

The Diamond Bracelet

By MRS. HENRY WOOD,
Author of East Lynne, Etc.

CHAPTER III.

Alice left her sister standing in the room and went upstairs. But she was more than one minute away; she was three or four, for she could not at first lay her hand upon the letter. When she returned her sister advanced to her from the back drawing room, the folding doors between the two rooms being as before, wide open.

"What a fine collection of bracelets, Alice!" she exclaimed, as she took the letter. "Are they spread out for show?"

"No," laughed Alice; "Lady Sarah is going to the opera, and will be in a hurry when she comes up from dinner. She asked me to bring them all down, as she had not decided which to wear."

"I like to dress before dinner on my opera nights."

"Oh, so of course does Lady Sarah," returned Alice, as her sister descended the stairs, "but she said it was too hot to dine in bracelets."

"It is fearfully hot. Good-by, Alice. Don't ring; I will let myself out."

Alice returned to the front room and looked from the window, wondering whether her sister had come in her carriage. No. A trifling evening breeze was arising and beginning to move the curtains about. Gentle as it was, it was grateful, and Alice sat down in it. In a very few minutes the ladies came up from dinner.

"Have you the bracelets, Alice? Oh, I see."

Lady Sarah went to the back room as she spoke, and stood before the table looking at the bracelets. Alice rose to follow her, when Lady Frances Chenevix caught her by the arm and began to speak in a covert whisper.

"Who was that at the door just now? It was a visitor's knock. Do you know, Alice, every hour since we came to town I have fancied Gerard might be calling. In the country he could not get to us, but here— Was it Gerard?"

"It—it was my sister," carelessly answered Alice. "It was not a true answer, for her sister had not knocked, but it was the readiest that rose to her lips, and she wished to escape the questioning."

"Only your sister," sighed Frances, turning to the window with a gesture of disappointment.

"Which have you put on?" inquired Alice, going toward Lady Sarah.

"These loose fancy things; they are the coolest. I really am so hot; the soup was that favorite soup of the colonel's, all capsaicums and cayenne, and the wine was hot; there had been some mistake about the ice. Hill trusted the new man, and he did not understand it; it was all hot together. What the house will be tonight I dread to think of."

Lady Sarah, whilst she spoke, had been putting the bracelets into the jewel box, with very little care.

"I had better put them straight," remarked Alice, when she reached the table.

"Do not trouble," returned Lady Sarah, shutting down the lid. "You are looking flushed and feverish, Alice; you were wrong to walk so far today; Hushes will set them to rights tomorrow morning; they will do till then. Lock them up and take possession of the key."

Alice did as she was bid. She locked the case and put the key into her pocket.

"Here is the carriage," exclaimed Lady Frances. "Are we to wait for coffee?"

"Coffee in this heat," retorted Lady Sarah. "It would be adding fuel to fire. We will have some tea when we return. Alice, you must make tea for the colonel; he will not come out without it. He thinks this weather just what it ought to be; rather cold, if anything."

Alice had taken the bracelet box in her hands as Lady Sarah spoke, and when they departed carried it upstairs to its place in Lady Sarah's bedroom. The colonel speedily rose from the table, for his wife had laid her commands on him to join them early. Alice helped him to his tea, and as soon as he was gone, she went upstairs to bed.

To bed, but not to sleep. Tired as she was, and exhausted in frame, sleep would not come to her. She was living over again her interview with Gerard Hope. She could not in her conscious heart affect to misunderstand his implied meaning—that she had been the cause of his rejecting the union proposed to him. It diffused a strange rapture within her, and though she had not perhaps been wholly blind and unconscious during the period of Gerard's stay with them, she now kept repeating the words: "Can it be? can it be?"

It certainly was so. Love plays strange pranks. Thus was Gerard Hope, heir to fabulous wealth, consciously proud of his handsome person, his herculean strength, his towering form, called home and planted down by the side of a pretty and noble lady, on purpose that he might fall in love with her—Lady Frances Chenevix. And yet the well-laid project failed; failed because there happened to be another at that young lady's side, a sad, quiet, feeble-framed girl, whose very weakness may have seemed to place her beyond the pale of man's love. But love thrives by contrasts and it was the feeble girl who won the love of the strong man.

