

THE CONCEALED DIAMOND.

FOR generations my ancestors had traced from Holland to various countries. But I'll pass them all until I come down to my grandfather, by name Jacob Vanderheyden. My father married his daughter, and eventually came back to live in this his native city, for he was a German. I recollect grandfather Vanderheyden very well, though I was only seven years of age when he died. He was an immensely fat old man, weighing nearly three hundred pounds, and wearing big shirt collars that reached up above his ears. He began life by sailing to Japan, and never, I believe, made any voyages save to that country. His ship used to lay at Boompies in Rotterdam. It was there where he lived.

My grandfather, as you may suppose, saved up a goodly pile of money, and was considered by the people as being well off. I have often been told that previous to his last voyage, he had a remarkable dream, in which he was informed that great good was to come to him when he arrived in port, but that he must never go to sea again, for if he did he would be overcome with evil. He accordingly made all his preparations to retire from maritime life, and sailed away with high hope in his heart. My mother told me it was more than two years ere the herring fishers at Vlaardingen described his vessel returning to port. It must have been a jolly day when grandfather jumped ashore at Boompies. They say he was so much altered that they could scarcely recognize him. He had grown enormously fat, and was yellow as saffron. Well, he was good as his promise; he gave up sailing, and settled down upon the land. But he brought a strange story with him, which certainly verified his dream. He was in possession of a diamond of most superb beauty and great value. I have heard it said that Count Albert Kaloska came from Paris, and offered to pay forty thousand francs for it, but my grandfather would not sell it, supposing he could obtain a much greater sum.

My grandfather was a peculiar man; he would not trust the gem in the possession of any bank, preferring to keep it in his own custody. His friends often told him he would be robbed, for it was soon noised about that he had the stone in his house. But the old man laughed when he heard the advice, and would not give up the prize to any other custody. There are various stories told as to how he came to be possessed of the jewel, but his own version was that a certain native of Japan took refuge in his ship and fled the country. The unhappy man fell sick unto death, and as my grandfather attended him with great kindness, he gave him the treasure before he died, and in this way he became possessor. Some ill-natured people said that if the truth was known it would be found out that grandfather Vanderheyden had entered into compact with the evil one to secure the wealth. Of course none but superstitious old women listened to stories like these, and they did not affect grandfather's good name in the community. I can see him now, sitting on the bench, with his old pipe smoking away, apparently in a dream; but he was never caught napping when smoking; he was too shrewd a man, for you must understand the diamond was concealed in the cavity of the knot of his pipe. My father and mother were the only ones to whom he imparted the secret. He reasoned this way:

"If," said he, "thieves break into my house they will ransack ever nook and corner they think contains valuables, but this old pipe might lie about anywhere, and no one would take the trouble to carry it off, for you see it's worth nothing at all."

And so he concealed the diamond in his pipe, and made his mind easy. But at length the predictions of his friends began to prove true. Thrice was his house broken into, and although something valuable was carried away each time, the great prize was not discovered. Grandfather at length began to be worried, and saw, when it was too late that it would have been more prudent to have kept silent regarding his jewel. His mind grew uneasy, yet with strange inconsistency, he would not sell the diamond, because he could not obtain the price he asked, and he considered it more valuable than it really was.

One day he said to my father "I am distressed that there are so many bad men in the world who desire to rob me of my wealth. Where shall we live and find virtuous people?"

My father quickly replied: "My countrymen are honest, and never was a robbery heard of in the town of Freising; you might leave a sack of gold on your doorstep and find it safe in the morning."

"Is that so," inquired grandfather.

"Of a truth it is," responded my father.

"Then I will go to your country," said grandfather, and he soon after sold off all his property and came hither.

But thieves are rarely at fault. They quickly heard that a removal was contemplated, and no trouble, I imagine, in tracking us to this city, though it was never known how they did so, for grandfather and his family were careful not to mention his future home.

