THE FEATHERSTONE DIAMOND.

It is well to be famous for something; so my friends often told me, and then they added that I was famous for my paper-knife. This gave rise to a question which produced considerable controversy at the time: "Is a fact like that conclusive proof of the paper-knife being extraordinary, or may it mean that the owner is insignificant?"

I hope I took the banter in good part. Bowman said it was capital fun, and Sweepstone said anything would produce mirth if properly treated, and others made similar remarks, as they enjoyed the laughter which was produced. The men who were most thin-skinned were readiest with their jokes, so I looked upon it as a compensation and tried not to begrudge them their amusement.

Bowman would have it that I had stolen the paper-knife, and Sweepstone hinted something about a still more serious crime being connected with it. Then there were roars of laughter, which would have put a light heart into a hypochondriac.

I may remark at this stage that Bowman and Sweepstone were two bachelor friends of mine, both good fellows, and both fond of a joke—at other people's expense. Bowman was a solicitor, and Sweepstone was a stock and share broker. Bowman always spoke about himself as a member of a learned profession, and he referred to Sweepstone as a mercantile Bohemian. Sweepstone returned the compliment by saying that lawyers existed on a reputation which they won when ignorance prevailed among people in general, but that stock and share brokers were in "the foremost files of time;" they represented the scientific spirit applied to the region of commerce. But they never railed against each other long if they could find a third person to torment.

"That paper-knife was a marvelous production, I must confess—only fit for a millionaire," said Bowman. "Or a lunatic," responded Sweepstone, starting the laughter which followed. Because of remarks like these I persistently refused to say how it came into my possession.

Let me describe it. The blade was nine inches long, and it consisted of richly-tinted agate. The stone had been worked until it was thin enough for the purpose to which it was devoted. Agate is exceedingly hard and brittle, so that great care must have been exercised by the lapidary who ground and polished it. On the blade was engraved the motto, "Nothing but Leaves." The handle was silver; a good, substantial handle, which might have been on a dagger or a bowie-knife. It was richly chased, and the ornamentation was very beautiful. On each side of the handle, in the thickest part, there was an oval framework, representing coral and seaweed. Inside the frame was a dolphin, which seemed to be swimming in water and bearing a child on its back. It was indeed a wonderful paper-knife; its only fault was that no ordinary mortal would ever have used it for cutting the leaves of a book or magazine.

"Lend me that stolen paper-knife," Bowman was fond of saying, if he found a book on my table which had not been cut; but I kept an ivory substitute for actual use and preserved the agate and silver one for show. Bowman had to be satisfied with the ivory, while I submitted to his remarks about the absurdity of keeping a white elephant. If I said anything about ivory being more like white elephant than the agate and silver, he solemnly failed to understand my reference, and asked me to explain my meaning.

"That paper-knife is like Bluebeard's key," said Sweepstone; "the crimson tints are indelible marks of blood. You cannot possibly wash them away, and therefore you are anxious to keep the proof of your guilt out of sight."

At that time I was classical master at the Millchester Grammar School. The school was situated in the middle of the town, near a river of filth. It was not surprising, therefore, that I resided several miles away, at a place called Barnfield. Railway trains and omnibuses ran regularly between Barnfield and Millchester, so that, for all practical purposes, I was quite near enough to the scene of my labors, and I was glad to get away from the smoke and mud which prevailed in the town.

We had a bowling club at Barnfield, and it was in connection with bowls that I became acquainted with Bowman, Sweepstone and other men who resided in the neighborhood. We called the club a bowling club because we had a bowling green, and the name sounded like open-air exercise and innocent recreation, but I am afraid that other games were greater favorites with many of the members. "Give a dog a good name and he cannot have the hydrophobia," said Sweepstone, in reference to our institution, which was patronized by men who would never have entered it if billiards or cards had been mentioned in the official title. "Every man who has any self-respect is a bit of a hypocrite," was Bowman's sententious reply.

Previous to my appointment at Millchester Grammar School, I was for two years the private tutor of a young man whose education had been interfered with by ill health. His name was Brayshaw, and he was nephew to Rumford Featherstone, a wealthy man, who died very suddenly, leaving his enormous fortune to a widowed sister, the mother of my pupil.

I had paid several visits to Rumford Hall with Brayshaw during his uncle's lifetime, and had often noticed the agate paper-knife, with its massive silver handle. My pupil knew that I admired it, and promised me playfully that if ever it came into his possession he would transfer it to me. When he was at Oxford and I had settled at Millchester I received a polite note from his mother begging my acceptance of the paper-knife as a memento of her deceased brother. I thanked her for the handsome gift, and wrote to her son, also, acknowledging the celerity with which he had taken time by the forelock and fulfilled his promise before the appointed time.

I never satisfied my Barnfield friends about the manner in which the paper-knife came into my possession. One reason for this reticence on my part was that there were certain rumors in circulation, soon after Rumford Featherstone's death, which reflected unfavorably upon a young man called Woodrough, who had been his private secretary. Both Bowman and Sweepstone mentioned the subject in my hearing, and expressed their opinion that Woodrough had stolen the famous Featherstone diamond, which disappeared mysteriously at the time when Rumford Featherstone died.

I often smiled when I thought what a precious opportunity for banter was lost to my friends through their ignorance of the circumstances under which the paper-knife came into my possession. I could imagine Bowman raising his hands in pretended horror and exclaiming: "I knew there was theft connected with it. Jackson was in league with that private secretary, and they shared the booty; but I must say the partition of spoil was not fair. The fellow who got the diamond—unless—Jackson, where is that Featherstone diamond?" Then Sweepstone would have declared that he had an additional reason for his favorite theory about the shedding of blood and the suspicious-looking tints in the agate.

Another circumstance which made me unwilling to say anything about my former connection with Rumford Featherstone's family was that Woodrough, the private secretary, was in Millchester. I met him one day when I was walking from the school to the station. He was startled to see me, but for that I should not have noticed him. When I knew him at Rumford Hall he was closely shaven, but he was beginning to grow beard and mustache, which seemed likely in a short time to disguise him effectually.