Yes; the knowledge diffused a

strange rapture within her as she lay there at night, and she may be excused if, for a brief period, she gave range to the sweet fantasies it conjured up. For a brief period only; too soon the depressing consciousness returned to her that these thoughts of earthly happiness must be subdued, for she, with her confirmed ailments and conspicuous weakness, must never hope to marry as did other women. She had long known—her mother had prepared her for it—that one so afflicted and frail as she, whose tenure of existence was likely to be short, ought not to become a wife, and it had been her earnest hope to pass through life unloving and unloved. She had striven to arm herself against the danger, against being thrown into the perils of temptation. Alas! it had come insidiously upon her; all her care had been set at naught, and she knew that she loved Gerard Hope with a deep and fervent love. "It is but another cross," she sighed, "another burden to surmount and subdue, and I will set myself, from this night, to the task. I have been a coward, shrinking from self-examination; but now that Gerard has spoken out, and now that Gerard has spoken out, I can deceive myself no longer. I wish he had spoken more freely that I might have told him it was useless."

CHAPTER IV.

It was only towards morning that Alice dropped asleep; the consequence was, that long after her usual hour for rising she was still sleeping. The opening of her door by some one awoke her; it was Lady Sarah's maid.

"Why, miss! are you not up? Well, I never! I wanted the key of the jewel box, but I'd have waited if I had known."

"What do you say you want?" returned Alice, whose ideas were confused, as is often the case on being suddenly awakened.

"The key of the bracelet box, if you please."

"The key?" repeated Alice. "Oh, I remember," she added, her recollection returning to her. "Be at the trouble, will you, Hughes, to take it out of my pocket; it is on that chair under my clothes."

The servant came to the pocket and speedily found the key. "Are you worse than usual, miss, this morning?" asked she, "or have you overslept yourself?"

"I have overslept myself. Is it late?"

"Between nine and ten. My lady is up, and at breakfast with master and Lady Frances."

Alice rose the instant the maid had left the room, and made haste to dress, vexed with herself for sleeping so long. She was nearly ready when Hughes came in again.

"If ever I saw such a confusion as that jewel box was in!" cried she, in as pert and grumbling a tone as she dared to use. "The bracelets were thrown together without law or order—just as if they had been so much glass and tinsel from the Lowther Arcade."

"It was Lady Sarah did it," replied Alice. "I would have put them straight, but she said leave it for you. I thought she might prefer that you should do it, so did not press it."

"Of course her ladyship is aware there's nobody but myself knows how they are placed in it," returned Hughes, consequently, "I could go to that or to the other jewel box, in the dark, and take out any one thing my lady wanted without disturbing the rest."

"I have observed that you have a gift of order," remarked Alice, with a smile. "It is very useful to those who possess it, and saves them from trouble and confusion."

"So it do, miss," said Hughes. "But I came to ask you for the diamond bracelet."

"The diamond bracelet!" echoed Alice. "What diamond bracelet? What do you mean?"

"It is not in the box, miss."

"The diamond bracelets are both in the box," rejoined Alice.

"The old one is there, not the new one. I thought you might have taken it out to show some one, or to look at yourself, miss, for I'm sure it's a sight for pleasant eyes."

"I can assure you it is in the case," said Alice. "All are there except what Lady Sarah had on. You must have overlooked it."

"I must be a great donkey if I have," grumbled the girl. "It must be at the very bottom, amongst the cotton," she soliloquized, as she returned to Lady Sarah's apartments, "and I have just got to take every individual article out to get at it. This comes of giving up one's keys to other folks."

Alive hastened down, begging pardon for her late appearance. It was readily accorded. Alice's office in the house was nearly a snecure; when she had first entered upon it Lady Sarah was ill, and required some one to sit with and read to her, but now that she was well again Alice had little to do.

Breakfast was scarcely over when Alice was called into the room. Hughes stood outside.

"Miss," said she, with a long face, "the diamond bracelets not in the box. I thought I could not be mistaken."

"But it must be in the box," said Alice.

