

A BREAKFAST DISH.

"And it was the most beautiful stone that I ever saw in a finger ring. None of those paltry things you can't wear till candle light on account of the yellow there is in them. So white so clear so brilliant, pellucid as a water drop and sparkling as a star! It was all but big enough, too, to have a name of its own, like those that the royal diamonds have—'Star of the Four Points of the Compass,' 'Light of the World to Come,' 'Glory of the Middle of the Earth,' 'Mother of the Moon.' Why under the sun," cried Mrs. Torrance, the pretty creature in a bewitching gown, pouring coffee for her husband, the little butler having been dismissed by Mr. Torrance—in fear of the wrath to come, perhaps—"shouldn't our diamonds have names as well as those of kings and queens, and—"

"Yours ought to have one," said her husband, quietly. "It would be suitable to call it now; it is in the vocative you know."

"Well I must say I don't believe any man was so undisturbed by the loss of such a thing as that. Archibald, that stone was worth \$1,000."

"Really I ought to be aware of the fact, dear if any one is. You have offered to sell it and procured the sum for my necessities every time I have been hard up since we married. And if I have Mildred arrested for this theft, as you suggested, it will cost another thousand before we are done with it; for she will certainly be proved innocent, and then a libel suit would be the next thing in order."

"But, Archy, Mildred can't be proved innocent. How can she be when I know she took it? And there was no one else to take it." And Mrs. Torrance paused with suspended cup, her great wondering eyes searching space for a reply. If ever anything lay in a straight line it is the evidence against that girl," she continued. "The other day when the ring fell on the floor, she was in the room and she asked me what a stone like that was worth, and then gave such a sigh that I said: 'I suppose you think it's wrong for me to wear \$1,000 on my finger?' And she said: 'I wasn't thinking of the ring; I was only thinking of that \$1,000 can do a great deal of good.' The mix! Well, I said, it does a great deal of good—in looking pretty on my hand."

"Indeed it does look beautiful there," she said—she is very particular about her adverbs; I wish she was about her chatechism—but a good deed done by a hand is its most beautiful jewel to my thinking. Just hear that! To her mistress! Are you through? Why, I've only just begun."

"She is quite a missionary," said Mr. Torrance, picking up his paper. "And the worst of it is, she is right." "Now Archibald, don't for mercy's sake, go to reading," said his wife. "I do think the morning news might wait for once. Its nothing but dynamites blowing up the British Empire and Arabs making mummies of the British army—all abstractions; but my ring is something positive, tangible here at hand."

"I wish it were," said Mr. Torrance. "And then I could be allowed—" But here he glanced at the lovely creature opposite, with her reproachful brown eyes in which stood two tears as large as the diamond she had lost, her color going and coming with her breath, as you might say, and the rose-colored ribbons of her morning cap all a flutter with her earnestness, he folded his paper and said: "Well my dear!"

"Well, my dear!" mimicked Mrs. Torrance, in derision. "I should say its anything but well when a man hears of a servant insulting—actually insulting—his wife, and says she is in the right."

"Now Janet, I will submit it to your own judgement if that's a fair interpretation."

"You needn't do anything of the sort. It isn't fair to suppose I have any judgement, if what I say concerning Mildred—perfectly ridiculous cognomen. Who ever heard Mildred for a servant's name?"

"Why not Mildred?"

"Why not Gwendoline then, or Freigonde, or Thunseid? How would it seem to be telling Gladys to brush the dust off my shoes?" And Mildred is just as bad. If I had my

way, all the cooks should be Noras and all the second girls Ellans, and if they came from England, then they should be Elizas and Mary Annas, and it wouldn't sound as if you were taking a liberty with your superiors when your own name is just plain Jane. I ought to have been Raymond myself, you know," said Mrs. Torrance, absently, twinking the grounds in her cup, "or Katherine, or Eloise, or something. But I am sure I have trouble enough with these people without being troubled with their names. And I don't believe her name is Mildred anyway. I believe its just plain Martha, and she took the Mildred. If she took my diamond, she wouldn't stop to taking a name. Or may be it was just Milly—and here Mrs. Torrance paused, not for breath, but in amazement to see her husband's eyes twinkle, and he himself lie back in his chair as he pushed his plate away with a laugh he could repress no longer.