Scarcely had we got settled in our new home ere an attempt was made to break into our house. My father urged grand-

father to sell the diamond, as we should never be free from robbers until he did. But the old man was stubborn and refused. Moreover he was getting well on in years, and was cross and ill-natured.

Months passed away and, we were free from robbers, so we thought they had departed and would trouble us no more.—Grandfather became more amiable, and talked and smoked with more pleasure than he hitherto had done. We were sure at last we were safe, when one morning, soon after my father arose, he came running into our bedroom saying that the house had been broken into during the night. My mother ran to my grandfather's bedroom, and had to break open the door ere she could gain admittance. The poor old man laid tied upon the bed with a gag in his mouth. His face was livid, and the veins in his throat were swollen purple. The robber had escaped by the window of his room.

"It's all over," he moaned, as soon as he was able to speak. "It's all over. We are ruined. All I wish to do is to die.—They carried off my pipe. Woe is to me."

The account he gave was this: He was awakened by a heavy hand on his throat, and the next moment he found himself in the presence of three masked men, who spoke to him in German, and demanded to know where the diamond was concealed.

"In the bank," he replied.

"Thou liest," returned the one who held the lantern to his face. "Not a word from thy lips," and they forthwith gagged him and commenced to search the room.

Failing to secure the prize, they took his watch and some money, and were departing when one of the rascals spied his pipe.

"Ah! that will do for me," he said; "'tis an ugly old thing, but will answer my purpose," and ignorant of the wealth he had in his hand the scoundrel proceeded to fill it with tobacco, and lighting it, passed with his comrades out the window, bidding grandfather good night.

Bound hand and foot and unable to move, my grandfather was forced to witness the robbery, without being able to regain his property.

So great was the effect on his system that he began to fail at once. His appetite, hitherto good, was now gone. He could not sleep, and soon was ill. Gradually growing worse day by day, he died within six months, repeating with his last breath, "It's all over now; we are all ruined."

To say my father and mother did not share my grandfather's grief would be false. My father made an accurate drawing of the pipe, and deposited it with my mother, and then he took to roaming over the country, and making acquaintances with the lowest and worst people to be found, in hopes of finding the pipe. Notwithstanding he traveled through Germany and Holland, he returned home weary and disappointed, to die of a fever contracted in his wandering.

As I grew up, the recollection of my grandfather's pipe was indelibly stamped on my memory. Had I, however, never seen it, the drawing my father made of it was so correct that I should have been able to identify it anywhere.

Often and often my mother told me the story of the robbery, fearing lest I should forget it, making me promise that I would keep my eyes open as I passed through the world, in the hope of meeting my grandfather's pipe.

I was twenty-one year's of age when I lost my mother, and came into the possession of a sum of money sufficient to enable me to begin life. I connected myself with a worthy man in the grain business. He was wealthy and had taken a fancy to me. I was with him a year when I became in love with his daughter.

I should have mentioned that his name was Peter Krummacker, and his daughter was called Augusta. We loved each other from the first; and I went to him and frankly told our mutual feeling. He listened to me quietly and when I had finished, said:

"The only objection I have to you is that you have not money enough to wed my daughter. Don't misunderstand me; I admire your character and could give my daughter a dowry large enough to maintain you both handsomely, but I do not choose to do so. When you can come to me rich enough to keep her in the style she now lives, you may take her if she is willing. That is all I have to say. Good day."

This was a great unhappiness for it was unexpected. I went to Augusta and told her all.

"Have courage," she replied. I will wait for you until I am an old woman. What do you propose?"

"I will go to some place where money can be made faster than in Bavaria, and as soon as I can accumulate enough, I will return to you, my darling, if you will remain true to me."

"Have faith, have courage," she answered.

I dissolved business with Peter Krummacker and went to France. I did not find things as good there as in my own land. So I went to England. Worse and worse.

Back I went to France and fortune favored me. I was one day sitting in a cafe, at Bordeaux, when some sailors came and

called for wine, sitting down at a small table. They were all Frenchmen, and soon became very noisy in their talk. All at once one of them pulled a pipe out of his pocket, the sight of which almost made me faint. The fellow commenced smoking my grandfather's pipe. I scarcely knew how to act, I was so afraid of betraying my feelings. Could the diamond still be concealed in the pipe? Oh, what tumult reigned in my heart at that moment.

