858. In many respects the colonists looked to Mr. Hedde as a leader, and it was under his guidance that the first winter was passed, the short rations made to answer, and supplies were received from Omaha. In the following years, too, he took an important part in the settlement, having been appointed agent of immigration for the state and making a trip to Germany under that commission.

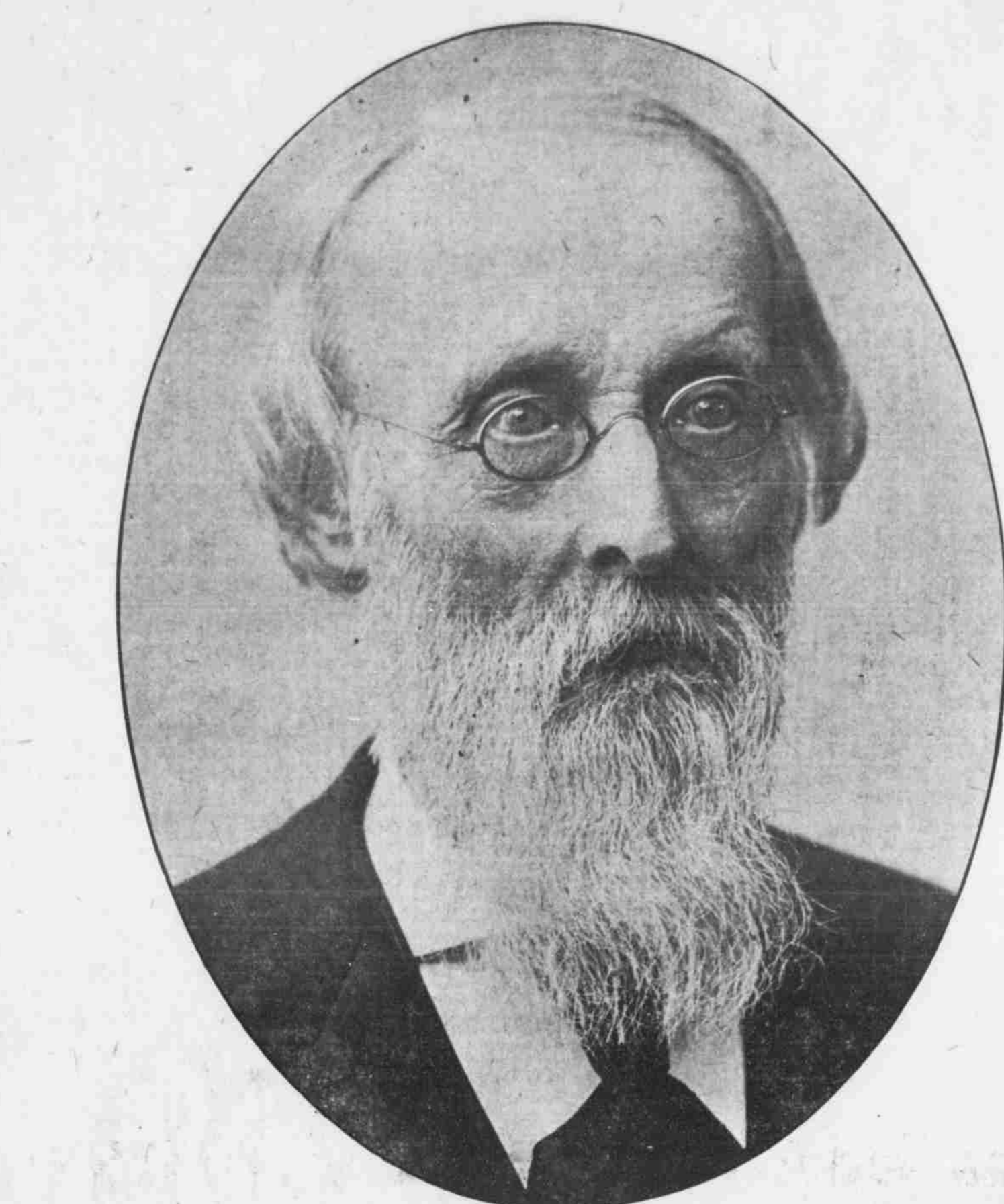
In this connection Christian Menck has recently contributed the following to the early history of Hall county. It reveals the confidence his associate-colonists placed in Mr. Hedde:

When, in the year of 1857, on the 4th of July, we located here with thirty men, six women and one child, we had seventeen yoke of oxen (five teams), and one team of mules. The latter was purchased by the company, which provisioned the colony for the purpose of transporting supplies for us from Omaha. Mr. Barnard was the engineer and chief of the company and Mr. Hedde the leader of the Germans in this colony. After we were here week or ten days we began to wonder why Mr. Barnard did not send the team back to Omaha for the supplies. Mr. Hedde, therefore, and the writer, went to Mr. Barnard to take up the matter with him. Mr. Barnard was of the opinion that the mule team was not good enough, and had appointed a man who had come out with him to bring a load of provisions out. When Mr. Hedde inquired what security he had for the man—that he would return—Mr. Barnard was of the opinion that he was a gentleman. Mr. Hedde was not satisfied with this, and thereupon four men were sent with an ox team to get provisions from Omaha. When our four men arrived at Omaha they ran across the man who had promised to bring out provisions, walking the streets. He excused himself by saying that his horse was taken sick. In the settlement all the provisions were brought out of the wagons in the meantime, in order to make inventories of what there was left, and to gauge the use of them accordingly. It was estimated that at least fourteen days would be required before our team could return. Rations were reduced to one-third of one pound of flour per day for each person, and we would have suffered from hunger the first four weeks of our settlement here. Mr. Hedde thus, from the beginning became to be the advisor of our settlement.

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Work in Journalism.

His career as an editor in this section—though he was already a contributor to the press in the fatherland, began early in the eighties, when in conjunction with William Anyan and one or two others he established The Antimonopolist. The publication of this paper was, however, a labor of love. It was distinctly unremunerative. But the fight against the corporations having even so early been on, owing to their growing political power, Mr. Hedde took over the interests of his associates later, purchased the Platte Valley Independent—established in 1869 at North Platte and brought to this city a year later by Mrs. M. T. G. Mobbey, since deceased—and in a short time changed the name to the Grand Island Independent, while the paper continued to retain the clientele of the former paper. In a large measure this led the way to him to become, measurably, the pioneer newspaper man of the city, as well as one of the city's founders. In 1884 he founded the present Daily



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Independent and remained its owner until 1900. The daily proved unprofitable, on the whole. However, it was a principle the veteran ward, though it never approached that which this grimly determined defender of a policy which he believed to be right offered as a sacrifice. Failing health, his advanced years, and his desire to get his possessions in easy condition lest the grim reaper come unexpectedly as in the night, caused him to dispose of the newspaper property to a company of younger men, one of whom had been an silent business partner for some years, and all of whom had been employees especially railroad machinery—to give up the fight. But while some of these efforts were longer lived than others, eventually they suc-

The Independent's policy under its founder, and, considering the

Distinguishing Between Real and Near Real Jewels

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15.—In all this talk about artificial rubies and diamonds the experts keep saying that a reconstructed or scientific ruby can be detected at a glance. Now this may be true of experts, but it scarcely applies to the average person.

It is a fact that most of the artificially produced rubies are off in color, having a brick red tone, which should betray them even to an ordinary observer. But some of them approach the real stone so closely that if even the expert himself is going to detect them at a glance he will have to do his glancing through a powerful lens.

Not that the color will appear different. That is not the only way in which the made ruby betrays itself. The infallible test is the presence of circular lines or markings in the interior of the stone.

If it is a poor specimen these are easily seen. In the best ones they can be detected only by close scrutiny.

When one knows how these stones are made the markings are readily explained. The process is described by Leopold Claremont, a London lapidary, as follows:

"A small crystal of silicate of alumina, colored by bichromate of potash, is rotated at a very high speed, being kept meanwhile at a temperature of about 1,800 degrees centigrade. It is then nursed with minute particles of natural ruby, which adhere and become melted on to the center core.