"If she took your diamond. Well my darling I am glad you have arrived at the diamond once more. I began to think it had been lost again. But don't tell me about the inconsequence of a woman's mind. Its workings are labyrinthine, but the thought always comes out at the place it went in. Now, let us be business-like, if we can, Janet. What makes you think this pretty Mildred of ours took the diamond?"

"Pretty Mildred? Well, perhaps because she is pretty," said Mrs. Torrance, looking like a satirical sparrow.

"Not at all impossible," said her husband gravely.

"You don't mean to imply that I would denounce a person as a thief because you said she was pretty?" cried Mrs. Torrance, half rising to her feet. "I've as good a mind to leave the table as ever I had to eat. I would, if the buckwheat cakes had come up."

"My dear child!"

"You treat me exactly as if I were a child," cried the outraged wife. "What do I care whether my maid is pretty or not? Being pretty, apparently, doesn't keep her hands from picking and stealing. I know she stole my diamonds just as well as if I had seen her do it."

"But what would she do with it?"

"What a question! As if that sort of person didn't know where to dispose of things easily and take care of the proceeds! I wonder if Patricia is never going to send those cakes up—"

"How in the world did you cook come to be called Patricia?"

"I called her so myself when she came. Her own name is Hannah, a combination of sounds I utterly detest and wasn't going to have it ringing in my ears all the time. And she is so tall and erect she justifies Patricia. Don't you think so?"

"All right," said Mr. Torrance, thinking best to make no reference to the Noras of a few minutes since. "But we were speaking of Mildred."

"I did think very well of Mildred, I will confess, before this," said Mrs. Torrance, with judicial calmness. "She is educating her sister, who has a voice—such a voice—for a church singer, then she will have a salary that will be wealth to them, and give some lessons besides. And she was wrapped up in her. And I took all interest in them myself, and gave her a silk dress to make over and got a new cloak that I really didn't need so as to give her my old one (and I saw she had the good taste to take off some of the trimmings) and lots of my old music. And out of her own wages Mildred has to hire a room and a piano and pay for her lessons, somebody gives her her board till she can pay the debt, and it takes every cent Mildred earns; and you see, it is quite natural that she should look about her to find where she can turn a penny—"

"An honest penny," said Mr. Torrance. "A girl that is doing that for another is not one that would be likely to turn any other sort of a penny."

"How you do love to interrupt me, Mr. Torrance! It really seems as if you couldn't bear the sound of my voice! I was going on to say, before you took the words out of my mouth, that recently this sister of hers has been advised to take lessons of another master, who asks all creation, but a really worth it. And he says he

says he can make her voice a fortune to her. And they have been dreadfully cast down because they couldn't do it. And now you see where the diamond comes in. If she can get for that stone anything near its value her sister Mable can take her lessons. And her voice is delicious—just perfectly delicious!" exclaimed Mrs. Torrance, forgetting the diamond again; "Mildred had her come here and sing to me. And I can't describe it to you I never heard a lark or a nightingale but a bobolink isn't a whistle to it. A flute, a trumpet—well, it was sweet and satisfying and penetrating as the odor of some flower, and yet soft as the velvet side of the petals of the flower. Angels would sing so maybe, if there are any. I forgot all about her sister being my maid. I cried and I laughed, and I felt as if I had found her. And now I will solemnly tell you, Archy dear—and she bent across the pretty china service, transfixed him with her radiant eyes—

"I looked at my ring, and I turned it and turned it, and I said to myself I have had the good of it ever since Grandfather DePeyster gave it to me, and everybody knew I had it, and my position was pretty well established, diamond rings are not, and when you were able to afford a real grown up butler you would probably get me plenty; and if I sold it now, and gave this poor girl the money to secure a career, what a blessing it would be to her, and what a joy I would be giving to the world in her, too; for, of course she wouldn't be confined to a church choir in that case, and if she were, in what a heavenly fashion could those tones of hers swim out over a prayerful audience, and just take the prayer on their silvery strength, and lead it up, up; and any body who is the means of producing more of them, and so bring down the price of prime donna in the market, is a public benefactor, to be sure, anyway; and I was just on the point of saying that I would speak to you, and it you approved, as I knew you would, I would have \$1,000 or thereabouts for them to day, when Mrs. Veasey happened in, and so, as I didn't want Mrs. Veasey to know any thing about it and taking the wind all of my sails I just told Mable to come again to day and I would have something further to say to her. And so I shall!"

"I shall have to tell her that her sister has been arrested for a theft, and she may go and sing to her in prison. That's what I'll tell her, the wicked, ungrateful girl!"

