

# TRICKERY IN DIAMONDS.

### SOME OF THE TRICKS RESORTED TO BY SWINDLERS.

#### Persons Not Experts Taken In by Artful Devices—Some Famous Cases—Making Genuine Diamonds.

"Is there a large amount of imposition at present in your business?" asked a Chicago Tribune reporter of a diamond dealer.

"In an article where not one in a hundred has any knowledge whatever, and not more than one in ten thousand is a good judge, there must necessarily be a good deal of imposition. The methods of cheating may be divided into three classes. The first and most common is when flawed, imperfect, or off-colored diamonds are sold for first-water, flawless gems. This takes place every day and every hour of the day. The next two methods are swindling pure and simple. There are several precious stones which are of an entirely different composition to the diamond, but resemble that gem so closely that none but experts can distinguish them. Even experts have often to test these before they can discover the imposition. The basis of the diamond, as almost everybody knows, is carbon. The basis of the stones I now allude to is alumina, and they are known under the generic term 'corundums.' The principal stones substituted and sold for diamonds are the white sapphire, white topaz, and the zircon or jargon. White sapphire and topaz are worth from \$2 to \$8 a carat, zircon much less. Bushels of these stones have been and are still sold for diamonds. They can be at once identified by experts for their inferior hardness and difference in specific gravity.

The last method of swindling is when imitation stones made in various ways are sold for the genuine article. More of this is carried on than you would think possible. In Europe, especially in Paris, the art of making fine imitations of diamonds has been brought to perfection. Many of these, of course, are sold for what they are, many are made to order for wealthy people who in temporary difficulties wish to raise money on their diamonds, and have these stones set in the same manner to wear while the real article is out of their reach, but large quantities are set in fine style and sold for first-water diamonds.

"Have there been any very successful frauds in your line lately?"

"There is always something going on, but the most extensive and successful swindle in which I as well as a great many others suffered first came into operation about two years ago. It is the coating system. By saturating off-colored flawless stones—worth about \$25 a carat—in a peculiar solution it gave them the appearance of first-water goods, worth \$100 a carat. The solution soon wears off, or it may be removed by a good application of hot soap-suds. But the trade was quite unacquainted with this method, and before we got to the bottom of it the sharpers had made an enormous pile. This is still being practiced at present to a small extent, principally for the working of pawnbrokers."

"Can you call to mind any well-planned gem confidence operations that have not been made public?"

"Did you ever hear of the clever dodge worked in London in 1881 by one of the best known 'con' practitioners of New York? He went to London and purchased in Hatton garden a magnificent stone weighing about twelve and a half carats. He paid between \$7,000 and \$8,000 for it. He then made his way to Paris and put the stone in the hands of the best maker of paste goods and ordered thirty facsimiles of it. He then had the whole of them mounted in rings of exactly the same design. In London are many large pawnbrokers who lend sums of \$5,000 and upward for short terms—fourteen days or so—at one and a half or three-quarter per cent. He left the original ring with each of them in turn, took it out again, and repledged it two or three times until they were well acquainted with him and the gem. One Saturday, which is their busy day, he rushed around to the whole collection and left one of the imitations for sums ranging from \$4,000 to \$6,000. He placed twenty-eight in all. They possibly did not examine them closely, as he was so well known, and his appearance and manners were calculated to ward off suspicion. The shrewdest pawnbrokers in London were taken in by this scheme. The Attenboroughs (this family have about eight establishments) had five of these rings, the Russells had three, and so forth. A much cleverer though not such an extensive scheme was worked in Paris in 1878 by a notorious French 'chevalier de industrie.' He had a magnificent stone worth \$6,000, of which he also had an imitation made and set in the same manner as the original. He then went to the most extensive retail jeweler there, and handing him the genuine gem in a ring, asked him how much he would charge to reset it in a combination setting, or a setting where the stone could be used as a ring, scarfpin and stud. The jeweler named the amount, which he said was much more than he wished to spend, as the stone was only an imitation and not worth the outlay. The jeweler was astonished to hear that the fine stone he had in his hand was an imitation, and testing it slightly assured the owner that it was a real diamond. At this the sharper laughed and stated he had bought it in Baden Baden from a gambler out of luck for \$50 and that the jeweler must be mistaken. He willingly left it until next day for further testing. When he came the following day the jeweler assured him it was a real diamond (as he well knew), and to back his opinion offered to give him \$4,500 for it. The sharper still asserted that the jeweler was mistaken, but agreed to sell it for that price on condition that he would not be held responsible if it was afterward discovered to be an imitation. This was agreed to, and a document was drawn up by which the jeweler agreed to give \$4,500 for the ring and to hold the vendor, who had bought it and still believed it to be imitation, not responsible after the sale. The transaction was concluded in the presence of witnesses. Just before the money was paid over and the ring delivered, the sharper skillfully substituted the imitation and palmed the diamond. In a few days afterward, when the fraud was discovered, although the schemer was still on the spot, the duped had no remedy, as