As far as I could remember, nothing was really proved against Woodrough, and I was puzzled at the moment how I ought to treat him, but when I am uncertain what to do I invariably, and from impulse, follow the course which seems kindest at the moment, so I put out my hand to him as if nothing had happened which was discreditable to his good name.

He seemed very grateful, and told me that he had obtained a subordinate position in the office of Sheet & Piece, a well-known firm of shippers. Mr. Sheet was a friend of his father, the Rev. Stephen Woodrough, a minister near London.

"But he stipulated that I should be known here as Stephens," said Woodrough, "and, therefore, I have lost my good name in more senses than one."

It was grim humor. But I believed in the young fellow, especially when I remembered that the Featherstone diamond was worth at least £10,000.

"If he had that diamond he would not be toiling at Millchester," I reflected. "Poor Woodrough!"

So there were several reasons why I did not care to tell Bowman and Sweepstone about what they called my champion paper-knife.

II.

Rumford Featherstone was a very eccentric man. It was said that the only way in which he could be managed was to take no notice of him—rather a peculiar kind of management, I must confess. Bradshaw, my pupil, acted on that principle, and the experiment appeared to be successful.

"Uncle meddles with everything and everybody, but he would be surprised if you attended to any of his suggestions. I never do." Remarks like that were often made by the lad in a jovial manner. Weakness and pain had not made him petulant, but he was ready to joke about his own infirmities.

"There are worse things in this world than a weak constitution," he said, "if it is not too weak. I have been spoiled, and I like it."

Fun must have been very difficult in the presence of Rumford Featherstone, who was a grim-looking man of sixty-five. He had a face which looked incapable of smiling, and I never knew him try the experiment. His nephew was constantly making absurd remarks, but none of them appeared to affect the uncle, who glared under his heavy brow at the venturesome youngster who was bold enough even to make puns in that forbidding presence.

Rumford Featherstone professed to trust nobody. His opinions about human nature were as unfavorable as possible, but in practice he was the most unsuspicious of men, and he might have been robbed with impunity. He locked up scarcely anything. He denounced the worthlessness of humanity and the dishonesty of society, while he left valuable articles about as if he had perfect confidence in his fellow-men.

He was known to have a splendid collection of gems, and some of them were of great value. The Featherstone diamond especially was one of the famous stones which have been honored with distinctive names, and it was known far and wide.

"If you want to be remembered as long as the world stands," he said to me when first he showed me his treasures, "you must procure a stone like this and call it after yourself. This will be the Featherstone diamond when all the monuments which have been reared in this generation are carted away for rubbish, and when all the books which have been written during this century are forgotten."

"It may have half a dozen different names before the end of time," exclaimed Brayshaw. "In the year 10001 it may be called the Ching Chow diamond, if the Chinese rule the roast, as they are expected to do. 'Rule the roast pig,' Charles Lamb would have said."

Featherstone looked angry, and as nobody cared to laugh at Brayshaw's remark, he laughed himself, repeating:

"It will be the Ching Chow diamond, formerly the Pah Pah diamond of New Zealand. There is time for many changes before the year ten thousand and one."

The Featherstone diamond was famous for its perfect color and matchless luster. It had been cut to the best advantage and weighed thirty-five carats. If there had been nothing extraordinary in its appearance it would have been worth £10,000, but with precious stones value is enhanced by fame, and it was impossible to say what a stone like that might have fetched in the open market.

Some people said it was the only thing in the world which its owner really loved.

"He is a little more than indifferent to his sister," was a remark often made, "and he does not positively hate that nephew of his, but he loves nothing but his diamond."

In the library a massive safe stood, having the most recent improvements, including a time lock, and in that safe the precious stones were kept.

Woodrough was called the private secretary, but his duties had more connection with the jewels of his employer than with books and papers. He had a key to the safe, and he generally set the time lock at night.

I liked Woodrough and so did my pupil. He was a quiet fellow, fond of reading and attached to his employer. "Mr. Featherstone is not difficult to please," he said to me in confidence. "All you have to do is to find out what he is likely to want and then act as if he had told you. Very likely he will complain, but that does not matter. He is magnanimous enough not to expect me to say I am wrong when I know I am right. I have to watch that safe continually, and when I am going out I generally set the time lock; then nobody can open it. He has stormed a few times about my doing so, when he has wanted something later than usual, but I say nothing and do the same thing again. I have known him to leave the safe open, with half the gems on the library table. It is not fair to the servants. I remember the first time I discovered things in that condition I told him I should not consider myself responsible for the safe keeping of his treasures if some reasonable precautions were not taken to protect them."

"How did he like that?" I asked.

"Well, he made himself rather offensive," was the reply.

I looked at Woodrough, and I suppose he understood me to signify that I was surprised to find him still there.

"Oh, I did not eat much mud, I can tell you," he answered. "I said that I considered that our engagement was at an end, and I would go and put my things together. That surprised him. He apologized handsomely, however, and so the dispute ended. The only danger of a rupture between us since has arisen when he has told me not to set the time-lock on the safe because he intended to open it late at night. He always promises to set it himself, but as often as not he forgets. I have come down into the library at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning and found that he had simply locked it."

"What does it matter?" I asked.

"It matters just this," he said, "if burglars broke into the hall they would be sure to get his keys or mine, for it would be an organized gang which would do it; then they could open the safe and take everything. We are known to have chronometer locks, and that is our chief safeguard. Let it be discovered, however, that we do not use them regularly, and the cracksmen will think it worth their while to pay us a visit."

The Featherstone diamond and some of the richest gems were generally kept in a small case, of which Woodrough had no key.

"I cannot show them in Mr. Featherstone's absence," he said, "and I am very glad. Sometimes he tells people to call and look at his 'baubles;' but if he is out they have to call again."