"But it is NOT," persisted Hughes, emphasizing the negative; "can't you

believe me, miss? What's gone with it?"

Alice Seaton looked at Hughes with a puzzled look. She was thinking matters over. It soon cleared again.

"Then Lady Sarah must have kept it out when she put in the rest. It was she who returned them to the case; I did not. Perhaps she wore it last night."

"No, miss, that she didn't. She wore only those two—"

"I saw what she had on," interrupted Alice. "But she might also have put on the other without my noticing. Then she must have kept it out for some purpose. I will ask her. Wait here an instant, Hughes, for, of course, you will like to be at a certainty."

"That's cool," thought Hughes, as Alice went into the breakfast room, and the colonel came out of it with the newspaper. "I should have said it was somebody else who would like to be at a certainty instead of me. Thank goodness it wasn't in my charge last night, if anything dreadful had come to pass. My lady don't keep out her bracelets for sport. Miss Seaton has left the key about, that's what she has done, and it's hard to say who hasn't been at it; I knew the box had been ransacked over."

"Lady Sarah," said Alice, "did you wear your new diamond bracelet last night?"

"No."

"Then did you put it into the box with the others?"

"No," languidly repeated Lady Sarah, attaching no importance to the question.

"After you had chosen the bracelets you wished to wear, you put the others into the box yourself," exclaimed Alice. "Did you put in the new one, the diamond, or keep it out?"

"The diamond was not there."

Alice stood confounded. "It was on the table at the back of all, Lady Sarah," she presently said; "next the window."

"I tell you, Alice, it was not there. I don't know that I should have worn it if it had been, but I certainly looked for it. Not seeing it, I supposed you had not put it out, and did not care sufficiently to ask for it."

Alice felt in a mesh of perplexity; curious thoughts, and very unpleasant ones, were beginning to come over her. "But, Lady Sarah, the bracelet was indeed there when you went to the table," she urged. "I put it there."

"I can assure you that you labor under a mistake as to its being there when I came up from dinner," answered Lady Sarah. "Why do you ask?"

"Hughes has come to say it is not in the case. She is outside, waiting."

"Outside now? Hughes," called out her ladyship; and Hughes came in.

"What's this about my bracelet?"

"I don't know, my lady. The bracelet is not in its place, so I asked Miss Seaton. She thought your ladyship might have kept it out yesterday evening."

"I have neither touched it nor seen it," said Lady Sarah.

"Then we have had thieves at work."

"It must be in the box, Hughes," spoke up Alice. "I laid it out on the table, and it is impossible that thieves—as you phrase it—could have come there."

"Oh, yes, it is in the box, no doubt," said her ladyship, somewhat crossly, for she disliked to be troubled especially in hot weather. "You have not searched properly Hughes."

"My lady," answered Hughes, "I can trust my hands, and I can trust my eyes, and they have all four been into every hole and crevice of the box."

Lady Frances Chenevix laid down the Morning Post and advanced. "Is the bracelet really lost?"

(To be continued.)

NAPLES BREAKFAST VENDORS.

They Make the Morning Air Vocal with Their Calls.

The air of Naples becomes vocal with the characteristic calls of the breakfast vendors. "Hot, hot, and big as apples!" shout the sellers of peeled chestnuts. These are boiled in huge caldrons in a reddish broth of their own making, which is further seasoned with laurel leaves and caraway seeds. A cent's worth of the steaming kernels, each of which is as big as a large English walnut, is a nourishing diet that warms the fingers and comforts the stomach of troops of children on their way to school, or rather to the co-operative creches, or nurseries, where one poor woman, for a cent a day each, takes care of the babies of a score of others who must leave them behind to earn the day's living.

Meantime dignified cows pass by, with measured tread and slow, shaking their heavy bells and followed by their beguiled offspring, whose business it is to make them "give down" their milk at the opportune moment, and to let the milkman take it. Nothing can be funnier than this struggle between the legitimate owner, the calf, and the wily subtractor of the lacteal treasure. Although tied to his mother's horns with a rope long enough to reach, and even lick her bag, but not to get satisfaction out of it, his bovine wit is often sharp enough to give the slip to the noose and elude the vigilance of the keeper, occupied, perhaps, for the moment, in quarrelling with some saucy maid servant over the quantity of milk to be paid for. The scene which ensues is worthy of the cinematograph. As a sequel calf's tail is nearly pulled off, but he has spoiled the oppressor's game for one day, anyhow.—The Century.

