

The RUBY RING

An Parker turned out the water from the old-fashioned bucket into the pail a small object sank to the bottom and was concealed by a quantity of mud. Taking the dipper which hung on the wall, Parker dipped down into the water—it was too precious to turn out—and it was only a moment before he held in his hand a gold ring.

It was tarnished, to be sure, but it was strangely familiar. For an instant he doubted his own eyes, but after he had looked at the setting, which held a peculiarly shaped ruby and several tiny pearls, and glanced at the inscription inside, he knew without a doubt that it was the ring he had given to Ruth Lorton three years ago.

She had lost it while away on her vacation which she had spent at this same farmhouse—this was the reason why Parker had decided to come here. Early one morning, Ruth had gone down stairs, and when she returned to her room only a few moments later the ring, which had been lying on her bureau was not to be found anywhere.

When she had told Parker this story he had unconsciously shown a little doubt in his manner. Ruth had resented this and a quarrel had arisen which had resulted in their engagement being broken.

"You said you were going fishing with me today," piped a boy's voice as Parker prepared to make himself comfortable on the shady side of the piazza. A boy about ten years old was looping up the steps. His shock of tow-colored hair and the numerous freckles which often go with it were topped by a wide-brimmed straw hat.

"Well, Bob, I don't believe we'll go this morning. It's most too late now. We'll start early some other morning. What do you say?"

"All right," Bob assented, but he looked a little disappointed. "We're going to have another boarder next week," he said rather unexpectedly, after a short pause.

"Who's a dandy," went on the boy. "His good, too—Miss Lorton is—"

Parker stared at him. "Miss Lorton," he repeated. "What day is she coming?" he asked, turning the ring over and over in his hand.

"Monday," answered Bob, "she—"

But he did not finish his sentence. He turned suddenly and almost ran into the house.

Parker could hardly wait for Monday to come. He was sitting on the piazza when she came. She paled slightly at the first sight of him, but returned his bow coolly as she passed into the house.

For three days Parker found it impossible to speak to Ruth alone. He was confident that if he could have a talk with her and show her the ruby ring everything would be as it had been three years ago. His thoughts were interrupted by the appearance of Bob.

"I—I want—" stammered the boy, standing first on one leg and then the other. He evidently had something on his mind which he wanted to tell Parker, but did not know how to begin.

"What is it Bob?" asked Parker, with an encouraging smile.

"You've given me a knife and a fishing pole, and I don't know what and I'm going to tell you something."

"All right," said Parker kindly. "You know that ring you got out of the well? That's my mother's and—"

"Yes, yes," broke in Parker. "You hold it in your hand as though you thought a lot of it—I wanted to tell you that, but I couldn't. And when she comes I see you two wasn't good friends, and so I'm going to tell you about it. I throwed—it into the well."

"You threw it into the well," repeated Parker, astounded. "What for?"

"I'm going to tell you the truth. I took the ring of Miss Lorton's bureau, 'cause 'twas awful shining and pretty—I was only a kid then. When I see everybody huntin' for it I got scared and throwed it in the well. I've been awful sorry I done it."

Bob's eyes were fixed on the floor of the piazza, and Parker was confident that he was very near tears.

"Bob, you've made a lot of trouble," he said after a while. "But you're a brick to tell now. If you'll go to Miss Lorton and tell her, maybe she'll be all right."

"It isn't necessary," said a voice rising behind them. Looking up, Parker saw Ruth smiling with the old delight in her eyes. Bob went away with a little child then, and Ruth said only a little child then, and Ruth said only a little child then.

"No, indeed we mustn't," returned Parker fervently. "Bob's all right." After a moment he added, "Will you forgive me, Ruth, for acting as though I doubted you?"

"There's nothing to forgive me—"

LEATHER FROM SEA ANIMALS.

Marine Creatures Whose Hides Are Tanned for a Variety of Purposes.

"It makes a leather, the hide of the porpoise," said a leather manufacturer, "soft, pliable and waterproof, and it retains these excellent qualities through long wear. It is rather a costly leather, worth, say, twice as much as calfskin."