The circumstances attending Rumford Featherstone's death were very painful because of the suspicion which was thrown on Woodrough. As I have said already, nothing was proved against him, but he was ruined, and he had to commence life again in a subordinate position and under an assumed name.

These are the particulars, as I learned them at the time.

Rumford Featherstone was discovered by Woodrough in his library, at 2 o'clock in the morning, dead.

The secretary had been requested by Featherstone not to set the time lock on the safe.

"I awoke just before 2 o'clock," Woodrough said afterward. "I had been in bed then about three hours. Just as I was going to sleep again I thought I heard a noise. This roused me at once, and I suddenly remembered that I had left Mr. Featherstone in the library, and that the time-lock had not been set. I got out of bed, put on a dressing-gown, seized my revolver, and went down stairs as quietly as possible. There was no sign of disturbance anywhere, and all was still. I opened the library door; the lamp was burning, and Mr. Featherstone was lying on the floor. I glanced round the room and saw that the safe was shut; then I hurried to Mr. Featherstone and tried to rouse him, but he was dead.

"There was a scene of commotion after that. The servants were called, and a messenger was sent on horseback to Waringborough, the nearest town, for medical assistance. When Dr. Pitchford arrived it was too late to be of any use. Mr. Featherstone had died of apoplexy, he said, and death must have been almost instantaneous.

"Brayshaw had gone to Oxford at that time, but he and his mother were at Rumford Hall before noon. The family lawyer was there also, and the safe was opened to make sure that all the gems were safe. The Featherstone diamond could not be found."

Woodrough said that he had not seen it for some days, but he thought it was in the special case all right. Nothing had been said about it, and he was not aware that it had been sent away for any purpose. Careful search was made, and letters of inquiry were sent to the persons who were likely to have been taken into Featherstone's confidence in reference to the stone. No intelligence could be gained concerning it, and suspicion was directed toward Woodrough.

III.

Woodrough was never formally charged with having stolen the diamond, though I believe that was in consequence of Mrs. Brayshaw's attitude. The executors were very angry, and great publicity was given to the affair, so that the name of Woodrough was commented on very unfavorably at the time. They would have charged him with theft, and they might have succeeded in convicting him on circumstantial evidence. Even if they had failed, his disgrace would have been more complete. But I remember Bowman saying that he wished he had the case in hand, and he showed how all the facts were dead against the suspected man.

I did not acknowledge that I had any personal acquaintance with Rumford Featherstone or with Woodrough, but I sided with the secretary in the discussions, much to Bowman's disgust, who labored under the impression, which is not uncommon among a certain class of men, that an intimate knowledge of ancient classics is detrimental to a right understanding of modern life.

Sweepstone was not inclined to blame Woodrough much, if he had purloined the diamond.

"Rather awkward stuff to sell," he remarked. "Something like a stolen bank note for £1,000 or the famous Gainsborough picture. If that fellow had been as sharp as some people are, he would have laid his fingers on something which might have been turned into cash more easily."

My own opinion was that one of the servants had found Featherstone before Woodrough did, and that the diamond was lying on the table. The servant (male or female, I did not care which) picked up the jewel and went away, making the noise which Woodrough heard.

"It would be simpler to fall back on spiritualism," said Bowman. "Why not suggest that some mysterious agent from the other world put in an appearance and bolted with the gem? When you get off the track of reasonable evidence you might as well propose one explanation as another."

"Featherstone may have lent it to some savant or other," Sweepstone interrupted, "and the worthy admirer of nature's masterpieces may be keeping it until he can get it recut, and then he will pass it off as another stone. There are tricks in all trades but ours."

I met Woodrough several times in Millchester, and felt sorry for the poor fellow.

"If he had the stone he could make money of it," I repeated to myself time after time, "even if he had to get it cut into several smaller stones."

I was angry at not being able to use that strong argument on behalf of Woodrough when arguing the question with Bowman. I should have liked to say:

"The man you are charging with theft is working hard in Millchester under an assumed name. Do you think he would do that if he had in his possession a piece of property as valuable as the Featherstone diamond?"

But I was precluded by circumstances from making a statement like that, and I decided to show Woodrough how much confidence I had in his honesty.

"Come and dine with me," I said one day. The poor fellow was moved, and I thought I could see tears springing into his eyes.

"Just our two selves," I said; "a bachelor dinner." But I made up my mind that on some future occasion I would invite him to meet Bowman and Sweepstone. My only fear was lest the paper-knife should be mentioned or anything should happen which might turn the conversation into undesirable channels.

Woodrough accepted my invitation, and the day was fixed.

"Let me tell you this, once for all," I said. "I believe you are as innocent of any wrong in connection with the Featherstone diamond as I am myself. Now we do not need to mention the subject again."

The manner in which he wrung my hand convinced me that my confidence was not misplaced.

We spent a very pleasant evening together, and after dinner we went into my study to smoke and chat. I had put the paper-knife out of sight, but when Woodrough introduced Featherstone's name and mentioned the diamond I thought there could be no harm in showing him the memento which Mrs. Brayshaw had sent.

"You know this," I said, taking the knife from the drawer where I had placed it.

"Of course I know it," he replied. "I doubt whether there is another like it in the world. That is a splendid piece of agate."

"Mrs. Brayshaw sent it to me that I might have something to remind me of her brother."

"Unless you had the Featherstone diamond you could not have an article on which he set greater store than this paper-knife."

Woodrough looked sad as he read the inscription on the stone, and I could not help thinking that it carried his mind back to happier days before his name had been clouded by suspicion.

"If Mr. Featherstone had been a man with whom it was possible to joke," he said, "I should have charged him with making this into a fetich. He often had it with him when he could not want to use it. He never did use it."

"Had it any interesting associations?" I asked.

"Not that I am aware of," was Woodrough's reply.

Then the subject was changed, and he told me about his early life and his love for mineralogy. His desire had been to get an appointment in the British Museum or in the office of a diamond merchant. Featherstone knew about his ambition and promised to help him.

