

A DIAMOND RING

By M. QUAD
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If any one had told my friends that I was possessed of the slightest spark of romance at the age of forty-five the information would have been received as a base canard. A bachelor of that age, who has drifted about with all sorts of people and bumped up against all sorts of adventures, is pretty sure to have had all romance knocked out of him.

On a certain Tuesday I took a train at Elmer Junction for London, and as there were but few passengers I had a compartment to myself. I had been busy with a newspaper for half an hour when I noticed a small package lying under the opposite seat. I found it a plain pasteboard box and was prepared to find a specimen of free chewing gum or a new brand of toques inside. It was something different, however. It was a lady's diamond ring, made up of five stones of the purest water, and on the inside were the initials "B. P." The ring was a double hoop of gold and had probably been made to order. It was lying loosely in the box, and the box had once contained steel pens. I argued that it must have been some careless person who carried a valuable ring in that fashion. I am only a fairly honest man. My first idea was to keep the ring to my own profit, but I remembered that I was known to the railway porter and that the property might be traced to me.

If not strictly honest I am prudent, and I therefore gave up the idea of converting the ring. I would hold it for a reward, however. Half an hour later I felt a curious sensation stealing over me. I began to feel sentimental. I began to connect that dear little ring with a dear little blond-haired, blue-eyed girl. I got up and kicked myself three times and called myself a fool, but the feeling did not go away. To my astonishment and indignation I found it growing stronger, and before I knew it the grip of romance had got me by the neck.

I was a man of leisure, though I had no great amount of money to my credit. I would hunt up the owner of that ring, and if all things went well I would marry her. For a week I watched all the newspapers, but the ring was not advertised. This seemed to prove to me that the owner was either rich and indifferent to her loss or that for some reason the loss had not yet been discovered. Romance made me anxious, and I therefore went to the expense of advertising in five different papers. I simply stated that a diamond ring had been found on a railroad train and asked the loser to correspond.

Inside of three days I received about 150 letters in reply. The 150 writers were fakery and liars, and the true loser had not answered me. I was a bit nettled at this neglect on her part. I advertised again. This time I asked "B. P." to communicate with me in case she had lost anything. There were just 107 "B. P." answers, but among them I selected one which appeared to be genuine. This "B. P." had lost a double hoop diamond ring, containing five stones. It had been a birthday gift from a dead mother. I was asked to call at the chambers of a certain solicitor to have the ring further identified. I was on hand at the appointed hour. So was a stern faced and aggressive looking householder, together with a slick looking villain whom I had once spotted for a detective and a young woman whose hair was red instead of blond. The ring was speedily identified by the stern faced man and red headed girl. "B. P." was Bertha Perkins, and her father and her maid were before me. Perkins was a country squire, and on the night previous to my finding the ring his daughter's jewels had been stolen. The hoop ring was part of the plunder.

Of course I was ready to hand over the ring, but it wasn't to stop there. The red headed maid was sure she recognized me as the man who was hanging about the grounds a few hours before the robbery, and that villain of a detective was only too glad to snap the handcuffs on my wrists and hurry me off to jail.

It took me three days to prove myself respectable and to establish an alibi. They had to give me my liberty, but it was grudgingly done, and the detective said he'd have an eye on me all the rest of my days. The romance had departed when I was locked up, came out of jail determined to secure reparation. Old Perkins had helped the red headed girl to conclude that I was the robber, and I went down to his country seat to receive an object lesson or pull his nose. He not only refused an apology, but threatened to kick me off the grounds, and the red headed girl declared I had a cast in my left eye, and by that cast she would swear me in any court as a man who would not stop at murder. There was one more thing to be cleared up. I wanted to find out about "B. P." herself. Was she the blond haired, blue eyed girl of my dreams and was she worthy of my love? I had not long to wait. I was walking from the country seat to the village when a dogcart knocked me down and rolled me all over the road, and the driver halted to call me a tramp and threaten me with the law. The driver was "B. P." Her hair was bleached, her eyebrows colored and her nose slipped up. She had a big mouth, had black and milky eyes, and when she drove on she whistled like a man.