I called for wine, and filling my glass sent the bottle over to the sailors. They looked at me and nodded as they drank. Then one of them spoke to the others, and they beckoned to me. I went over to the table.

"Sit down," they said; "you seem like a clever fellow. What is your country?"

I told them I was a citizen of the world, although I was born in Holland.

They all laughed and slapped me on the back in good humor.

I ordered more wine of the best quality and we soon became good friends.

"And so you came from Holland?" remarked he who had grandfather's pipe.

"No, indeed," I replied; I only said I was born there. I have lived in Bavaria ever since I was a child."

"You wouldn't be any the worse for being a Hollander," remarked the sailor. "I had a messmate, John Hooft he was called, though I never knew whether that was his right name or not; but a better sailor I never knew; yet he would get drunk. Last voyage he fell overboard at Hague, and was drowned, poor fellow, that was his old pipe."

"You ought to smoke a better pipe than that," I said; "that's nothing but a chunk of wood."

"I saw a beautiful pipe," he replied. "In a shop up the quay. I would like to have such a pipe as that, but it costs too much money. Twenty francs. Just think of it," he was speaking to his comrades.

"Bah," I answered, "twenty francs is mere bagatelle. Let us go and see it."

"Pardon me," he said "but I could not accept such a gift if you intend to purchase it;" he winked to the others.

"That's a smart fellow," I thought, "but I'll be smart also."

"Come along," I cried, taking him by the arm.

"Here, garcon, bring us another bottle of your best wine, and you my friends drink until we return."

I paid for the wine, and the sailor took my arm and we sallied forth.

"You are a noble hearted fellow," he said.

"Bah!" I rejoined, "when one meets good company, it is no merit to be generous."

"Thank you," he replied.

We soon came to the shop and I purchased the pipe and presented it to my friend. He was delighted.

"What a beautiful present! I shall take a great deal of pleasure in smoking it, and will always think of you when I do so. Well, I shall not trouble John's old pipe much now."

"Ah! I know what you shall do. You will give the old pipe to me. It will recall our first meeting. It's my fancy, you know."

"You won't smoke an old pipe like that?" he replied, gazing at me with an expression of wonder.

"Truly not," I returned "but I will hang it up by my bed, and think of you my fine fellow, when I look upon it."

He grasped me by the hand with a grip of iron.

"Take it," he said.

The next moment it was in my pocket and I would have wrestled with a giant before surrendering it.

We found the sailors at the cafe still drinking wine. I ordered something to eat and we all had a good dinner. Then they shook me by the hand and went away. They were all worthy men and big-hearted.

I seemed to fly over the pavement as I hurried to my lodging. Locking the door, I drew forth the pipe, and commenced to try the knots; none of them moved. The one I had been searching for had doubtless grown stiff with age. At length I found it, for it started a little. Then I tried it again exerting all the power in my fingers. It yielded; and as I unscrewed it, out fell the large brilliant diamond of my grandfather, Jacob Vanderheyden.

Talk of joy! no man can estimate my delight at that moment. I saw Augusta in her radiant beauty, and Peter Krummacker giving her to me as my wife.

I hurried to Amsterdam; it was the best place in Europe to sell diamonds.

A week later I had sold the gem for ninety thousand francs. My grandfather had been correct in his estimate of its value.

Back I went to Peter Krummacker and showed him my money.

"I will keep my word," he said, you shall return to me in the grain business."

I took the old fellow by the hand and danced for very joy. Augusta and myself were married and up to this hour we have neither of us regretted the act. Peter Krummacker died a few years since, and left his great wealth; but had it not been for the old pipe, it might have turned out less happily for the grandson of Jacob Vanderheyden.

BADLY SOLD.

