

The Lambton Diamond.

I.

The famous Lambton diamond threw back the light from its many facets, and strange, brilliant colors shot from its depths. It was the finest stone I had ever set in my life.

I was particularly pleased with my design for the setting. No other hand had touched it, and I felt that the frame, so to speak, was worthy of the picture.

The ring, now that it was finished, was fit even to adorn the hand of Lady Gwendolen Forrest, the beauty and heiress of the season. But I did not envy young Lord Lambton his fiancée; in my own Nell I had a girl as good and as pretty as any in the land.

I was about to take the ring to Mr. Nugent when Nell herself ran in. She was my employer's daughter, and his private house was upstairs over the large showroom in Clifford street. It was against all custom for Nell to come down to my workshop, for her father disapproved our engagement. But today she had not been able to resist the temptation of having a peep at the Lambton diamond.

Just as she had slipped it on her finger, and was dancing about twisting her hand, that the marvelous stone might catch the light, the door opened and Mr. Nugent entered. I prepared to defend Nell from a harsh reprimand but none came. Her father appeared oddly preoccupied, merely took the ring from her, examined it earnestly, and, snapping the lid of the case down upon it, placed it in his pocket and walked away.

Next day I was sitting at work, when I saw a hansom drive up, and Lord Lambton jump out. He came hastily into the room, which adjoined the one where I was sitting and where Mr. Nugent was.

"Scoundrel!" I heard him say, and could scarcely believe my ears. "You thought to fool me easily by a false stone; but I am as good a judge of jewels as you are. You are a thief, sir! What have you done with the diamond I intrusted to you?"

Mr. Nugent answered in a lower voice. What he said, could not have made any great impression upon Lord Lambton, however, for he impatiently interrupted, and at last an ominous threat concerning the "police" reached my ears.

I sat still. I understood very well that Lord Lambton had deliberately accused my employer of trying to palm off upon him an imitation diamond, yet I knew that I had set the true stone and delivered it to Mr. Nugent only yesterday.

My employer himself was a skilled workman, though not a good designer, and in the time that had elapsed between my handing him the ring and his transferring it to the owner he could have removed the stone and replaced it by another. But for such a bold trick to succeed the imitation must be magnificently made, and the original diamond must have been carefully measured.

I had never known that Mr. Nugent kept any false gems about the place, and besides was it likely that a man in his position would care to run so terrible a risk? Still, I could not help remembering how haggard and irritable he had been of late, and the keen interest that he took in the racing intelligence.

As I thus speculated on the astounding accusation, Mr. Nugent himself opened the door of the workroom. He looked keenly at me as if wondering if it would be safe to trust me.

"Did you hear anything of what passed in the next room?" he questioned.

I admitted that I had. "Of course, I shall be triumphantly acquitted," he announced, clearing his throat huskily as he spoke. "Still, Lord Lambton can make things disagreeable. And look here, Wade, I haven't always been as friendly to you as I might, but I can trust you. You'll be an important witness. Do what you can for me, for the girl's sake."

The words sounded strange, but I was given no time to answer, for at that moment Lord Lambton returned with two Scotland Yard men. My employer was given into custody and taken to the police station to be charged, the detectives remaining to search the premises.

Mr. Nugent being a widower, with only one child, the management of the business practically devolved on me, as the detectives ransacked the place, they put many questions to me as to where the stones were kept. The safes were all pointed out to them, but they seemed disappointed with their operations.

Late in the evening they came to me in the workroom, and, holding out the ring that I had made for Lord Lambton, one of them said:

"This is your work, we understand. Is that the stone you set?" I glanced at it, but I only replied: "I don't call myself an expert in precious stones, and all I can say is that this one precisely resembles in size shape and appearance the one given me to set."

While this statement was practically true, that one glance had been enough to show me that I was not looking at the Lambton diamond.

The detectives left, saying that I would have to tell all I knew in the witness box, and then, just as I was about to look up the place for the night, Nell came in. It was the first time she had let me see her since her father had been taken away.

The face which I thought the sweetest on earth was marble white, and

there were dark shadows under the lashes.