"But all that is past," he said, "and I must toil on as best I can in my present uncongenial sphere. But for my parents I would go to South Africa. My father is a minister at Surreyside; he fully believes the Featherstone diamond will yet be discovered, and he begs me to stay in England. Then there is somebody else—Ada—this trouble has been dreadful to her."

I knew whom he meant, but I did not reply.

"She has never doubted me," he said, after a while. "Of course, I offered to break off the engagement. I thought it was only right, and her friends agreed with me, but she would not hear of it."

I learned then what I had not known before—Featherstone left the draft of a codicil to his will, in which he bequeathed £1,000 to Woodrough. As it was not a legal document, however, the executors gladly disregarded it.

Among the general topics which occupied our attention was a meeting of inventors, which was to be held in Millchester during the following week. I told my visitor that I hoped to have the pleasure of dining with Reedyman, the great electrician, who lived at Barnfield some years before I did and was a member of our club. Half a dozen of us were to dine together at Bowman's house. The others all knew Reedyman, but he was a stranger to me.

"It is wonderful what that man has accomplished," said Woodrough; "and yet I have been informed that he is almost self-taught. If I am to do anything specially worthy it must be among precious stones, and that is the sphere which at present seems closed to me."

We were back again upon the old subject. He could not leave it. I thought he might possibly find it a relief to talk to somebody who was acquainted with his story, so I asked him what his opinion was about the fate of the Featherstone diamond, and I told him my own theory about a servant having taken it.

He differed from me on that point, and said his opinion was more romantic than mine. He thought Rumford Featherstone had put the diamond away somewhere, and he still hoped the hiding-place might be discovered.

"I believe nothing on earth gave him so much pleasure as looking at that stone," said Woodrough, "and I often suspected him of carrying it about with him. I know that it was not always in the special case which ought to have contained it. There was a secret drawer in his writing-table, and there was another in a cabinet which stood in his bedroom. I believe he sometimes put the diamond in those places. A skillful workman has examined the furniture for other secret receptacles, but so far he has not succeeded in discovering any. He is to search again. Mrs. Brayshaw is very kind in affording every facility, and I am sanguine that in some out-of-the-way corner a drawer will be found containing the missing treasure. Mr. Featherstone would not take the trouble to put things in his safe. He had faith in the security of the unsuspected. I knew nothing about that secret drawer which the cabinet-maker has found in the library table. Where do you think it was?"

I could not guess.

"It was in the thick part of the leg," said Woodrough. "It was fastened by means of a hidden spring, and the carved work effectually disguised the opening."

"May the diamond be discovered!" was my earnest wish.

IV.

I knew perfectly well that Bowman or Sweepstone, or both of them, would make some ridiculous remark to Reedyman about my paper-knife. I have often noticed in men who appear to pride themselves on their want of interest in literature that they get into ruts, and, however undesirable the ruts may be, they remain in them ad nauseam. They had a few favorite jokes, and no social meeting was supposed to have been successful unless all the jokes were introduced.

Reedyman was very quiet, and, as far as I could judge, very intelligent. He was full of questions about bowling matches which had been played since he left Barnfield. No stranger would have suspected that his name was a household word among people who took an interest in mechanical progress. If any other subject was mentioned, however, he was ready to show an interest in it. Bowls and machinery did not absorb all his thoughts.

Somebody mentioned a great American electrician, and the manner in which he first devoted himself to his favorite pursuit.

"It appears to me," said Sweepstone, "most men of genius are started on their career by an accident. I wish the accident would come to me."

"Would it not be better to wish for the genius?" Bowman asked.

There was a laugh at that, in which everybody joined except Sweepstone.

"What was it that started you?" he asked Reedyman, as if to divert attention from the point which Bowman had just made.

"A paper-knife," was the reply.

I knew in a moment that my time had come, and no other subject would be required during dinner.

"Jackson, there, has the most wonderful paper-knife in the world," said Bowman. "Stolen property; that is the worst of it."

"The price of blood, you mean," interrupted Sweepstone, recovering his spirits at once.

"Let us hear about Reedyman's paper-knife," exclaimed Fortiscue, a very sensible fellow, who, I dare say, was tired of the silly remarks which Bowman and Sweepstone were always making.

"I will tell you after dinner," was Reedyman's answer. "I never care to tell a long story when men are eating."

"Have you patented that method?" Bowman asked.

"Not yet," said Reedyman. "Perhaps I shall do so, and then other people will want to adopt it. Nothing is desired until it is forbidden."

He would never have told us that story if he had not been reminded of his promise.

"You must tell us what laid the foundation of your fortune," Sweepstone said. "We want to know all we can about paper-knives."

This is Reedyman's story:

"When the great exhibition was held, in 1862, I was near the end of my apprenticeship. I am a manufacturing silversmith by trade, as perhaps you know. My master, Metalmould, of Sheffield, had a case of exhibits, and among them were several very fine daggers, the blades being etched and inlaid with gold. My share of the work was the handles: each of them had a secret recess, which could be opened by means of a spring. The lid was so contrived among the work that a person unacquainted with the fact would never have suspected that the handle was not solid.

"Metalmould's name and address were on the case, so that anybody could tell where the articles were made. One day a gentleman came to our place in Sheffield and referred to the dagger-handles which he had seen in London. He gave no name and we never knew who he was. He said he wanted a handle made which should have in it a recess capable of holding a bit of wood which he brought with him. It was about the size of a hazel-nut. Metalmould said that would be an easy task.

"The gentleman wanted to know the cost, and Metalmould told him. The money was paid down. Then the gentleman said: 'If the opening is so cleverly contrived that I may have the handle a week and not be able to discover how it is fastened, and yet a person who knows the secret can open it in a quarter of a minute without the use of tools, I will pay you £100 in addition to what I have paid already.' Metalmould sent for me and asked me what I thought about it. 'I will try my best,' I said.

"The time was fixed for the handle to be finished. The gentleman came punctually to the day, and the work was ready. I told him his piece of wood was inside. He returned in a week and confessed that he could not open the recess. Then he gave me the handle and took out his watch. 'Fifteen seconds,' he said. In ten seconds the lid was open and the bit of wood was on the table in Metalmould's private room, where the interview took place.