"With care and patience a large bead can thus be built up from which the ruby is afterward cut. The material is, however, very likely to break directly it is allowed to cool and also during the process of cutting."

Manufactured rubies are sold under different names, but the processes by which they are made differ only slightly from one another. The usual tests for precious stones, those of hardness, specific gravity and refraction, are met entirely by these artificial rubies. The color and the markings are the only indications of their real character.

The markings are caused by minute bubbles forming circular parallel lines and also by wavy circles as the substance while being stirred had been allowed to dry suddenly.

While dealers in gems do not consider made rubies as precious stones, they frankly accept certain improved specimens as the real thing. For instance, it is said that almost all the pink topazes now on the market have been pinked, as the trade terms it. This pinking or burning is a time-

honored device dating from its accidental discovery by a French jeweler in 1755.

The topaz, though it occurs in many colors, is rarely pink. Consequently it was a happy chance for the Frenchman when he found that heat would change yellow and brown specimens into a delicate pink.

One method of doing this is to wrap the stone in German tinder bound tightly on with tin wire and then to burn the tinder. But the stone is likely to be fawed if the operation is not carefully performed, or to lose its color entirely if the heat is too great.

Sometimes precious stones have dark spots, which are removed by burning in sand and iron filings, but the process is a delicate one, as in the case of a sapphire, the color may be changed from blue to grayish, or with an amethyst, from purple to mahogany brown. Rubies are sometimes infected with white spots, which are removed by burning. Black spots adhering to the surface of diamonds may be got rid of in the same way.

The zircon is another precious stone which is improved by burning, being changed from brown to a clear brilliance which enables it to pass as a diamond, though not of the finest quality. Dark brown caviorgem is burned to make it lighter, and therefore more salable.

When it comes to agates and carnelians and onyx there is no end to the tricks man plays on nature. The Oriental carnelian owes its beautiful color entirely to burning. It is found in quartz sand in Madras and is cut and burned where it is found.

But the greatest marvels with this class of stones are achieved by bleaching and dyeing them. Whole communities in Germany, from little children to old men and women, do nothing but this work.

When onyx is to be dyed it is washed twice in water, then dried and laid in honey and water, half a pound of honey to sixteen or twenty ounces of water. The dish, which must be chemically clean, is placed in a warm oven.

Care must be taken that the water does not boil and that the stone is covered with the liquid. The treatment is continued for from fourteen to twenty-one days. Then the stone is taken out of the honey and washed and soaked in another dish with sulphuric acid. This dish is covered and put in hot ashes with burning charcoal on the cover.

In a few hours, in most cases, the stone will be dyed, but some stones require a longer time and some will never take a color. The final part of the process is to take the stone from the acid.

support given it from other sources in its infancy, its patron saint, was always that of an independent republican. Its editor was a firm believer in the policies of the party from its inception, strongly sympathizing, in company with most of the Germans who sought this country for a greater measure of freedom, with the abolition cause. He was none the less firmly an advocate of the principle of a protective tariff and an especially bitter opponent of Mr. Bryan's free silver propaganda again in common with many Germans who had lived through a shifting money period in parts of the fatherland. And thus, in national affairs, the erstwhile Kiel revolutionist was as vigorous as the most ardent committee chairman could wish. In local affairs, however, he was to the machine devotee a thorn in the flesh, frequently, even in county elections, supporting candidates of the opposition and in city affairs preventing in a large degree any party nominations. In fact it is in no small measure attributed to him that Grand Island has never, since it has become a city of any importance, had a party mayor. The last effort made was about eleven years ago, the presumably dominant party initiating it and being sadly beaten in the election. Nominations have never since been made for any city or school officers along party lines and in the councils of the bodies having in hand the affairs of the municipality or of the school district the word "republican" or "democrat" is never spoken. Appointments are not made along the line of party organization, even though the executive in other matters be a strict partisan. It would be regarded as a serious breach of faith. It stands today as almost an unwritten law that, for city and school offices, candidates must run by petition, and that the individual voter votes for the man whom he believes to be best qualified and most reliable. In this direction the veteran has certainly left an impress of wide importance and of lasting effect.