"Which?" said Mr. Torrance.

"I don't know how anybody can be so unfeeling," cried his wife; it really seems as if you were more interested in the troubles of two beggarly girls base enough to rob your wife's troubles. Both!"

"But robbery is a very harsh term, Janet, darling, where carelessness may be the whole thing."

"There it is again. My carelessness not their dishonesty. When I went to the washstand I turned the ring on my finger again, and there was the stone gone."

"And how many times have I told you that the careless habit of washing your hands with your ring on wears off infinitesimal fractions of the gold till the stones are loosened in the setting, and drop out without your being aware of it?"

"You are always so wise after the act! How do you know I wasn't going to take my ring off? You are so ready to find me at fault! But I thought at first the stone must have washed out—"

"So it seems you did wash your hands with the rings on?" said the turning worm.

"Yes I did. There! And I sent for the plumber immediately, for I knew if it had washed out it must have caught in the first trap; and he took up the pipe, but it wasn't there. And he said if he made a real job of it, and went down to the main something, he might find it there; but I thought that would cost more than the diamond itself—"

"Wise woman groaned," Mr. Torrance.

"And so, you see, I didn't accuse Mildred in the first place. I searched and took every precaution. I didn't think of such a thing till I saw her standing there turning more color, than the lady in the lobster—"

"You don't say that you really have accused her?"

"Well what if I have? I must lose my diamond that my dear grandfather gave me when I was married, and that I treasured so, and endure it all in silence, for fear some little husky's feelings will be hurt. My feelings are of no consequence at all! It isn't to be reckoned to my account that I was ready to give her the diamond—and I love diamonds. I don't think there's anything so beautiful in the world. There's no other one thing that holds so much in so little; I don't mean money or money value. It is the concrete essence of sunshine—really, materially. Once that identical stone of mine, ages before man was made, was nothing but a flood of sunshine, married to the wet air as it reached one spot of the earth, and a wonderful tree sprang from that marriage and flourished and flowered and fell a great strong marvel of growth that belongs to those past eons when earth itself was but half crystallized out of its gases, and that grows now nowhere. For they can't find any substance now that can quite produce it. And that made my diamond—by slow concentration. Or else, even if it is not that, it is the very compression of that ancient atmosphere, almost all carbon, which hung over the earth in that first mystery of chaos. And at any rate, it is of the purest physical perfection known to-day, and of the simplest chemical composition. So!"

"My love how much you know! You take my breath away. It seems to me wicked to have stolen your diamond than to steal the Koh-i-noor!"

"It is; the Bible says so. Nathan talked to King David about the ewe lamb. And that was all the diamond I had. It would seem so to you, really if your head clerk had stolen it, or anybody had stolen it but this pretty Mildred."

"But, Janet, you are always so positive."

"How can you say so? What am I ever positive about? You wouldn't have me distrust the evidences of my senses? And if ever I saw guilt on any face—"

"There is nothing more fallible than the evidence of your senses."

"I beg your pardon, I can see as far and hear as quickly, and taste as keenly, as any one alive. And for you to begin to run down my eyes now—perhaps they're not so bright now—but I never thought to hear you twitting me of growing old—in this way, all of a sudden" (trying hard to swallow her sob), "because you're interested—in—my servant maid—"

"For heaven's sake, Janet, think what you're saying!"

"I do think what I am saying," she cried, then in a fury, "and I say, whatever the evidence that you care nothing whatever for my feelings, as I can see me robbed without lifting your voice, and—and—oh, a husband ought to love his wife, and protect her and take her part," and here Mrs. Torrance rose hurriedly and pushed over her chair and was rushing from the room.

But Mr. Torrance was not to be outdone by any such sleight of foot, and had caught her in his arms before she reached the door. "And do you think," he exclaimed, "that I don't love you, you abominable little mass of contradictions? Do you suppose I won't protect you with my life itself? do you fancy for a moment that I won't take your part when you decide what your part is?"

"Let me go! Let me go sir!" she exclaimed; "or else at any rate, let me find my handkerchief!" And she struggled for her handkerchief, that the kisses her husband gave her might not be too salt, and pulling it from her pocket, something in a great arc and stream of luster whirled out with the violently wrenched handkerchief, sailed through the air like nothing so much like a flying rainbow, and fell at her feet.

It was the lost diamond.