"There's something I must say to you," she panted, "something I've been wild to say all day, lest it should be too late, but I dared not let anyone suspect. A month ago father confided to me that he had lost a great deal of money and he showed me how to open a secret drawer in his Chippendale bureau. 'If ever anything happens to me,' he said, 'don't lose a moment, but look into this drawer; throw away everything that you will find in the left-hand partition, and keep what may be in the right.'"

II.

Together we ransacked the old bureau, and at length Nell touched the spring which opened the secret drawer. I drew in my breath sharply, for the light of the candle which I held struck out a gleam from a pile of exquisitely made false stones, which lay in a partition on the left hand, while on the right was the Lambton diamond.

Involuntarily I betrayed the dreadful nature of the discovery by an exclamation, for, left to herself, Nell would not have understood. But she was quick to comprehend, and realizing the worst she swayed, staggering backward.

"My poor father," she moaned, as I held her. "He is ruined forever—and I, too. The daughter of a convicted thief is no fit wife for an honest man." "My darling, you are a wife for a king, and as for your father, I swear to you that I will save him yet." "You—you cannot!" "I tell you that I can and will." For even as I spoke an idea had flashed into my head which startled me by its audacity. In a moment I had thought out every detail.

I made up the stones, Lambton diamond and all, into a packet, carefully closing the secret drawer, and contriving to get away without being seen, and went straight to my brother's house in Kent, managing to avoid the service of a subpoena. Thus I was not present at the police court proceedings, which would have meant ruin for my plan.

Mr. Nugent was committed for trial, and meanwhile I stayed in the country, working each night in locked room, with the tools I had brought with me, until the gray dawn filtered under my closed shutters.

When I saw my old employer in the dock at the trial I was shocked at the ghastly change which had come over him.

The evidence at first went steadily against him. Lord Lambton swore that the stone in the ring was not his diamond. One expert testified that not only was the stone he now saw not the Lambton diamond, but was not a genuine jewel at all, but a marvelous imitation. Another was not so positive. He looked at the gem through his glass, turning it this way and that, declaring that in all his experience he had never seen a false stone so cleverly executed as this. Indeed, he was not prepared to swear that it was false.

This was the first ray of doubt which had been thrown by the evidence upon Mr. Nugent's guilt; and then I went into the box, I was cool now, for the game I had determined on had cost me many a qualm of conscience. But I had no intention of cheating Lord Lambton, swearing falsely, or tarnishing my personal honor.

The preliminary question of the prosecuting counsel brought out the fact that I had designed the ring's setting, and done all the work upon it.

"What sort of stone was it your employer gave you to set?" was the next question.

"An extremely valuable white diamond," I replied.

"Do you swear that you set the genuine stone, and delivered the ring when finished to the prisoner?"

"I do."

"Do you consider it possible that stone might have been taken out and imitation one substituted?"

"Certainly. But I could tell whether the ring had been tampered with since it left my hands."

"Take this then, examine it, and inform the court if that is the stone you set."

The ring was handed to me, and a hush fell upon the court. The kind of lull which denotes that a vital point in a case has been reached.

I put my hand in my waistcoat pocket for my jeweler's glass, and the sharpest eye could not have seen that I also drew forth a new ring, made in the secret hours of the night—an exact counterpart of the other, save that it contained the real Lambton diamond.

I pretended to examine the imitation with great care while all eyes were fixed upon me. At length I returned the glass to my pocket, and with it the ring with the false stone. I could hear my own heart beating, but, handing the court usher the new ring, I said firmly, in reply to the snappish "Well?" of the prosecuting counsel:

"I swear unhesitatingly that the setting of this ring has not been tampered with, and that this is the genuine diamond which was given me to set."

A rustle went round the court; the doubting expert pricked up his ears, the prosecuting counsel, with Lord Lambton and the treasury solicitor, were whispering over the ring.

"M'ud," said the counsel, "I ask permission to recall the expert."

I stepped out of the box and the expert stepped in. The new ring was put into his hand, a friendly ray of sunshine lighting up the jewel.

"This is very remarkable," he said at last. "It's the first time I have ever made a mistake. This stone is genuine. I cannot doubt it."

And so the prisoner was free; but when the verdict of "Not guilty" was pronounced a faint groan echoed it, and a dead man was taken from the dock. A spasm of the heart had proved fatal.