"I explained the secret to him and he was satisfied. He paid the £100, and Metamould gave me fifty. With that money I was able to purchase materials necessary for certain experiments which I wanted to work, and from that day to this I have gone on, step by step, sometimes failing, it is true, and sometimes succeeding."

"But what about the paper knife?" Bowman asked. "You have left Hamlet out of the play."

"Oh, I forgot that part," said Reedyman. "The gentleman brought with him a splendid agate blade, and he asked to have it fastened in the handle for a paper knife."

Bowman and Sweepstone pointed to me.

"What now?" Reedyman inquired.

"Jackson owns the very knife," replied Bowman. "We say he stole it."

"Murdered somebody for it, you mean," Sweepstone interrupted.

My friends told me afterward that I looked as if the charges were true. I dare say I did, for many strange thoughts were surging through my brain.

"Was there a motto on the blade?" I asked.

"Perhaps there was," said Reedyman, "but I have no recollection of it."

"Do you remember the pattern of the handle?"

"Yes, I remember that well enough. It was what we called the dolphin and child."

"Guilty! Certainly guilty!" Bowman repeated several times.

"Bring a black cap," Sweepstone exclaimed.

My rooms were not far away, and without any apology I hastened there and brought back with me the paper-knife.

As soon as Reedyman saw it he said:

"Well, this is wonderful. I never expected to see that again. It is certainly the very paper-knife. Can you open the handle?"

I told him I was not aware that it could be opened.

At the end of the handle there was a small protuberance which appeared to be part of a shell.

"Put the handle between two fingers of the right hand," said Reedyman, "place your thumb against that small knob, then press with your thumb. Now you find the shell will turn round."

As he explained the process we all watched him eagerly.

"You turn the shell round," he continued, "until that double line meets a double line on the handle."

He did what he described.

"Now," he said, "you notice that on each side of the handle are a dolphin and child. On one side the child has its eyes open, on the other side they are closed. The lid is where the eyes are open. Put your thumb on that child's-head and your first finger on the other. Now press. The heads were firm before I moved that shell, but they give way a little now. While you are pressing, turn back the shell to its original position. And now look."

He raised his thumb, and the oval medallion which contained the dolphin and child sprang open.

"What now?" he exclaimed.

Inside the small recess which he had exposed was the Featherstone diamond.

I need not tell how glad I was to communicate with Woodrough, which I did that very night. Bowman insisted on sending a messenger in a cab with a note from me.

All I said in the note was: "Come at once. Important discovery. — EDMUND JACKSON."

Woodrough was spending a quiet evening in his uncomfortable lodgings, and he returned with the messenger, wondering what the summons meant. The first thing he saw on entering the room was the Featherstone diamond.

"Thank God for that!" he said. Then he mentioned the name of Ada and fainted away.

We soon brought him round again, and I must say the two men who showed themselves the most demonstrative in their congratulations were Bowman and Sweepstone. Bowman had the effrontery to declare that he had heard something about the case, and never believed for a moment that Woodrough was guilty.

The diamond was speedily returned to its right owner, and I am glad to say the executors of Rumford Featherstone's will paid to Woodrough, at Mrs. Brayshaw's request, the thousand pounds which her brother had mentioned in the draft codicil to his will.

Woodrough is married now, and the last time I saw him he told me he had found a position to his liking in the office of Messrs. Golgonda & Kimberley, the dealers in precious stones.

The paper-knife is still in my possession, and in the secret recess I have a piece of crystal which Woodrough gave me. It is an exact copy of the Fatherstone diamond.

—Thomas Keyworth, in Gentleman's Magazine.

Written for the Sunday Journal.

In the Sea.

FROM THE SPANISH.

"Ay! triste el que fia
Del viento y del mar!"

One morn—It seems so long ago,
I scarce can tell if it were I,
Or but some legend tale of woe
That wakes my faint, regretful sigh—
One morn, when all the east was pale
With expectation of the day,
And at yon gray sea's edge the veil
Of mist and cloud was drawn away,

I walked upon the shelving beach,
My star-bright jewel on my breast,
And found a boat, half in the reach
Of languid waves outstretched in rest:
I pushed it off. The long, slow swell
Was calm as dreamer's breath might be;
I saw the full moon's silver shell
Pour down its beams upon the sea.

Then came a wind, and upward blew
A great, clear joy of amber light
That filled the sky, and aye the hue
Within my jewel grew more bright;
I saw the morning's freshness there,
The evening's sheen, the midnight dew,
The gleam of stars, the high noon's glare,
The flush of spring, the sky's clear blue.

The wind sped on, the bright sea danced,
Its million gems did glow and shine,
The dimmest one that on it glanced,
It seemed, was brighter far than mine;
The curling waves sang at my side,
A song as sweet as sweet might be,
I stooped me to the smiling tide,
I gave my jewel to the sea.

It came no more. These heights are mine,
Pale, shimmering peaks of moonlit calm,
And lower hills where shadows twine,
And grooved leaves drip their stored balm;
But never here is radiant dawn,
Or any glow of setting day;
Only the white moon shining on,
With clear, unpitying face alway.

I have forgot the lower air;
The great, bright stars are pure and clear,
The changeless dome beyond is fair,
Nor care nor sorrow vex me here:
But sometimes when a vapor curled
Brings up a faint unrest to me,
I bend my face down toward the world,
And hear the chiming of the sea.

—Minnetta Taylor.

Sonnet.

TO J. W. R.

On his contemplated visit to England.

Since you and I each unto each confessed
Faint hope that fame might favor and with toil combine
To bear our names beyond the county line,
You've conquered half the world, deserved the rest,
And now to England hasten, love-possessed,
To bow your Western manhood at the shrine
Of Avon's bard, or where the gracious Nine
On Albion's Laureate their endowments pressed,
Feel, in that air, how genius, art combine
To weld in love our Anglo-Saxon line:
Or in sweet Scotia, by enchanted Ayr,
Walk arm in arm with Burns's ghost and blend
Your kindred soul with his, as friend with friend,
So may God prosper you and keep you in His care!