OUR SUN A VARIABLE STAR

The More Spots It Has Upon It the More Heat We Get.

Accurate investigations carried on at the same time in various parts of the world through a long series of years have demonstrated that the sun does not give out constantly the same amount of heat, but the variation is as great as to amount to 10 degrees on the earth's surface. In other words, our sun is a variable star. It has long been known that other stars vary in the amount of light they send forth, notably Mira in the constellation of Cetus, but it required the most elaborate investigation with the most elaborate checks to prove that this was the case with the sun. One of the instruments is so delicate that it can measure one-millionth part of a degree of heat.

It is found that the amount of heat is connected with the spots on the sun, and, curiously enough, more spots more heat. Thus we have one factor in the changes of terrestrial temperature, at least it is only one. Our seasons are caused by the inclination of the earth's equator to the ecliptic, and the heat is greater in summer when the sun's rays fall most directly on the earth. But as the amount of heat varies and as the radiation, reflection, etc., also vary we have a very complex system of weather.

It is believed by the Smithsonian Institution that eventually we shall be able, through knowledge on the subject, to make much more accurate weather predictions than at present and for a much longer time in advance.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

ROLLING AN UMBRELLA.

This Expert Makes It a Rather Complicated Operation.

Few men can roll up an umbrella nicely. Here is the method I was taught. It is not very pretty, but it is effective. You begin by folding up a sheet of newspaper to form a little pad; otherwise you are apt to spoil your wall paper. Now for the rest.

Hold the umbrella horizontally. Hold the pad of paper against the wall, press the end of the umbrella against the paper and the handle of the umbrella against your own body. This leaves the hands free for the delicate task of rolling up the umbrella. Find the button. Bring the fold with the button on it to your left and let it hang down. Then pull out each fold and pass it over the first. Throw the lot loosely around the umbrella without disturbing the creases of the folds. Grip the tops of the ribs with the right hand. Put your left hand around the other end and wind the umbrella through the left hand with a screwing motion.

Do not let go of the tops of the ribs of the umbrella. When you have to move the hand slide it around. If you let go you will find that the ribs get out of place, and then the folds of the umbrella will follow suit. When the umbrella is rolled up grip it tightly until you have fastened it. If you fail in that detail, you will get an unsightly bulge in the center of the umbrella.—London Globe.

Gloves of Varnish.

Skin varnish completely covering the hands is used by some surgeons in place of rubber gloves during surgical operations. So cleverly is the varnish made that it cannot be washed off with water or any liquid likely to be met in the course of an operation; nor can it be scraped off except by scraping off the skin itself, and yet it is about as pliable as vary thin rubber. The purpose in using it instead of rubber gloves is to preserve the sensitiveness of the touch and make it easier to handle materials such as catgut. The varnish looks like honey. It is rubbed on the hands after they have been washed as thoroughly as possible, and quickly dries. To remove it the hands are washed in another chemical solution.—Saturday Evening Post.

Flint and Tinder.

If tempted to grumble overmuch at the modern match, let us recall the elaborate ritual necessary to procuring a light until about a century ago. By striking a flint with a piece of steel a spark—if you were adept and lucky—was thrown upon a piece of tinder which spark you blew into a flame. Strips of wood dipped in sulphur were held in the flame, and your match was lighted. The tinder, having fulfilled its function, was extinguished by a tin dumper. The match sticks were either homemade or purchased in small bundles from gypsies.—London Express.

Women as Soldiers.

"Henrietta," said Meekton, "I don't think women would ever care to be soldiers."
"Why not?"
"Soldiers' uniforms are so much alike. No soldier can have the slightest curiosity about what another soldier has on."—Exchange.

Tommy's Idea of Encouragement.

Mother—And you say the little girl played the violin, Tommie? Tommie—Yes, mamma.
"And did she get any encouragement?"
"No, mamma; nobody passed around any hat!"—Yonkers Statesman.

Russia's Vast Forests.