Call a man a donkey and he is apt to kick.

NOTES ON SCIENCE.

CURRENT NOTES OF DISCOVERY AND INVENTION.

Danger to Health in School Rooms—A Wire Fence Convenience—Curved Ruler Invented by a Russian—The Smallest Watch.

DANGER TO HEALTH IN SCHOOLS.

Many people who are scrupulously careful of the health of their children in the home are strangely indifferent to the conditions prevailing in the school. Hygiene in the public schools is a subject that is yearly receiving more and more attention, with the result that new school buildings in the larger towns and the cities conform generally to sanitary standards, but this is not true of many of the old buildings and of many schoolhouses in small places. It is the duty of all parents to know how far they fall short, and why, and what is needed to make them healthy.

The rules as to contagious diseases should be more strict, or rather more strictly enforced, and parents should remember that danger may lurk in complaints often considered of slight importance. Whooping-cough, for instance, is thought by many people to be an unimportant and necessary trouble of childhood which it is better to get over and have out of the way. They do not know, or they forget, that while whooping-cough is not a dangerous disease for older children, it is dangerous and often fatal to very young children, and is easily carried by the children attending school to the babies in the nursery.

Too much attention cannot be paid to the question of light in the school-room. Many children are made premature wrecks from unrecognized eyestrain, and school visitors may often see small, helpless children sitting blinking in the sunlight which streams through a large window in front of them, making frowning efforts through the glare to read from a blackboard, and using up in a few hours the nerve force of a week. Light should be abundant and should come from the left side, so that no shadow is thrown on slate or book, as is the case when the light comes from behind or from the right.

Another most important matter is the properly constructed desk, which will prevent undue stooping, contortions, or impediment to correct breathing.

In considering the subject of ventilation, there should, of course, be some system in every schoolroom by which air can be introduced from outside and then allowed to escape without using the windows, which cannot always be depended upon on account of drafts and storms. These and many other points should be insisted upon by parents.

WHY SILVER TARNISHES.

Although every housekeeper is painfully aware of the tendency of silverware to part with its brilliancy and become tarnished when exposed to ordinary atmospheric influences, many do not know that the cause of the tarnishing is the action of sulphur in the air. Unless frequently cleaned, the surface of silver will become black in the course of a few months.

The best way to keep silver bright, without the necessity of cleaning, is said to be to coat the surface with a thin solution of collodion varnish diluted with spirits of wine. After being applied with a soft brush the spirit evaporates, leaving a thin, glossy, transparent film on the polished surface. Warm water removes the varnish. Tarnished silver may be restored by careful rubbing with a soft cloth wet with dilute solution of potassium cyanide,—one ounce to a quart of water,—followed by rinsing.

A WIRE FENCE CONVENIENCE.

A wire fence always presents to those who understand the "power" of its barbs a formidable appearance, and, in truth, is an unpleasant affair to cross, either by climbing over or crawling under, or between the strands. Happily, however, the accompanying illustration shows a convenient and safe arrangement whereby such barriers may be crossed as often as desired, and that without any



A STEP-LADDER.

ension on the wires being lost by cutting a gateway.

It is simply a double stepladder, and can be constructed by any one at all handy with tools in a short time, the railing consisting of gas pipe, the over ends of which should be deeply inserted into the ground. Where a wire fence has to be crossed frequently in some out of the way locality this device is of great value.

ROOM IN THE WEST.