—Ben S. Parker.

NEW CASTLE, April 9.

In Maple-Sugar Time.

Out in the woods where the maples grow,
There's a musical drip that the children know,
A spink, spank, spink,
A silvery tink
As the waters down from the great trees flow.

Sweet are the waters that trickle down
Through the great trees, afar from the town,
With their spink, spank, spink,
Till the trough looks pink
As it peers through the sap from its coating brown.

A rough-hewn trough is the trough for me
And its home-made "spile" in the maple tree,
For the spink, spank, spink,
Is a silvery tink
That dwells like a song in the memory.

The dead leaves rustling beneath the feet
Once gathered from sun and from rain the sweet,
And the spink, spank, spink,
Of the famous drink
Is the song when the spring and the winter meet.

Out in the woods where the maples grow
There's a musical drip that the children know,
And the spink, spank, spink,
Is a silvery tink
That will summon the violets from below.

—Osman O. Hooper, in the Columbus Dispatch.

In the Rain.

Fall swiftly, rain, down on the sullen earth;
I love this darkness and it brings me cheer,
For I mind me, ah! I mind me
Of a rainy day last year.
Last year! I know not; may be longer still,
I often think the months are each a year.
But I know that day was rainy,
And it brought me charm and cheer.

All the town was dull, and gray, and gloomy;
Ah me, thought I, how dreary is the street!
Love came walking through the rain-fall;
Strange that Love and I should meet!
All the raindops sparkled into jewels,
Love smiled sunshine on the weary way,
So my heart is always happy,
Always on a rainy day.

—Boston Transcript.

Perhaps.

When he returns and finds all sleeping here—
Some old, some young, some fair, and some not fair—
Will He stoop down and whisper in each ear
"Awake!" or for dear pity's sake forbear—
Saying, "How shall I meet their frozen stare
Of wonder, and their eyes so woebegone?
How shall I comfort them in their despair,
If they cry out, 'Too late! let us sleep on!'"

Perhaps He will not wake us up, but when
He sees us look so happy in our rest,
Will murmur, "Poor dead women and dead men!
Dire was their doom and weary was their quest;
Wherefore awake them into life again?
Let them sleep on untroubled—it is best."

—Robert Buchanan.

Wild Violets.

They smell of the rain, the sun and breeze;
Of the long, cool shadows of cedar trees;
Of the brook that sings down its mossy ledge;
Of the bending ferns and the rustling sedge;
Of velvet mosses that keep the dew;
And of sweet dead leaves that sweet last year knew.

They smell of the chill pure breath of dawn;
Of wind-swept hillside and sun-swept lawn;
Of rose-briar hedge and of winding lane;
And—of dreams that will never come back again,
These wild, pale violets, faint and sweet,
That we buy in the crowded city street.

—Madeline S. Bridges, in Puck.

On the Tables of the Rich.

New York Evening Post.

China-lined tea-cups of solid silver are used by fashionable people at 5-o'clocks, and another unique combination elected for is that of a choice porcelain cup resting in a silver saucer. Very original nut-bowls represent in silver filigree the half of an English walnut. Claret-jugs and loving-cups display artistic examples of silver-deposit ornamentation. Double sugar-basins, united by intertwined handles in the center, are designed for lump and powdered sugar. Orange-spoons and knives are severely plain or richly ornamented to suit the buyer's taste, and sugar-dredgers sent in with the fruit are in the forms of cornucopias, richly chased, and with plain solid silver handles.

A New Version.

Springfield Republican.

"You know, Dorothy, these biscuits of yours—" he began, as he reached across the breakfast-table and helped himself to the seventh.

"Yes?" said his wife, with a weary, feeble smile.

"Ah, they're nothing like mother's."

"No?" And the smile was gone.

"No. Not a bit. You see, mother's were heavy and gave me dyspepsia, while yours are light as a feather, and I can eat about—why, what's the matter, Dorothy?"

But she answered him not. She had fainted.

READING FOR SUNDAY.

Written for the Sunday Journal.

The Watchman at the Gate.

A Watchman at the gate is he.
That is why he stands as quietly
As image graved in stone.
But not grim or cold; for o'er his face
At times, a strange sweet smile of grace,
Like golden sunshine shone.

Behold! he points with his right hand,
To the Gateway of the Promised Land
Where all may enter in,
Who accept the promises so true;
And change their old hearts into new,
That are free from every sin.

Tired pilgrims toiling up the hill,
Having crossed the river deep and still,
Find here the sweetest rest.
A rest that He alone can give
Who said, "Believe in me and live
And be forever blest."

For plainly through "the gates ajar,"
Are heard sweet voices from afar,
Proclaiming "Christ the King;"
While on the streets all paved with gold,
The happy steps of young and old
Make heavenly echoes ring.

We'll meet, dear Watchman, at the gate;
It may be soon, it may be late,
When we are called to go.
Oh! greet us with thy cheering smile,
And let us stop and rest awhile;
On our way the Lord to know.

—Adeah Harris.

International Sunday-School Lesson for April 19, 1891.

JONAH SENT TO NINEVEH. (Jonah i, 1-17.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—Preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. (Jonah iii, 2.)

HOME READINGS.

Mon.	—Jonah sent to Nineveh	Jonah i, 1-17.
Tu.	—Jonah's prayer	Jonah ii, 1-10.
W.	—Prophecy against Nineveh	Nahum i, 1-10.
Th.	—The stormy sea	Psa. cvii, 23-30.
Fri.	—The watchman	Ezek. xxxiii, 1-11.
Sat.	—The disobedient prophet	I Kings xiii, 11-21.
Sun.	—The all-seeing God	Psa. cxxxix, 1-12.

WHAT THE LESSON TEACHES.

The Independent.