Russia has 484,500,000 acres of forest. That is to say, more than one-third of the whole country is covered by trees, and there are four acres of forest to every inhabitant.

Straightforwardness without the aim of promptly becoming reformers.

A LESSON IN GEOGRAPHY.

Do You Know How Far East South America's West Coast Is?

In his book, "The Conquest of the Tropics," Frederick Upham Adams calls attention to some little known geographical facts: Most of us picture Havana as nearly south of New York, when in fact it is about south of Detroit. A study of a map of the new world discloses the disconcerting fact that all of the west coast of South America is east of Detroit, and that most of it is hundreds of miles east of New York city. The truth of the matter is that we should call that continent "Southeast America."

I also made the astounding discovery that a considerable portion of South America lies north of the southern sections of North America. When we set sail from Colon for Santa Marta, Colombia, we do not head south or southeast, we point our prow north-east. This is almost as puzzling as the other fact to the effect that Colon, Caribbean port (the supposed east port), is twenty odd miles west of Panama City, which is on the Pacific and presumably west end of the canal. It is positively uncanny to look out of a window of the Tivoli hotel, in Panama City, and watch the sun rise squarely out of the Pacific ocean! Of course an accurate map justifies the sun in selecting the Pacific for rising rather than setting purposes, but it never seemed right or proper to me. Oceans should stay where they belong, and the Pacific has no business to twist itself to the east of Panama.

TRAVEL IN SAN SALVADOR.

Crossing Rivers and Swamps Tourists Often Get Free Baths.

More than once, says John H. Weeks in his book "Among the Primitive Bantu," I had in my San Salvador journey a strong kroyob or part of whose duty it was to carry me over the many streams and swamps that crossed the path. His name was remarkable one. I do not know how he came by it, but the first time I met him I asked him his name, and he replied in kroyob English, "My name, massa, be Napoleon Bonaparte."

Sometimes Napoleon would have me on his shoulders in the middle of a river, and feeling the rush of water against his legs he would begin to quako and say, "Massa, I no fit for carry you. I go let you fall."

I would reply, "Napoleon, I fit for give you one cupful of rice suppose you no drop me."
He would then take a few more careful paces, and feeling the swirl of water more strongly about his legs and the stones slipping beneath his feet he would nervously call out in his curious English: "Massa, massa, I no fit!"

Napoleon often received from me the promise of two or three cupfuls of rice to steady him before he landed me high and dry upon the farther bank. At these times we were not fortunate. Then both of us went down into the water, and we congratulated ourselves when it was a stream and not a nasty, muddy swamp.

Shampoo.

A mid-eighteenth century traveler, who is the first person known to have made English of the word "shampoo," wrote that "shampooing is an operation not known in Europe and is peculiar to the Chinese, which I had once the curiosity to go through and for which I paid but a trifle. However, I did not see several Chinese merchants shampooed before me I should have been apprehensive of danger, even at the sight of all the different instruments." The original "shampoo," as this traveler's detailed account and other allusions for long after his time show, was very much what we call "massage" now. It was from India that the word really came, and it represents the imperative of a verb meaning to knead.

Green Animals a Puzzle.

What makes some animals green? If any reader knows and will tell me I will settle a big dispute now going on among scientists who have roved to find out. Green colorations belong chiefly to insects, worms and reptiles. Whether they get their green hue from the plants they eat or not is a question that has not been conclusively settled, although it has been shown that they will retain their color even when denied all green food.—Exchange.

Giraffe Meat.

The flesh of young giraffe, especially that of a young cow, is extremely good, somewhat like veal, with a game-like flavor. The tongue, from eighteen to twenty inches long is also very good. But the marrow bones afford the greatest luxury to the South African hunter.

Woman's Aim.

A bullet shot upward from the earth goes up to apellation with a retarding or decreasing motion, but a bullet fired by a woman at a burglar will turn a street corner and hit an innocent pedestrian in the leg nine times out of ten.—Florida Times-Union.

Having None.

"I am an income tax collector, sir, called."
"I am an artist."
"Oh, I beg your pardon" (withdrawn)—London Tattler.