Porpoise leather is used for making shoes and shoe laces. It is used more in England than in this country. Here we run more to lighter weight shoes and wear rubbers when it rains.

In England, with a moister climate, and need for more constant protection of the feet, they wear fewer rubbers and habitually more heavy and waterproof shoes. Incidentally I suppose if we should stand anywhere in the world where numbers of men pass and wear rubbers at their feet we could pick out the Englishmen among them by their shoes.

Sharkskin is tanned into a leather that has various uses, mostly for more or less ornamental purposes, as for bags and purses. The skin of the shark is naturally rough surfaced, and fishermen dry it and prepare it and use it for sandpaper.

Leather made from the hide of the seal is used to a considerable extent for bags and belts and purses and card cases and so on, including shoes.

The alligator, to be sure, is an amphibious animal, not strictly aquatic, but it is aquatic enough to be included among aquatic animals whose skins furnish material for leather. The uses of alligator leather are familiar.

And then we have the walrus, from whose hide a valuable leather is made, that is used chiefly by manufacturing jewelers, cut into disks to serve as wheels for polishing jewelry.

So you see we draw supplies of leather for various purposes not only from the hides of many land animals, but also from those of quite a number of the creatures of the sea.

Making War Horses Invisible. A special military commission is now sitting in Berlin considering the best means of making cavalry as invisible as possible in warfare.

Harmonizing the men's uniforms with natural conditions as much as possible is not enough, and the commission is now discussing the advisability of dyeing the horses or screening them with light canvas trappings.

At the War Office yesterday it was said that several experiments had been made in this direction during the war in South Africa.

One official said: "My horses were dyed, but it was found that the dye soon washed off all except gray horses. Several vegetable dyes and Condyl's Fluid diluted were used, but the experiments proved of little value."

"Canvas trappings made the horses perspire and impeded their movements, and besides, when the sun is behind the cavalry, the horses' legs can be seen through the canvas."

The best screen for cavalry used in South Africa was a combination of various leather-like shrubs picked up on the veldt. These plants were in many cases strung upward and downward from the trappings, and gave the appearance, when cavalry were moving slowly across the sky line, of waving vegetation.

An African Forest.

An explorer describes a Central Africa forest: "Ten miles west of the lake begins the only piece of real virgin forest met with. It is throughout a dense virgin forest, and almost impenetrable. It consists of very large trees of many varieties. The upper parts are festooned with a light grayish-green moss, hanging in long streamers, and giving to the forest a very fantastic appearance. When these long streamers are agitated by a storm they make the whole forest, seen from one of the hills near, look like a rough sea. Again, when the sun is vertical the whole forest appears dark, but when the sun is low the general effect on the sunny side is curiously light."

"All the trees are bound together with innumerable lianas and creeping plants. Between the stems is a dense tangled mass of lesser vegetation. The forest stands to a great extent in the water and mud of the swamp. A singular feature of it is the abruptness with which it begins and ceases on the plain. The grassy swamp or open country reaches in the mighty wall of trees, which continue in the same density from one side to the other. There is no smaller wood or scrub outside, forming a transition from the open plain of the forest."

"Inside, the silence and bloom are accentuated by the apparent absence of animal or bird life. There are some herds of buffaloes that make it occasionally, monkeys and porcupines are sometimes seen, and a harnessed antelope now and then appears at the edge; but the general impression left is one of lifelessness."

Indignant Talent. A lecturer who has always flattered himself that he was in the front rank of public speakers felt a trifle indignant over his introduction to a Westminster audience, by the chairman of the committee having charge of the town lecture course. It was the opening night of the course and the chairman said:

"Ladies and gentlemen: This is, as you know, the opening night of our town lecture course. I think that most of you know also that our lecture course last winter was not a financial success and we ran behind nearly one hundred dollars. To avoid a recurrence of this we have this year engaged cheaper talent, the first of which will now address you."—Puck.