A GENTLEMAN genteelly dressed, walked into an inn, and professed to be tired. Having taken refreshments, he said he would take a nap for an hour. To sleep he went in a very business-like style, in a chair, and a long nap he appeared to enjoy. Before it expired, the usual smoke-pipe company began to drop in, and with others, two strangers made their appearance. One of the company said that it was unpleasant to have a man sleeping in a public room, with valuable property about him such as the sleeper, who had a fine looking gold guard chain displayed on his waistcoat, and apparently connected with a watch in one of his pockets. To this remark, one of the strangers replied—"Poo! that's no gentleman, I'm sure; he's more likely one of them ere swell mob as is always a taking of people in—I dare say he has no watch at all; but I'll soon see."

Sniffing the action of the word, the stranger softly drew forth out of the sleeping man's pocket a piece of wood, round, and about the size of a watch.

"I thought so," holding it up that the company might see it, and then returned it to the owner's pocket. By and by the sleeper awoke, and called briskly for a glass of brandy and water. He assumed quite a patronizing air to the farmers, which soon raised a desire to put him down. Accordingly one of the seniors inquired to be informed of the time of day.

"Why," said the gentleman, "the fact is, I had a drop too much last night, and forgot to wind up my watch."

"Just so," ejaculated the senior, "you forgot to wind it up, did you? You'd be puzzled to do that, I should say, wouldn't you, now?"

"Well, sir, you seem to take more notice of such a trifle, than there is any call for; but the truth is, I have not a watch-key about me, and mine is rather a peculiar watch."

Here a burst of laughter ensued, a number of jokes were passed about the peculiar style of the watch. At last, one of the company loudly told him that he had no watch about him; whereupon the amazed individual hastily clasped his hand to his waistcoat pocket, having previously declared that, unless the watch had been stolen since he had been in the room, he had one. Satisfied, apparently, by the external application to his pocket he said—"It's all right, my watch is here. I thought you had been playing a trick upon me."

"I'll bet you £5 as you've no watch," bawled out one of his tormentors; another offered to bet him £10, and one of the strangers said he hadn't £5, but there were two sovereigns which he should like to double by betting in the same way. The awakened sleeper looked at them with astonishment, and asked if they were serious. They all stuck to it that he had no watch; and he then took out his purse and produced five and ten pound notes to the amount of the bets offered against him. The stakes were posted, and then the thoroughly awakened sleeper coolly pulled out the piece of wood, at which a horse laugh rose against him; but the laughter was soon on the other side, when touching a spring in the bit of wood, it flew open, and displayed a very handsome gold watch snugly encased within. The gentleman gave a plausible reason for preferring so odd a looking case for his watch, with which his dupes might either feel satisfied or not. He had received their money to the extent of £40, and they had bought a knowledge of "the time of day." Of course, the very suggestive strangers lost nothing by the business—in fact they were accomplices of this clever sharper.

Wellington's Strategy.

On a certain occasion, during Wellington's campaign on the Pyrenees, that "Great Captain," being displeased with the dispositions Gen. Picton had made for receiving the assault of Marshal Soult, who menaced him in front, ordered the plan to be entirely changed. But the difficulty was to delay the attack of the French until the change could be effected. This the Iron Duke accomplished in person, in the following manner: Doffing his cocked hat and waving it in the air, he rode furiously to the head of a regiment, as if to order a charge. Thereupon arose a tremendous cheer from the men, which was taken up by the corps after corps until it reverberated along the whole extent of Picton's line. As the roar died away, Wellington was heard to remark musingly, as if addressing himself, "Soult is a skillful but cautious commander, and will not attack in force until he has ascertained the meaning of these cheers. This will give time for the Sixth Division to come and we shall beat him." It turned out as he anticipated. Soult, naturally enough, supposed those tremendous shouts announced the arrival of large reinforcements, and did not attack until too late. Had he struck at the right moment, he would have won an easy victory; as it was, he met with a bloody repulse. This was strategy of genius, endured and executed in the same moment. There is no such thing laid down in Jomini. The idea was born of the occasion, and carried out on the instant.

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