Alarming.

"Your son's case, my dear Mrs. Come up, is one of ecclectic eclecticism."—Baltimore American.

HE SAVED HIS FACE

By DOROTHY BURNS

While amusing myself over some letters from India, written by my grandfather about half a century ago, I came across one to his mother, which he announced his engagement, and gave an account of how he came to marry.

"You know, my dear mother, that I have always contended that neither clergymen nor soldiers should marry. The first should always be ready to fight the devil under the banner of the cross in any land, however barbarous, and the second to fight the enemies of his country under its flag. And it seemed to me that if a soldier should take a wife she should have about her something of a soldier's nature. I do not mean that she should be expected to march to battle like a man, but that in moments of great danger she should retain her self possession.

"You remember that I came out here the year before the great mutiny and was assigned to the Bengal cavalry at Meerut, where it broke out. I saw enough of the terrors a soldier's wife is liable to among the Englishwomen, who were obliged to fly for their lives, many of them being butchered and some burned in their houses while their husbands attended to their military duties, to confirm my opinion that a soldier should not be encumbered with a wife, or at least if he has one she should be a marvel of courage.

"A few months ago, dear mother, I was invited to the quarters of Colonel Crocker of the fusiliers. The colonel had been in India twenty years and has a daughter, Cynthia, born just after his arrival here, so that, never having left India, she has never seen England. At my first meeting with this young lady I felt that she was to prove a strong temptation to me to desert my principles. After being constantly at her father's bungalow for three months the first part of my resolution—never to marry so long as I was a soldier—was completely broken down. I was passing an intermediate stage between that resolution and my second—if I did marry while a soldier to mate only with a woman of such remarkable nerve under danger as I had seen among the officers' wives and daughters at the breaking out of the mutiny at Meerut—when an episode happened that broke down all my scruples against marriage.

"I was dining one evening with Colonel Crocker and his family. The colonel sat at one end of the table, Mrs. Crocker at the other, while one of the younger children and Cynthia sat on one side and the other child beside me. A servant was pulling on the punkah; another, an Indian girl, was serving us at dinner. In these days one seldom talked about anything except the adventures of the mutiny and the colonel, who was at the time it broke out at a cantonment about two miles from Delhi, was telling how he tried to induce the mutinous sergeants of the regiment to which he was attached to remain faithful to their duty when he was interrupted by Cynthia quietly telling the waitress to place a bowl of milk on the floor. The colonel gave over his narration and looked at his daughter anxiously, her mother doing the same. I saw at once that she was moved by some powerful emotion. But she neither moved nor spoke. We all sat waiting while the maid placed the bowl of milk on the floor not far from Cynthia's chair and in a position where I could see it. What was my surprise and horror to see a cobra slowly creep from where Cynthia sat to the bowl!

"The snake had been wound around her leg and uncoiled to get the milk. Suddenly Colonel Crocker seized a carving knife from the table and, darting to the snake, with one blow severed it in two parts.

"And now, dear mother, I have come to the other important statement contained in this letter. This brave woman has consented to be my wife. I can keep, at least, my resolution not to marry a woman who is unfitted to be the wife of a soldier. Colonel and Mrs. Crocker have consented, and Cynthia and I are very happy. To crown all, the colonel is to be retired in a few months and will use his influence to have me ordered to England, so that we shall doubtless all sail for home together. Cynthia and I shall not be married till we reach England, and you, dear mother, will be at our wedding."

"This is the end of the story as given in my grandfather's letter to my great grandmother. All turned out satisfactorily. Colonel Crocker was retired as expected and had influence sufficient to secure an order for his intended son-in-law to report at the war office in London about the same time as he himself expected to reach there. So they all went home together, and the wedding was celebrated at Twickenham, where the Crockers took up their residence after their return.

MILITARY ARCHERS.

Bows and Arrows Were Used in Battle Up to a Century Ago.

We think of the bow and arrow as medieval weapons of war abandoned by the nations of Europe four or five centuries ago. The bowmen of Creecy are the last of any prominence in English history. Yet it is only about 100 years since soldiers fought with bows and arrows in European wars, and that, too, on the fields of southern Belgium.