Miss Bellum's Assistant

Miss Bellum, public stenographer for the Hyperbolic building, would have lost her well earned reputation for assiduousness if her latest investment had been made known. It was an assistant. That in itself, I grant you, is not extraordinary, but this assistant did not really assist, and that does look queer, you see.

It came about that Miss Bellum's sudden discovery that she had more work than she could attend to, and from the advertisement which she promptly inserted in a morning paper. The result of this ad—one of many results, of course, but the one which concerns us—was little Miss Marjory Holt. Now, Miss Bellum desired a discreet combination of industry and sedateness; she did not approve of flirtation even in a business office. By this you will see that Miss Bellum was no longer young; she was indeed, on the shady side of thirty-three, and plump and majestic-looking besides. But still her heart was tender, and when Marjory appeared, a slender wisp of a girl with a crop of chestnut curls and an air of general starvation, she engaged her on the spot and agreed to pay her the magnificent sum of \$6 a week.

This performance was the more erratic that Marjory, who had picked up typewriting while copying her father's sermons at home in the parsonage, boasted that she sometimes could do several lines without a mistake. She knew nothing whatever of shorthand, and at the ridiculous age of 19 could not be expected to even appear sedate.

Based on \$6 a week it is possible to find enough to eat, and Marjory improved both in looks and ability. It was not until spring, however, that Miss Bellum heard her protegee's story. It was late one afternoon, when the work on hand had been finished, and in Miss Bellum's office, that was an event worthy of celebration. Of course, there was a very nice young man in the story, who was not only very nice, but also quite rich, and he had wanted to marry little Marjory Holt.

"Though I never could understand," said Marjory solemnly, "why he should want to for I am quite quite ordinary."

"What was the matter didn't you like him?" inquired Miss Bellum briskly.

"Oh, yes, very much. It was only that I was dreadfully tired of being taken care of. I wanted a chance to look out for myself. And to marry means to be taken care of always, you know." Miss Bellum nodded with an odd mixture of wastefulness and defiance, to the outsider marriage often means just that.

"The time will come when you would give the world for that one thing, child," she predicted grimly. "I know—it is lonely in the city sometimes," Marjory admitted. "Just evenings," she explained quickly. "Of course, only in the evenings."

And Sundays, when it rains," added Marjory honestly.

"How about Christmas?" asked Miss Bellum. The girl shivered, the memory was still fresh of that Christmas evening spent in the hall bedroom of a South End lodging house. It was only the poor cheer of a red tin paper bell hung in the window, or on \$6 a week one does not buy into it if one is wise. Marjory returned to her story quickly.

"Well, Rudolph said he would take good care of me, and I wanted—oh, so much to take care of myself, for never had. So I took a year to make up my mind, and he persuaded me to let me come up to the city."

"Have you seen him lately?" The girl shook her head.

"Not since then. I think he must have forgotten; or perhaps—her breath caught—"he may have stopped carning." Miss Bellum's heart must have been hard after all, for she was actually pleased to observe that the girl's chin quivered slightly.

"Now, I'm sure it will come out all right," she observed cheerfully, and gave a better prophet than she now, for hard upon her words there came a knock upon the door and a young man entered—a young man who looked as though he might be very nice indeed, and also quite rich.

"Is Miss Holt—?" he began. Marjory turned.

"Ri oloph!" she breathed.

"I've got some telephoning to do," said Miss Bellum hurriedly, and stepping into the booth made sure that the double door was latched behind her with a comprehending glance at Miss Bellum's broad back, just visible between the curtains, the young man was at Marjory's side in an instant. He studied her face for a moment before he inquired very gently:

"How is it, little girl—are you ready to come and—take care of me?" Marjory's face lighted.

"Let's take care of each other," she offered in shy amendment. The typewriter table which she interposed soon afterward would not have proved an effectual barrier if Miss Bellum had not, after premonitory clucking of the latch emerged from the booth. She surveyed the two with great satisfaction. No explanation was necessary.

"It looks to me," she remarked generally, "as though I should have to advertise for another assistant!" And for the second time that day her prophecy came true.