It is not generally known that there are in the United States unutilized areas of land to the extent of 600,000,000 acres. There are times when one is apt to think that the country is getting a trifle crowded, and one welcomes the opening of little tracts of a few hundred thousand acres as affording opportune relief to a condition of almost dangerous congestion. But all Europe does not possess the area which is included in the arid region west of the Mississippi. There's the rub—it is an arid region. But in these

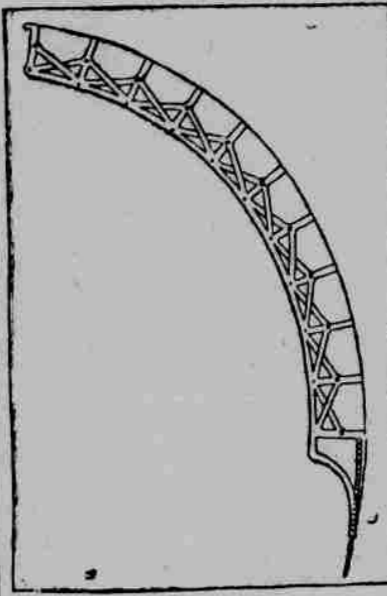
days of vast increase in the employment of irrigation, the solution of the problem of congestion appears.

This tremendous expanse of territory is capable of supporting a population of 50,000,000 people. At the increase rate of only 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 in a decade, it will be a long time before the population of the country has reached 125,000,000. But the preparations must be made to accommodate a population roughly estimated by these figures.

CURVE RULE INVENTED.

In the picture is shown an adjustable curved ruler invented by Prince Anareas Gagarin of St. Petersburg, Russia, which will be found very convenient in drawing schools, architects' offices and for designers' use generally. With the aid of this ruler it is not only possible to draw a curve of any radius, but also to measure curves accurately, a gauge being provided to indicate the circumference or diameter of the circle formed by a continuation of the arc.

The frame of the ruler consists of a series of pivoted levers connected with each other in such a manner that when the adjusting screw is turned the arc of the circle is varied accordingly. The face of the ruler which maintains



the curve is a steel strip suspended from the levers in such a manner as to allow free play between the ends. The adjusting gauge has a sliding indicator attached to the end of the steel strip, and as the levers are moved in either direction this indicator moves correspondingly to show the size of the arc.

RUBBER FORESTS IN VENEZUELA.

Along the river Orinoco the caoutchouc, or rubber, trees are scattered about in families, in forests composed of many other valuable woods. The men engaged in the collection of the raw rubber make entrances into the thick forest on the banks of the stream, and then open tracks penetrating the leafy wilderness. They find from 100 to 200 rubber trees along the course of each of these tracks, although the distance seldom exceeds two-thirds of a mile. The milk, which is white when it issues from the tree, is coagulated with smoke into dark balls, weighing about 44 pounds apiece. Recently the planting of rubber trees has become a considerable industry in Venezuela.

CAKE DISH AND CANDLE HOLDER.

Mrs. Julia Alice Earl of Cincinnati has invented a combined dish and candle holder for use in connection with birthday cakes. It has a central vertical tube, with a second tube coupled to the first one at its upper end in such a way as to be easily removed. The second tube supports a series of branches, which in their turn are provided with sockets to hold the candles. One advantage of the arrangement is that any one of the sets of candles may be removed at a moment's notice, and thus one may have as many tapers as are wanted, or as few.

THE SMALLEST WATCH.

What is said to be the smallest watch in the world has recently been made. It is so small that you could get four watches of its size on an area equal to that covered by a 25-cent piece.

The watch was made at Geneva, where special tools were constructed for the purpose. It contains 100 separate parts and weighs one-thirtieth of an ounce, avoirdupois. The hands are, respectively, one-eleventh of an inch and one-twentieth of an inch in length. The watch has been valued at \$1,250.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES.

Improving in Glass-Blowing.

By employing compressed air, a Dresden manufacturer has lately succeeded in producing glass vessels of extraordinary size. Heretofore, it is said, concave glass could be blown into vessels having a capacity not exceeding about 26 gallons, but by the new process glass bath tubs and large glass kettles can be blown.

Bread Made of Moss.