In the state's political affairs he often fought side by side with the founder of The Bee and the two were very close personal friends, considering the infrequency in which, necessarily, they were able to meet. He was in the thick of the fight twenty years ago for an effective railway commission and the files of his paper show some interesting analytical editorials concerning public men. Senator Foraker's maiden speech in Washington, for instance, was thoroughly dissected and the Ohio statesman stamped from the beginning as an agent of the corporations, even though he was of the same political faith.

Waiting for the End.

Mr. Hedde in his younger years had been county judge of the county—the first on record, and was also a member of the territorial legislature from 1858 to 1861. He was also a member of the city council after the city became incorporated. He was married in New York City in 1855 to Mrs. Caroline (Waechter) Buennemann. Some years after the death of his first wife he married, in 1884, in this city, Miss Louisa Spethmann.

In his own domestic affairs Fred Hedde has always lived a retired and simple life. A student, books have been his best companions; a thinker, the peace and quiet of his library has been his most loved retreat. Even in his younger years he mingled but little in social affairs, barring an occasional visit to nearer friends or a social evening with the members of the Liederkranz society—an organization of Germans—of which he was a charter member and in which he still retains membership.

The veteran journalist and pioneer has for some months been closely confined to his home—a suite of rooms on the third floor of his business block, commonly known as The Independent building. The allotted "three score years and ten" have for him been stretched into "four score years and ten." Enfeebled by age, he hesitates not frankly to say to his friends that he yearns for the end. His race is run and he quietly and fearlessly awaits the hour when God's finger shall touch him and he shall sleep. About him, in the streets below, there is the busy hum of industry and of the commercial activity of a growing city. But its inhabitants are not unmindful of the labors performed and of the hardships undergone a half century ago by the near-centenarian and by his companions of that first colony—Christian Menck, William Hage, William Stolley, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Joehnek, Mrs. John Thomssen and Cay Ewoldt, who are still resident survivors of the first settlement—and by those others who have passed into the great beyond or are in other fields. And it is not merely a pleasant fiction to say the wish is not infrequently expressed and earnestly felt that the sunset of his life may be clear and calm and peaceful, like the roselate ending of a fruitful, balmy summer's day, the benediction of a life well lived. A. F. B.

like the real thing at all.

"Of course a jeweler need never be cheated anyway, for he knows—or should know—how to test for hardness, specific gravity and optical properties. For ordinary paste just try a file gently on the sharp edge of the stone."

Of recent years a good many improvements have been made in the production of the imitations known as doublets. Nowadays there are even triplets.

The old form of doublet consists of a thin piece of a genuine but inferior precious stone cut to form a front, to which a back of paste of the desired color is cemented. The result is an apparently valuable gem.

It really has one one good trait, if it is to be compared with out and out glass stones. The surface being genuine, will not scratch and dull. But if it is sold as the real thing the buyer is likely to be sad when it falls to pieces some day. That is what it will do at once if soaked in spirit or even in hot water.

This will not happen to these doublets, made recently, in which the two pieces are welded together. But the character of the stone can be seen by looking through it from the side.

A triplet consists of two pieces of crystal or poor quality gem stone, one part for the front and one for the back, with a thin piece of colored glass or even simply colored pigment between them. In this way, worthless pieces of nevertheless genuine sapphire are used with deep blue glass or pigment; but, of course, while the stone may look all right from the top, it is easily identified as a fake.

When stones are set with a close back that is embedded in the metal they are painted or covered with tinfoil to increase either the color or the brilliance. This is done not only with imitations, but with genuine stones if they are of inferior quality. It used to be the custom always to set gems with a backing of gold, no matter whether the stones were good, bad or indifferent.

Appropos of the intentional and the accidental coloring of stones, it is well known that certain gems have a way of doing the changing themselves. Chief among these is the turquoise, with its unpleasant habit of turning green.

It is said by jewelers that the use of perfume is often responsible for this change. Also the wearer of turquoises must guard them from contact with any acid or with grease. According to superstition, when the color of a gift turquoise changes the giver is in danger, or if the giver is a lover he or she is sickle.