It was in 1813, when all Europe was armed against Napoleon. Every one of the allied nations brought every possible resource of men and means to further this end. Among them was Russia. To the war she sent soldiers from the newly conquered tribes that dwell upon the steppes of Asia—Bokharans and Turkomans and Tartars and other half savage peoples. Many of these regiments were armed with bows and arrows.

Junini, the military historian, speaks of a great number of these that fought side by side with the Prussians in eastern Germany and in Belgium, and he says that these bowmen held their own against the French infantry. Their aim, he says, was surprisingly good, and they could shoot an arrow with effect almost as far as a musket ball was effective, but in those days that was not much more than 100 yards.—Exchange.

THE ART OF MUSIC.

One Must Thoroughly Understand It to Really Enjoy It.

Berlioz says: "Music is the art of moving, by a systematic combination of sounds, the affections of intelligent, receptive and cultivated beings."

Weber states: "Music is to the arts what love is to man. In truth, it is love itself; the purest, loftiest language of passion, portraying it in a thousand shades of color and feeling."

Ruskin declares: "Music is the first, the simplest, the most effective of all instruments of moral instruction."

Have you ever thought what a desolate place the world would be without music? Have you ever realized that the entire civilized world now looks upon music as one of the great essentials in the education of the cultured man and woman?

Few persons know that the greatest delight of music comes through the understanding of it. The highest in music is not revealed to the student until the student has earned the right to enjoy it. With the right one earned the student has a wonderful power as his command, a power with which he can carry his listeners to the height of joy to the depth of sadness. With music it is possible to exercise control over all the emotions of man.—Alfred Edward Fretwell, Jr., in New York Tribune.

How He Looked.

One summer when William M. Evans was at his country home in Windsor, Vt., a farmer who had followed his political career in the newspapers for many years was extremely anxious to see him in the flesh and drove eight miles into town in order to catch a glimpse of his idol.

Senator Evans at that time was being entertained constantly, dining out almost every night, and as he drove out of his grounds to an appointment one evening the farmer was lying in wait for him in the road. The latter, seeing the pale, ascetic face and meager form of the famous statesman, was disappointed.

"Well, I declare," he exclaimed, "looks as if he'd always bearded!"

Question of Direction.

"When I started out in life," said Mr. Dustin Sax, "I was full of idealistic theories. I was determined that I would never take an unfair advantage of any man."
"But you had to sacrifice some of your ideals," suggested Miss Cayenne.
"Oh, yes. A man must be practical, you know. I have reached a point where I can afford to be indifferent to criticism. I began at the bottom and worked my way up."
"Perhaps. But are you sure you didn't begin at the top and slide down?"—Washington Star.

Muensterberg Mastered.

Dad (from the hall)—Why, Marjorie, how dim the light is in here!
Freddy (the dance, not a college graduate in vain)—Yes, sir, Professor Muensterberg has a theory that brilliant light benumbs the intellect. We are experimenting to find the degree of illumination by which the attention is kept vivid and the mental functions active.—London Standard.

Only One Flavor.

"I never take any other flavor in ice cream or soda water than vanilla," said the Boston girl to her New York cousin.
"Are you so fond of it as that?"
"Not exactly, but it is obtained from a bean, you know."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

A Family Jar.

"I suppose you know I came near marrying Jim Wombat before I married you."
"Yes, I know it," said the goaded husband. "He rubs it into me every time he gets a change."—Kansas City Journal.

Then He Was Fired.

Father—I cannot give you my daughter, my dear sir. I am mighty particular in such things. Suitor—Oh, please! Now, I am not in the least so.—J. G. Gardner's Stories.

What is not necessary is dear at a penny.—Chris.

SLANG IS HARDY.

Some Supposedly Modern Phrases Are Really Centuries Old.

Much of the current slang supposed to be modern is not new. For instance, "kid" (child) goes back as far as at least as Massinger's "Old Law" (1599).