The first great lesson we learn from this story is the missionary one, that God wants the heathen saved, and sends us to save them. That was a strange lesson for the Jews of that day. Then the Jew was God's chosen people, and the heathen were reprobates. The law of Moses contains not one command to try to convert other people. We have, in the last part of Isaiah's prophecy, an anticipation of the nations, the heathen, coming into the fullness of God's glory, and here again a wonderful expression of God's love even for the cruel, bloodthirsty enemies of the Jews. But the time was too early for the lesson to be learned. Even Peter found it hard to learn it when he had the vision of the sheet let down from heaven. Only Paul seemed first to catch it fully when he exclaimed: "I go unto the gentiles."

We have here an example of the narrowness and bigotry of good men. Jonah was a good man, a prophet; but he did not want Nineveh saved. He would much rather have it destroyed. He is an illustration how selfish mere patriotism is, when it forgets the wants of other nations.

If all whom God calls to go on some mission for Him, and who refuse, were punished as Jonah was, it would feed all the sharks in the ocean.

It was very loving of God that he did not let Jonah run away from Him. It was a hard trial he went through, but how much harder if he had escaped from the presence of Jehovah, and lived in Tarshish, and worshiped the gods of the Phœnicians. We may be very thankful for the trials that bring us back when we wander away from God.

Jonah does not seem to have felt very badly about his sin. He was asleep through the storm. A wicked man may be very stupid and insensible about his sins. Compare the guilty, runaway Jonah and the innocent Jesus, both asleep in the ship in a storm.

Those poor idolaters did the best they could. They prayed to all the gods they knew of. They threw the cargo overboard and they rowed hard, and they tried to save Jonah. There is good stuff in the heathen and we must not despise them. God loves them.

A storm is a good time to pray in, but fair weather is better.

We are not told that Jonah did any praying just then. He had sinned, and he knew that his only course was to take the consequence. There is a good deal of grace in accepting, without murmuring, the fruits of one's own misdoing.

The repentant prophet was saved. Had he not repented he would have been drowned. God has infinite ways to protect and help His children.

Jonah is the Old Testament Peter. Both sinned; both repented. Both were passionate, unreasonable; but both had noble natures, and both are helpful examples for us, all the more so because they had so much human nature.

Of General Interest.

The total issues of the American Bible Society for the year ending March 31 were 1,502,624 volumes. This does not include publications in foreign lands.

Dr. Talmage's new tabernacle in Brooklyn is rapidly approaching completion, and will soon be ready for dedication. It will hold twice as many persons as the old tabernacle.

The Salvation Army, which has flourished in Berlin only a short time, has already drawn members of the nobility to its ranks. The Baroness von Lilienkranz is now an officer in the army.

According to the American Baptist Year Book for 1891, the Regular Baptists have in the United States 1,382 associations, 34,780 churches with a membership of 3,164,227, an increase for the year of upward of 94,000 members.

A great interest is felt in Massachusetts in the question who is to be the new bishop of the Episcopal diocese. The choice, it is said, will lie between three men—Dr. Phillips Brooks, Dr. W. R. Huntington, of New York, and Bishop Talbot, of Wyoming. The election will take place the last of the month.

The entire clergy of Dalmatia have petitioned the Pope to permit all the Slavonic priests of the Balkans to celebrate mass in their native language. The petition sets forth that the Slavonic people, on account of their antipathy to the mass in the Latin language, go over to the Greek orthodox churches.

Thoughts for the Day.

If you would lift me up you must be on higher ground.—Emerson.

Efforts, to be permanently useful, must be uniformly joyous.—Carlyle.

Every soul should have its own holy of holies. The truths of Christ are worth keeping, and the way to keep them is to ponder them.—Henry.

God gives us always strength enough and sense enough for what He wants us to do; if we either tire ourselves or puzzle ourselves it is our own fault. And we may always be sure, whatever we are doing, that we cannot be pleasing Him if we are not happy ourselves.—Ruskin.

There are men and women in the world who never know what it is to have a hearty, generous, spontaneous burst of sentiment, hospitality, philanthrophy, enthusiasm. They spread out their lives thin, and never really have enough of anything at a time to know the taste of it.—Ram's Horn.

True, we shall pass through the river which is named Death; but it is a misnomer; like the Jordan, when Israel passed into Canaan, the Lord hath rebuked it, and it is dried up. We shall pass through the valley of the shadow of death, and that is all; and thus we shall reach a higher stage of being, in which we shall be "forever with the Lord."—Spurgeon.

The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration.
—Wordsworth.

O never is the path we tread
So drear, but if we upward gaze,
The favoring smile of heaven will shed
Some solace for our darkest days.
—Beech.

Man's rich with little were his judgment true;
Nature is frugal, and her wants are few;
These few wants, answered, bring sincere delights;
But fools create themselves new appetites.
—Young.

Almost a Monopoly.

The Independent.

The average number of American patents issued yearly is about twenty thousand. Compared with the number issued in any other county this is very large. England, which comes nearest to us, issues only about four to five thousand a year, and its system is very much more lax than ours. Patents are issued without any conditions as to novelty or merits, and not two applications in a hundred are rejected. In Prussia the number granted annually is less than a hundred; in Belgium 1,500 to 2,000. The American inventive genius has become, it would seem, almost a monopoly.

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

There is living in Centerville, Ky., a blacksmith who has just learned his correct name, though he is over fifty years old.

In its half century of business not a single passenger of the millions who have crossed the Atlantic in the Cunarders has been lost.

Clay county, Missouri, will be represented at the world's fair by a span of mules eighteen hands high and which weigh 3,800 pounds.

A twelve-year-old boy carries the mail from Tucson to La Paz, Ariz. The distance is seventy-five miles, and the trail is through one of the wildest portions of the Territory.

About the only farm work that cannot now be successfully done by machinery is husking corn. It is still done about the same old way.

A man was recently fitted out with two glass eyes, a complete set of false upper and lower teeth and an artificial nose in a New York hospital.