Be false to no one; then you will never be faithful to yourself.

Redeeming Mutilated Money.

The United States government will pay for a mutilated bill provided that three-fifths of it are recovered. The method of determining just what part of the note remains is rather interesting. Each mutilated bill is carefully pasted on a backing of paper the size of the complete bill. The expert has a piece of glass the exact size of the bill. This glass is divided into forty squares. When placed over the bill, if the expert can find that the remnants of the bill fill twenty-four of the squares, or three-fifths of them, the bill will be redeemed.

Not long ago a Missouri farmer was leaning over to feed his pigs when he dropped his purse into the pen. When he discovered his loss an hour later he searched the pen and found the purse, but nothing of its contents. The pigs were slaughtered that day and the remains of the money taken to Washington. Three hundred dollars were returned to the farmer.

Burned money is the hardest for the government experts to work on, with the possible exception of money which has been gnawed by mice. The department at Washington once received a cigar box full of money which had been sent from Philadelphia with the necessary affidavit showing that it had been inside a poorly constructed safe and had been burned to the condition in which it was forwarded. Evidently with the idea that the original package ought not to be broken, the sender enclosed the charred pieces with some silver coins which had also been in the badly burned safe. In its passage through the mails the heavy silver was shaken through the charred bills till there was hardly a piece left the size of the head of a pin.

Mrs. Brown, who is at the head of the experts who handle the mutilated money, called two of her best helpers and the three, by the aid of magnifying glasses, soon brought out four fifty dollar bills, and within an hour recommended that they be redeemed by the Treasury.

Only infinite care and patience can bring any result with the mice chewed bills. Each of the pieces is laid out on a hard, smooth surface, and with the assistance of magnifying glasses they can be placed in their proper position in relation to one another. The experts have a copy of every bill which has been issued by the government. These are used as models as soon as enough of the bill has been laid out to establish its issue. The experts say that the best bills were printed by the government during the civil war period. The grade of paper was superior to any other used and the engraving has never been excelled.

Beginnings of Rich Men.

Cornelius Vanderbilt ferried his own boat.

John Jacob Astor sold apples in the streets.

Jay Gould was a book agent.

John D. Rockefeller worked in a machine shop.

A. T. Stewart was a school teacher.

John Wanamaker began life at \$25 a week.

Andrew Carnegie began life at \$150 a week.

Benjamin Franklin was a printer.

Eliza Burrut was a blacksmith.

Abraham Lincoln was a rail-splitter.

James J. Hill began as a roustabout.

William A. Clark as a young man was a mineboy.

Henry Villard was a reporter.

Thomas Edison began as a telegraph operator.

Thomas F. Ryan was clerk in a dry-goods store.

William Lloyd Garrison was a printer's devil.

Daniel Drew began as a cattle-trader.

Henry H. Rogers was a grocer's delivery boy.

Oldest Artificial Leg.

What is said by the "British Medical Journal" to be the oldest artificial leg in existence is now in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. It was found in a tomb at Capua, and is described in the catalogue as follows: "Roman artificial leg; the artificial limb accurately represents the form of the leg; it is made of pieces of plain bronze, fastened by bronze nails to a wooden core. Two iron bars, having holes at their free ends, are attached to the upper extremity of the bronze; a quadrilateral piece of iron, found near the position of the foot, is thought to have given strength to it. There is no trace of the foot and the wooden core had nearly crumbled away. That skeleton had its waist surrounded by a belt of sheet bronze edged with small rivets, probably used to fasten a leather lining. Three painted vases (red figures on a black ground) lay at the feet of the skeleton. The vases belong to a rather advanced period in the decline of art (about three hundred years B. C.)."—Philadelphia Record.

The FIGHT AT ELEPHANT ROCK

By BUFFALO BILL.

This is the story of the battle—now nearly forgotten—at Elephant Rock at the South end of Beaver Valley in the winter of 1863. Major-General Eugene A. Carr was in command, one of the bravest, wisest Indian fighters who ever lived. I am proud that he once spoke of me as his friend and that he trusted me.