Six months later Nell and I were married. On our honeymoon we were walking in a lane near Ilfracombe, when we came face to face with Lord Lambton, who was stopping with his bride in a neighboring country house.

"Ah, Mr. Wade!" he exclaimed, "I haven't seen you since that very mysterious case of mine. Do you know I have always since thought of you—as a very—clever man?"

"Thank you," I said quietly. "Will you allow me, my lord, to present you to my wife—the only daughter of the late Mr. Nugent?"

Lord Lambton raised his hat, looked keenly at pretty Nell, shook hands with us both, and murmured:

"Ah, I understand!"

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

A Few Paragraphs Which Will Be Found Worth Reading.

Hams which are packed in pulverized charcoal will continue fresh for from five to ten years.

Nine-tenths of the finest tea raised in China, is sold and consumed in Russia. Most of the next best grade finds a market in Great Britain.

The golden tresses which adorn the head of Willie Reynolds, of Jersey Shore, Pa., are thirty-six inches in length. His age is twelve years.

At a watermelon eating contest in Bridgeton, N. Y., the contestants being all colored boys, one little darkey ate twice his weight of melons.

Samuel Webb, a Texan farmer, has purchased an immense tract of land in Eastern Cuba, and will there establish a large cattle ranch. He is about to ship thither, 2,500 Texan cattle.

Vapor baths were recommended to Mr. H. T. Higgins, of Chicago, as a remedy for hay fever. As he was taking one, the bathing machine exploded, and so seriously scalded him that death resulted.

A novel exploit was performed by some thieves at Dover, Del. They audaciously broke into the jail there, stole considerable clothing and other valuables, and successfully got off with their plunder.

Cigarette smoking is a common practice among the washerwomen of New Orleans. It is a picture to behold one of them contentedly smoking while she is vigorously rubbing a garment on the washboard.

In France, when a convict is sentenced to death by the guillotine, the day of his execution is not named in his presence, and he knows not when he is to be led forth until within fifteen minutes of the fatal moment.

During a fight with a moccasin snake at Decatur, Ala., George Miller, a farmer, struck the reptile with a thick switch, bursting the poison sacs. The poison spattered over Miller's face and eyes, causing the loss of sight.

The street cars in Manila are 13 feet 6 inches long, and seat 20 passengers. They were all made in the United States, and were purposely constructed light, as they were to be drawn by Philippine horses, which are not much larger than Newfoundland dogs.

A shocking experience recently came to James Fish, of Tioga, Pa. Lightning tore all the clothing from the left side of his body, and rent it into ribbons. He became unconscious, and when he recovered his senses he found that his left arm and leg were paralyzed.

Japanese children are taught to write with both hands. Usually there is a marked difference in the penmanship of each person, the better writing being produced by the left hand, while the right hand can turn out ten per cent. more work in a given period of time.

A terrible shock, like that of an earthquake, caused the parents of Harvey Reiff, of Maugansville, Md., to imagine that their dwelling was about to tumble about their ears. It was caused by Harvey, who weighs 380 pounds, falling through the bed-slats. The boy is six feet in height, and his age is fifteen years.

The paintings in the Royal Gallery at Madrid comprise some of the most beautiful in the world. They number over 2,000, and are said to be worth \$200,000,000. Among them are 10 by Raphael, 46 by Murillo, 64 by Velasquez, 62 by Rubens, and 43 by Titian.

Nine horses were driven a distance of 300 miles by a resident of Ventana, Col., who wished to sell them. A customer bought them all. Some days later the horses appeared at their old home, having escaped from their new owners, and made the homeward trip unguided.

The sixth marriage of Mrs. Augusta Thistlewood was recently solemnized at Province, R. I. Four of her former husbands were present, and acted as ushers; the fifth sent his regrets and a gift, and invited the bride and groom to spend the honeymoon at his house. The five divorces were secured by the lady, without opposition.

RESISTING TERRIFIC COLD.

That wonderful new substance, liquid air, has recently been employed at the Kew Gardens in London for testing the ability of seeds to endure very low temperatures. Seeds of various plants were enclosed in thin glass tubes which were kept immersed in liquid air. For 110 hours consecutively they were submitted to a temperature varying from 297deg. to 313deg. Fahrenheit below zero. Then they were slowly thawed, the operation lasting 50 hours. On being planted, it was found that their germinative power had not been appreciably affected. The experimenters conclude that seeds, when in a dormant condition, have their vital machinery absolutely stopped, and not merely slowed down to an indefinite extent.