The prisoners in the Calloway county, Kentucky, jail have petitioned the pastor of the local Methodist church to come and preach to them.

A spinster, who died in Westminster, England, two weeks ago, aged sixty years, had been in the habit for some years of using half a pound of tea a day.

A two-year-old girl who died at Mascoutah, Ill., weighed twelve pounds, exactly what she weighed when born. She never got an ounce heavier during her short life.

An ingenious Frenchman has discovered a process of recovering the tin contained in the wash waters of silk. In Lyons alone the application of the discovery will effect an annual economy of $60,000.

The largest deposit of sulphur on this continent is said to have been discovered in the Cocopah mountains, seventy-five miles southwest of Yuma. It is 1,100 feet long, 60 feet wide and 40 feet through.

In the United States annually about 2,500 persons are tried for murder, with an average of about one hundred legal executions. In five of the States imprisonment for life has been established for the death penalty.

A rope company in St. Louis recently made what is claimed to be the largest shipment of cable ever carried by one car. Two reels of wire, weighing 140,000 pounds, were shipped on a special four-truck platform car.

In prehistoric times the Ohio valley was a great inland sea extending from the site of Pittsburg to the Indiana line. The hump of Allegheny and the hills separating the East End from Pittsburg proper were probably islands.

A resident of Toccoa, Ga., owns a mule forty-five years of age. The mule is white, about half the size of ordinary mules, and sports the name of Jesse. He is as sprightly as a spring chicken, can unlatch a gate, lay down a fence and dismount the best of riders.

The first water mill ever built was erected on the River Tiber, at Rome, A. D. 50. Windmills were in original use in the twelfth century. Tide-mills were operated in Venice about 1798. Saw-mills are said to have been in use at Augsberg, Germany, about 1332.

One is never too old to give up a bad habit. A lady in Islesboro, Me., eighty-eight years old, who had used tobacco all her life, has discarded the weed last winter. She hasn't given up work, though, as she makes it a rule to knit a dip-net every day besides doing her other work.

A dog belonging to a resident of Cordell, Ga., got his head wedged in a hollow tree one day while chasing a rabbit and, failing to release himself, remained in that position for eleven days without food or drink, when the master found him and got him out. He was alive, but it is not known what became of the rabbit.

It appears that the grip is not entirely new in Japan, for there is a full description of its ravages between 1778-1780 by a native writer named Bakin. It was called the okoma kose, tenkow koze, satsuma koze and tanke koze, the last being the more popular, being derived from Tanika, a famous wrestler whose boast it was that only illness could floor him, and who died from the koze.

It is claimed that at a home in Albany, Ga., two inseparable companions are a large buff Cochin hen and a half-grown house cat. Where one goes the other goes, and they even roost together at night. The cat, when a kitten, was all that was left of a family, and it was such a pitiable little creature that the hen took charge of it and raised it. The display of affection between the two is something remarkable.

At least one person in three between the ages of ten and forty years is subject to partial deafness. The great majority of cases of deafness are hereditary and due to the too close consanguinity of the parents. Deafness is more prevalent among men than among women, because the former are more exposed to the vicissitudes of climate. It is thought that telephones tend to bring on deafness when one ear is used to the exclusion of the other.

SPRING FASHIONS.

The mutton-leg is still the popular style of sleeve for toilets and costumes of every description.

Short hair, which is extremely fashionable, is full at the ears, and reminds one of a King Charles spaniel in its frowsy effect.

The wash silks and outing flannels, which come up bright and glowing from the laundry, are in greater demand than ever for the making of morning dresses, yachting and mountain suits, tennis and beach costumes, pretty negligee gowns and fancy shirt waists.

Black mousseline de l'Inde is affected by dressy matrons, who delight in the gay little tones so lavishly displayed upon the somber backgrounds. Bunches of pansies, single violets, tiny sprigs of green, sprays of lilacs, roses big and roses little fall in graceful profusion over this pretty material.

Some large cross-barred materials are made up with the bias skirts gathered in the back and plaited in front, with a round bodice opening over a box-plaited vest of black surah, like the rolling-collar and pointed belt. The black accessories are feather-stitched with silk to match one of the colors in the plaid. The bodice buttons in the back.

In selecting decorations for challies, ginghams, sateens and summer silks remember that ribbons and velvets which cannot be found to accord should be given the go-by in favor of lace. This is always a charming garniture, and it promises this season to outrival every other trimming designed for the warm weather toilet. Jabots of the airiest silk lace fall over the side panel, peep out from odd corners of the bodice and stand in big pouse above the shoulders and about the wrist.

Many of the expensive and dressy French round hats for next season in Milan, Leghorn chip, and lace-patterned Neapolitan braid will have the crown portion taken out altogether, and in its place will be a soft crown of shirred or frilled silk, rich lace, or point d'esprit net, silk-dotted tulle, flowered velvet, or silk etamine. The crowns thus removed are used for French toques, with a double edge of rolled velvet as a finish and a cluster of velvet and flowers, set up in the fashionable fore-and-aft style.

Light wools and soft silks are employed for present-use blouses and shirt-waists, and among the very useful garments are hemstitched black surah blouses, made with bishop sleeves and jet-embroidered collars and cuffs. Blouse waists, with belts all around, and bodices, with blouse fronts and girdles, are favorite waists on imported dresses of light textiles, such as crepaline lace, veiling challi, India silk, and the soft, transparent, old-fashioned lawns and muslins that are revived by leading French modistes.

The combination of velvet with all species of fabric will continue to be a feature of spring and summer costumes and evening toilets. Chestnut velvet sleeves appear upon very many of the beautifully-braided gowns of ecru, fawn or pale almond wool, and very closely fitted cuirass corsages of moss, gray, black, dove or claret velvet are made extra long, and a drapery of Henrietta cloth, camel's hair or India cashmere is arranged over the lower portion of the velvet cuirass, covering all its lower edges. Folds of the wool material are closely massed and hooked to the back of the bodice.