A big war party of "dog soldiers" (fanatical renegades collected from a dozen different tribes) were out and were making themselves a danger to the whole district. Their atrocities were at last so great that Carr had orders to go after them and never to let up in his pursuit till they were crushed.

For months we followed them, and caught up with them at last near Elephant Rock. Coming upon their fresh trail there, Carr went into camp, sending an advance force of skirmishers under Lieut. Ward to locate the enemy. I acted as guide to the skirmishers. Ward sent me on a line parallel to his own, and unexpectedly came up with so large a force of Indians that he was almost cut off before Carr with reinforcements could get to his relief. A quick battle sent the Indians scattering.

Next day the chase kept up, the savages making a gallant running fight of this. This sort of thing continued three days. At that time, almost, I was in the saddle. Then came the climax.

The rest of the adventure I am going to quote from Gen. Carr's own official account of the affair. He wrote:

"The Indians had got into four ravines which headed near the trail, two on each side. Babcock dismounted his men and formed them in a circle and stood the Indians off. I sent Lieut. Bradley with the next company to open communications, and the Indians, supposing the whole command was coming, went on as before. Reaching the scene we could see the Indians scattering in retreat."

"A figure with apparently a red cap, rose slowly on the hill. For an instant it puzzled me, as it wore the buckskin and had long hair, but on seeing the horse I recognized that it was Cody's Powder Face, and saw that the rider was 'Buffalo Bill' without his broad-brimmed sash. On closer examination I saw his head was swathed in a bloody handkerchief. His hat had been shot off, the bullet ploughing his scalp badly for about five inches. It had ridged along the bone and was bleeding profusely—a very close call, but a lucky one."

"I took the gallop and ran the Indians for twelve miles and across the Republican River and up the bluffs on the south side, where they scattered in every direction after dropping a good deal of plunder. We could see them on the distant hill, but could not catch them under the circumstances, or without means of some counter strategic cunning, so we went back and camped north of the Republican. The advance guard had been relieved, the Indians severely punished, with a loss on our side of four or five killed and few wounded, and Cody's narrow escape as the result of casualties."

"The object of the campaign was nearly accomplished, but our greatest need was supplies which the hot trail had sidetracked in the excitement of a necessary pursuit of the defiant foe. As the country was infested with Indians and it was fifty miles to the nearest supply point, Fort Kearny, on consultation with Cody, he decided it would be best to undertake the job himself of going for supplies."

"I gave him the best horse in the outfit and when twilight arrived he started after patching up his head a little, to bring relief and meet us at a point northwest about a day's march."

"These were about the most definite directions any scout got in the trackless wastes in those days, and the faithful fulfillment of them showed the peculiar sixth sense or acumen possessed by scouts like Cody."

"Cody, returning, reached us safely, making a successful ride of fifty miles during the night, arriving at Fort Kearny at daylight. He had chased and fought Indians all day, been wounded and superintended the loading of supplies."

"And when through his rare frontier instinct he reached us, he had been almost constantly in the saddle for forty hours. Pretty strenuous work!"

The National Game.

Politics! Great word that! Ever stop to think what it means? No! People talk about baseball being the national game! Taint so. Politics is the great game of America and of the world. Men make a business of it, as well as a pastime. In that respect it's a good deal like baseball. There are professional and amateur players.—Lawton (Mo.) Journal.

Put heart in what you do. Half heart is half done; no heart, not begun.

Don't look at life through smoked glasses. The sunlight will strengthen your eyes and stimulate your spirit.

ARTIFICIAL PUMICE STONE.

Answers Many Purposes Made by Mixing Sand and Clay.