Mrs. Torrance stopped in the midst of her tears, blushing, disheveled, diamond dropped herself, as pretty a sight as a rose bush in a shower, and held back her skirts with both hands while she looked at the shining eye there before her on the carpet. "The horrid thing!" she said; the horrid, unthinking, accusing thing! It is calling all sorts of names, I shall never want to see it again. Only think, if I had

denounced that poor girl I'm so glad I never breathed of it to her. I remember I had on this very gown when Mrs. Veasey was in! How stupid of me! Now, I'll take this down to a diamond broker to-day, and Mildred's Mable shall have her \$1,000 worth of lessons. I dare say she'll sing at our parties by-and-by. She'll be our prima donna, and by that time I shall have improved Mildred into a companion. Oh, I think you would despise such a ridiculous, wicked little wife as I am!" she cried, turning to her husband; you ought to have married a saint. What a good man you are, Archy!"

"My dear," said Mr. Torrance, "life with any other woman who didn't arrange these little circuses for my morning entertainment would be too stale, flat, and unprofitable to endure. I should run away from the saint and take to the flying trapeze and you."—*Harriet Prescott Spofford, in Harper's Bazar.*

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PARALYSIS AND CONSTIPATION.
Milroy, Pa., May 30, 1885.
Gentlemen—I deem it a pleasure to refer to the fact that I have been free from the above named PARALYSIS AND CONSTIPATION. I have gradually improved from the effects of Paralysis of one side and Constipation. Since using the apparatus have been free from the above named trouble. I have improved in my general health. I therefore commend them to any who may be suffering from the same trouble.
NERVOUS PROSTRATION AND SLEEPLESSNESS.
Milroy, Pa., June 2, 1885.
Gentlemen—My wife has been for years with Nervous Prostration, so much so that life at times seems to her a burden. Her rest at night was so much broken and disturbed that she could not get much sleep. She was induced to try the Howard Shield, and has worn it over two months can now sleep well at night, and even during the day, can work with comfort that was a burden before. She has improved in general health and complexion. I consider your appliances invaluable for nervousness, sleeplessness and general debility.
JOHN COX.

NO MEDICINE NEEDED.
Gentlemen—I have been greatly benefited by the use of the Howard Shield, No. 2, for constipation. I have worn it since May and would not like to do without it. I now feel thankful for your appliances and have advised others to give them a trial feeling sure that they would be benefited as I have been.
WHAT A LEADING DOCTOR SAYS:
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A HARBINGER, M. D.

WHAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE 1st NATIONAL BANK SAYS:
Ashland, Pa., March 9, 1885.
Gentlemen—I know what you mean. Application are personal uses and I therefore recommend your shield to Mrs. Hanburger some time ago for Sciatica and induced her to send for one which she did and has used it for about four weeks and she is now able to bear and feels entirely cured. Yours re, fully,
GEO. H. HELFELICH,
President of the 1st National Bank of Ashland, Ohio.

Another Affidavit From a Prominent Citizen of Ohio NERVOUS DEBILITY IN ITS WORST FORM.
Columbus, O., Oct. 2nd, 1884.
Gentlemen—I take pleasure in saying, that I tried almost every known remedy, without success. Electric appliances without any benefit. I was weak, nervous, depressed, despondent, almost without hope, almost entirely cured, looked better, and will face, in a word was afflicted with the above symptoms of Nervous Debility the effects of which are so well known to every sufferer. I can truthfully say that the Howard Shield Appliances and the Howard Shield entirely cured me. I commenced their use in 1881 and restored to perfect health. I am now married and have never had recurrence of my former trouble. You can refer anyone to me as I shall ever feel grateful to you. Your treatment is as represented. You have proven yourselves worthy of the confidence of every sufferer.
AUG. F. BLENKMAN.
Personally appeared before me, **AND. F. BLENKMAN**, notary public, and swears that the above letter certifying as to the curative powers of the Howard Shield and Special Appliances is true. Sworn and subscribed before me this 6th day of May, A. D. 1885.
THO. B. BARK.
Deputy Clerk of Courts of Franklin Co., O.

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I hereby certify that the following testimonials are a true and exact copy as given to me by the parties whose names are attached thereto.
W. C. McCLEAREN.
Sworn and subscribed before me this 5th day of June, 1885, Lafayette Webb, Prothonotary of the Court of Common Pleas in and for the County of Allegheny, Pa.
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