"I am old, you say. Yes; parious old, kids, and you mark me well." Kidnap (to nab a kid) was certainly not a new word to De Foe or Bunyan.

"To skip out" is accounted slang, but in Wycliff's translation of the Bible we read, "Whanne barabas and pouil berden this, thei skipten out."

In "Ralph Rowler Doliner," the first English comedy, about the middle of the sixteenth century, an actor says, "Nay, dame, I will fire thee out of my house," which certainly has a modern ring.

Goldsmith in "The Good Natured Man" (1768) says, "If the man comes from the Cornish borough you must do him," and this will require no gloss for the modern reader.

"Not in it" is found in Shakespeare's "Winter's Tale." "They have a dance which the wenches say is a gallimaufry of gambols because they are not in it."
"Cut it out" goes back as far as at least as Sheridan's "Critic" (1770). "The performers have cut it out."
The optimistic brakeman who had both legs cut off by a train and who, when a bystander tried to console him by saying he ought to be thankful he wasn't killed outright, replied, "I'm not kicking." was only using a Biblical expression. "Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice?"—Edward A. Allen in Forum.

SAWING GRANITE ROCKS.

Steel Wires and Sand and Water Are the Apparatus Used.

Stone is still sawed by hand, even in great cities, where the latest appliances of the mechanical art are to be found. Yet the mechanical sawing of rock is at least three centuries old and in recent years has reached a stage of perfection.

The idea of using a metal cord and a mixture of sand and water for sawing stone was patented by Eugene Chevallier in France in 1854. His apparatus, with scarcely any change, was used not long ago in cutting a trench through the Pont Neuf in Paris.

The principle upon which the mechanical stone-saw works is described by Victor Raynoud in La Science et la Vie as follows:

An endless rope composed of three steel wires twisted together is set in movement and draws with it a grinding granular substance, pressing this hard upon the stone that is to be sawed. The mordant substance is grit mixed with water. The stream of water renders the movement easy and prevents the heating of the cable. The ends of the cable are joined by splicing.

The hardest rocks, such as porphyry, are now sawed more easily than the softer, such as marble, but not so rapidly. Marble is sawed at the rate of nearly nine inches an hour, granite at from six to seven inches an hour.

Can't Be Cut Off With a Shilling.

French parents (or, at all events, those with more than 2 shillings to dispose of by will) are precluded from the gratification of cutting a nutritious child off with a shilling. A reserve is established by law which no testator can bequest away from his offspring. A Frenchman with one child can dispose of half his property according to his pleasure; the other half must inevitably pass to the child. Those with two children can dispose of only one-third of their property, those with three children of one-fourth, and so on according to the size of the family. Stern parents occasionally seek to evade the law by subterfuge. But the disposal of property in France is hedged round with so many restrictions that family black sheep are rarely mulcted of their legal inheritances.—London Mail.

Victor Hugo.

Victor Hugo was born in Besancon, France, in 1802. He was the son of a colonel in the French army and received a classical education. After the revolution of 1830 his plays "Marion de Lorme" and "The King Amuses Himself" were performed at the Theatre Francaise. He was created by Louis Philippe a peer of France, with the title of viscount, but he arose above this honor in being the author of "Les Miserables." He opposed Napoleon III and was banished from France, but returned on the fall of the empire. He died in Paris in 1885 and was buried in the Pantheon.

She Liked Whist.

The modern whist fiend seems colorless beside that enthusiastic exponent of the game, Sarah Battle, whom Charles Lamb describes in his "Essays of Elia." He says she was "none of your lukewarm gamblers, your half and half players." To use her own language, all she desired was "a clear fire, a clean hearth and the rigor of the game."

A Slow Sleeper.

The servant girl in a suburban family was taken to task for oversleeping herself.

"Well, ma'am," she said, "I sleep very slow, and so it takes me a long while to get a good night's rest."—Boston Transcript.

A Slight Mistake.

"The patient who was so badly cut on the head is mending."
"I thought it was the doctor who was mending. I saw him sewing the patient up."—Baltimore American.