Consul General Guenther of Frankfurt reports a German invention by which artificial pumice stone is produced by a mixture of sand and clay. He writes: "Pumice stone, aside from its use as a cleaning agent, belongs to the most important polishing substances. While emery is used for polishing tools, polishing paper for stone and glass, oxide of iron for fine glassware and lime for metals, pumice stone is employed for polishing softer articles. Pumice-stone as found in nature is, according to its composition, nothing but lava which has received its foam-like porosity through the fact that the volcanic stone substance was cooled very rapidly under strong development of gases. Natural pumice stone, which, for industrial purposes, comes almost exclusively from the island of Lipari, is of little firmness, and for some reason experiments have been made for some time to find an artificial substitute of greater durability. This seems now to have been accomplished through a German invention, under which artificial pumice stone is made by mixing sand and clay. This artificial pumice stone is made in five different kinds. The first is either hard or soft, with a coarse grain, and used for leather, water-proof garments and for the felt and woolen industry. The second can also be supplied hard or soft. It has a medium grain and is mainly used for stucco and sculptural work as also for rubbing wood before painting. The third is soft, of fine grain and is recommended for polishing wood and tin. The fourth is of medium hardness and the grain and gives to wood the right polish before being finished with oil. The fifth is hard and of fine grain and used for polishing stone, especially lithographic stone. The manner of using is the same as for natural pumice stone. For wood it is first used dry, afterward mixed with oil."

Valuable Vestments. The vestments in use at St. Patrick's Cathedral New York, compare very favorably with those in many of the famous cathedrals in Europe, and they are the finest in any cathedral in America. Archbishop Corrigan presented to the cathedral the only complete set of Holy Thursday vestments in the world. They are valued at \$20,000. In the set are thirteen chasubles, ten dalmatics, nine mitres, two copes and lace albs, amices and other vestments to correspond to the Holy Thursday services alone.

These vestments are of the finest white satin, embroidered with gold ninety per cent fine. The principal ornaments are the passion flower, wheat sheaf and grapes, embroidered in silk and gold emblematic of Holy Week. The body of the vestment is worked with sprays of fuchsias. The remainder of the vestments in this set are made of the finest moire antique, embroidered in the finest silk and gold to correspond. This magnificent set of vestments was made by the Dominican Sisters at Hunt's Point. It fifteen nuns an entire year, working eight hours a day.

The chasubles are arched with pearls and rubies. The archiepiscopal sets worn when the Archbishop pontificates, are of the finest red silk velvet. There are eight sets, which cost \$5,000 each. They are embroidered in pure gold.

A famous set of vestments now in the old sacristy was a gift to the late Archbishop Hughes. On these vestments, which are of the finest gold cloth, is worked the Archbishop's coat of arms. They are embroidered with gold and encrusted with jewels. This set comprises vestments for twelve priests besides the Archbishop. Archbishop Corrigan wore these vestments occasionally.

Another set of vestments which has attracted attention from admirers of artistic embroidery was presented to Archbishop Corrigan. They are rose colored and are worn on two days only of the year and are permitted to cathedrals and collegiate institutions only throughout the world. They are embroidered in fine gold and artistic needlework. On the chasuble is the usual cross, and the figures on the cross and designs on the frontispiece are worked in silks of different colors, gold and silver on gold.

Another handsome set is one worn for pontifical requiem masses. It is of black moire antique silk. A set of vestments which was prepared specially for Archbishop Corrigan is used for celebrating the nuptial masses. It is made of white satin, and around the outer edge is worked a vine of forget-me-nots in colors that blend. Around the cross in the back of the chasuble are worked sprays of marguerites in vine shape.

Natural Trenches Inventors. "We get our hints from nature," the inventor said. "Take, for instance, the hollow pillar, which is stronger than the solid one. The wheat straw showed us the superior strength of the hollow pillar. Solid, the wheat straw would be unable to support its head of grain."

"Where did man get his idea for carriage springs? From the hoofs of the horse, which, like the springs derived from them, are made from parallel plates."

"Scissors we get from the jaws of the tortoise, which are natural scissors; officials from the squirrel, who carries them in his mouth; axes from the hippopotamus, whose ivory are axes of the best design; the plane from the bee's jaws; the triphammer from the woodpecker."

Chrysanthemums, it is said, were cultivated in China before the eleventh century.