The Home

KNITTING STOCKINGS.

To knit stockings is not so much a matter of economy as formerly; for good stockings can now be bought at very reasonable prices. But it may still save something and the hand-work often wears better than the woven. Many a girl and woman is glad of an occupation for spare moments, and there are persons that still have their knitting done by hand; and a gift of one's own manufacture is more appreciated, and certainly more suggestive of thought and affection on the part of the giver, than what she has simply bought.

As many of the directions in the manuals for knitting are very long and not often easily comprehended, even by an experienced person, the object of the present article is to give a few practical directions on the subject that can be followed without the aid of a teacher.

The number of stitches cast on varies with the size of the stocking and the fineness of the thread and needles. Thirty stitches on each needle is about an average for a good-sized child with a stout leg or a grown person of ordinary figure, narrowing to seventy-five at the ankle is reached. If one stitch is put on extra and purled, that is, knitted as a seam stitch, all the way down, the narrowing should be on either side of that. At the top a band should be knitted from half a finger to a finger in length, by knitting and purling two alternately, before the plain knitting is begun. It is simpler to cast the stitches upon one needle and then to divide.

More stitches are required for cotton than for woolen hose.

Three balls of knitting-cotton will make two pairs of socks.

Two different heels are as follows: First. When the heel is reached, divide the stocking in two, knit one-half plain and back till about half a finger in length; take the side in which the one stitch has been purled all the way down; then narrow on the right side on either side of this seam stitch till about twenty stitches remain; knit to the middle on the right side, double the needles together and bind off the stitches on the wrong side; slip up the stitches all around; slip four or five off the front needles at each side on to the needles of the heel, narrow the two stitches before these four, every other row, till the same number of stitches are on as at the ankle; then knit plain till it is time to narrow for the toe.

For the second heel, divide the stocking into two, as before, and knit one side a little more than half a finger in length; divide this into three parts; knit back and forth, slipping a stitch on to the next at the first part of the middle division, one side at the plain row, the next at the purled row, until all the stitches at the side divisions have been slipped over; knit across and take up the stitches on the side, knit around and take up on the other side; transfer two stitches from the front needle at either end, narrow every other row, the two stitches before these two, until, as in the other directions, there are nearly or quite the same number of stitches on the needles as at the beginning of the heel. The first is sloped to the foot, but has a seam; the second heel is more square.

For the toe, narrow every seventh stitch, knit seven rows, narrow every sixth row, knit six rows, and so on, until but a few stitches remain on each needle, when the yarn or cotton should be broken off, threaded in a large darning needle, run through stitches, drawn up and fastened down on the wrong side, or narrowed off by knitting until two stitches remain, then turn one stitch over the other, pulling the thread through the remaining one, then fasten the thread.

A pretty open-work silk stocking can be made without this troublesome heel. With fine needles put on one hundred and thirteen stitches. Knit for a short finger length, then knit about the length of the needle plain, next knit a row, dropping every alternate stitch. Get some one to hold the needles, and pull the stocking carefully till the dropped stitches run down as far as the ribbing, when each one should be fastened on the wrong side.

THE MUSHROOM, AS YOU LIKE IT.

Baked.—Cut off a part of the stalks of twelve medium-sized mushrooms; peel the tops and wipe the mushrooms carefully and dry with a small piece of flannel and a little salt. Put them into a baking dish, with a little melted butter poured over each one; season with a sprinkle of white pepper, and bake twenty minutes. Serve on a hot dish with the sauce poured over.

Broiled.—Select one dozen medium-sized fresh mushrooms; cut off a part of the stalk, peel the top and rub off with a little fine salt. Drop as soon as cleansed into cold water to which salt and lemon juice have been added, say to one quart of cold water add the juice of one lemon and one teaspoonful salt. Fifteen minutes before serving drain and wipe the mushroom dry. Season with half a teaspoonful of salt and white pepper mixed, brush them

over with melted butter; lay on a hot broiler, and broil over a moderately clear fire five minutes on each side, turning them twice while cooking. Lay six small slices of buttered toast on a hot dish, dress two mushrooms over each piece of toast, spread one tablespoonful maitre d'hotel butter over the mushrooms, and serve.