In some parts of the world bread is made of bark or moss. This occurs in more than one place in the far north, and bread is made of vastly different materials in different countries. In Lapland, oats with the inner bark of the pine are used. The two together, well ground and mixed, are made into large flat cakes and cooked in a pan over the fire. In Kamchatka, in Asiatic Russia, pine or birch bark by itself, well macerated, pounded and baked, frequently constitutes the whole of the native bread food. The Icelanders scrape the Iceland moss off the rocks and grinds it into fine flour, which serves both for bread and puddings. In parts of Italy chestnuts are cooked, ground into meal, and used for making bread. Dura, a variety of millet, is much used in India, Egypt, Arabia and Asia Minor for making bread.—Chicago Journal.

The cost of painting the Tower Bridge, London, is £5,000.

THE MINISTER DID NOT GO.

Money Had Been Raised for His Vacation but He Didn't Get It.

"Our minister did not go on his vacation this summer as he expected," said Brown with an amused smile. "He fully intended to and had made his arrangements to that effect. But circumstances over which he had no control were such that he decided at the last minute to remain at home. My wife and several other enthusiastic women members of the church hit upon the happy idea of raising a fund sufficient to defray the good man's expenses, as he has a large family and finds it difficult to make both ends meet. With this end in view they held several 'affairs' and at last were proud possessors of something over \$50. Then they decided to make the presentation a gala event and give the members of the church a chance to send the Rev. Mr. Blank away with the best wishes of the whole congregation. It occurred to my wife that a little music would add to the happy occasion and she saw that some musicians were engaged. Another member of the committee thought that a light lunch would be a happy idea and took it upon herself to see that it was ordered. Another one conceived the plan of having the church decorated for the auspicious occasion, and hired a man to do the work. Early in the evening when they met to compare notes their expenses had not only eaten up the amount they had raised, but had left them a matter of \$2 or \$3 in debt; so the presentation had to be omitted. I asked my wife who she expected was going to make this amount good," continued Brown, according to the Detroit Free Press, "and she snapped: 'The Rev. Mr. Blank, of course! It was all done in his interest!'"

KNOTT'S RABBIT STORY.

Told to Illustrate One View of Sampson-Schley Affair.

Since the Sampson-Schley controversy has grown acute again there has been considerable reference to Proctor Knott's "rabbit story" in connection with the credit for the victory at Santiago. It is here reproduced: Ex-Gov. Proctor Knott and John Yerkes were discussing the claims of Sampson and Schley to the credit of smashing Cervera at Santiago. Mr. Yerkes took the ground that all the honor of that memorable conflict belonged to Admiral Sampson, and was inclined to entirely ignore Commodore Schley's part in the affair. The governor listened until his companion had finished, and then with that characteristic twinkle in his eye said: "My dear sir, it is exceedingly gratifying to me to hear you take the position you have in the matter. It is like a balm to my conscience and settles a point that has worried me many a day. I was walking through the woods once with a boy friend of mine when we saw a rabbit run into a sinkhole. We stood around the hole awhile; then I told the boy to keep watch while I went to get some fire to smoke the rabbit out. When I returned the boy had the rabbit. I took it away from him, claiming that it belonged to me because I told him to catch it if it came out. That was over fifty years ago, and you are the first man who ever agreed with me that I was right in taking it and conscience is at rest." Mr. Yerkes looked solemn for a few moments, then smiled a feeble smile and changed the subject.—Kentucky Journal (Frankfort).

Fire Among the Redwoods.

Perhaps the most startling phenomenon of the fire was the quick death of child-like Sequoias only a century or two of age. In the midst of the other comparatively slow and steady growth, one of these tall, beautiful saplings, leafy and branchy, would be seen blazing up suddenly all in one leaving, booming, passionate flame reaching from the ground to the top of the tree, and fifty to a hundred feet or more above it, with a smoke column bending forward and streaming away on the upper free-flowing wind. To burn these green trees a strong fire of dry wood beneath them is required to send up a current of air hot enough to distill inflammable gases from the leaves and sprays; then, instead of the lower limbs gradually catching fire and igniting the next and next in succession, the whole tree seems to explode almost simultaneously, and with awful roaring and throbbing a round, tapering flame shoots up two or three hundred feet, and in a second or two is quenched, leaving the green spire a black, dead mass, bristled and roughened with down-curling boughs.—John Muir in Atlantic.