Saute.—Cut off the ends of the stalks from one and a half pints of fresh button mushrooms, and put them in a dish of water with a little lemon juice. Then take them out of the water and place with two tablespoonfuls butter in saucepan over the fire. Add a teaspoonful pepper and the juice of one lemon. Cover and stew slowly twenty minutes. Add one tablespoonful flour and a sprinkle of nutmeg, and gradually sufficient cream or milk to make the sauce of a proper consistency and serve.

In Spanish Sauce.—Cut nearly all the stalks away from one pint of small mushroom buttons; peel the tops or rub them off with salt. Place in a saucepan over the fire with half pint Spanish sauce, described below, simmer slowly twenty minutes; season with a little cayenne pepper, nutmeg, and salt, and serve very hot.

Spanish Sauce.—Place a saucepan with one tablespoonful butter over the fire, add two tablespoonfuls fine-cut raw ham, the same of chopped onion, carrot, and celery. Cook five minutes or till brown; then add one heaping tablespoonful flour, stir and cook three minutes. Add one pint soup stock, one even teaspoonful salt, six whole peppers and a small bouquet; boil slowly ten minutes; then strain. Add half teaspoonful liquid beef extract and use as directed. This will make one pint of sauce. For the mushrooms half the quantity will do. If soup stock is not at hand take water and a little more of the beef extract.

CHILDREN AND REASONS.

Children always want a reason for the doing of the simplest things, said a mother the other day. Psychologists say it is the claims of science working in the mind when it begins to question. To answer these childish inquiries is not always easy, as every one knows, nor is it wise to discourage the questionings. Sometimes it is the simple little interrogations that are hardest to give replies to, such as "Why may I eat with my fork and not not with my knife?" and "Why must I take soup from the side of the spoon, instead of from the end?" To this last I have found that a practical illustration serves best, to show why. I put the child beside some one else at the table, and allow him to take his soup or porridge from the end of the spoon. Of course, his elbow, extended as brings the spoon in line with his mouth, will jostle his neighbor or will threaten to do so. The child can readily see that this is unpleasant, especially if some one will sit on his other side and incommode him in the same way. He thus learns that the comfort of other people at the table is largely dependent upon his good behavior. If he has been taught from infancy that he must try to make others happy, he can be persuaded to acquire manners that are pleasing.

FANS NO LONGER FOR USE.

Warm as the weather has been this summer, fans have been in but little use. It seems as if the fan had entirely lost its usefulness and had become a mere article of adornment. Apparently it is used no longer to cool the heated person who suffers from the sun's rays. If employed for such a purpose a big palm-leaf fan is used, and as often as not it is a man who swings it, vigorously hoping to stir up a little cooling breeze.

The fan nowadays is flirtatious, and the flirtatious fan is ripe in winter. It is used in the ballroom after a dance and then more as an aid to coquetry than for the ostensible purpose for which it was devised. It is a part of evening dress, and an indispensable part. It is not vigorously waved, for it is too expensive an article to bear such hard usage. Dainty and pretty articles are these, and it is no uncommon thing for them to cost hundreds of dollars.

As a fad, however, the fan still holds a place in woman's affections. There is nothing that is so often collected by women. Fashionable dames have a fancy for them, and there are many rare collections. The finest private collections of fans in the world are owned by Queen Victoria, the Empress of Russia, ex-Queen Isabella of Spain who has over 600 specimens; the Countess of Paris, the Countess of Chamburn, Countess of Granville, Mme. Alphonse de Rothschild, Lady Shaftesbury and Mme. Jubinal.

A unique dismissal of a batsman occurred in Ceylon in a match between teams of soldiers of the R. A. and R. E. A gunner was fielding in the "country." The ball was hit high in the air in his direction. He ran backwards to catch it, but misjudging it, did not get his hands underneath. The ball hit him plump on the top of his pith helmet, a regulation one, and instead of bouncing off again, it went through, resting on his head inside. His helmet was flattened somewhat over his ears, and so he caught the ball! It was rough on the batsman, though the fieldsman probably found it rather hard.