in the document he had signed, he had agreed to purchase the stone whether imitation or not. I could tell you many well-verified anecdotes of this description but they are all variations of one plan. After confidence is inspired a sudden skillful stroke is played which is generally undiscovered until it is too late.

### Old Age.

With every year the average duration of life is increased, and we have more old people on our hands. Naturally, this question becomes of increasing interest. How shall we secure a healthful old age, and how can we prolong in comfort this scullery?

Some curious information regarding this subject, though more especially regarding what may be called "centenarianism," has been published by a gentleman of Syracuse, N. Y., who, we are informed, has collected the histories of 10,000 people that have passed the age of 100 years. According to this authority, the United States leads in centenarian longevity, while Connecticut is ahead among the States. As to sex, women; as to occupation, soldiers, sailors and farmers are the longest lived. Among the professions, 100 ministers, thirty doctors and ten lawyers reached their centenarian.

Of more practical and scientific character are the statistics regarding longevity obtained by the British Collective Investigation committee. These are based upon over 500 returns, and relate to persons who have reached or passed the age of eighty.

Professor Humphry, of Cambridge, has given some interesting deductions based upon the returns in an oration delivered before the Medical society, of London.

### Zuni Table Etiquette.

Among the Zunis Indians, with a guest at the table, it would be considered shameful for any one of the household to cease eating while any other remained obviously unsatisfied; and equally shameful for any one not to cease eating very soon after even one of the others—if a respected or elderly one—had done so.

### General Custer's Pet.

At one time General Custer tamed a tiny field-mouse and kept it in a large empty inkstand on his desk. It grew very fond of him, and ran over his head and shoulders and even through his hair. I had, fortunately, only to keep away from the desk when the little creature was free, for it was contented to consider that his domain. The general, thinking at last that it was cruel to detain the little one indoors, when it belonged by nature to the fields, took it out and left it on the plain. The kindness was of no earthly use; like the oft-quoted prisoner of Bastille, it was back again at the steps in no time and preferred captivity to freedom.—Mrs. Custer's Reminiscences.

### Queer Epitaph.

The following is a bona fide epitaph on a tombstone in a Providence cemetery:

# THE QUEEREST FISH NESTS.

### THE PYRAMID BUILDERS OF THE ST. LAWRENCE.

#### Fish Nests Made by Heaping Up Thousands of Pebbles—Difference of Opinion Among Fishermen.

A letter from the Pyramid Islands to the New York Sun has the following: "Stop her!" shouted the man in the bow. A second later the boat sheered off, just avoiding a pile of stones that loomed up on the sandy bottom like a regular pyramid.

"What is it?" asked some one. "Looks like a dump from a steamer." "It must be that," said the bowman, leaning over and grasping some of the stones from the top of the heap. "They are clean pebbles, and look as though they had been piled purposely."

The speaker had an overboard, and was holding the boat over the pile, so that all hands could see it, and that moment one of the professional fishermen came rowing along.

"Looking at the chub beds?" he shouted.

"We're looking at a heap of stones," replied the discoverer.

"Wall, them's chub beds," replied the fisherman. "Chubs makes 'em. Chubs is fish."

"You don't tell me that a fish heaped up these rocks, do you?" asked an astonished and incredulous voyager.

"That's just what I'm a-sayin'" was the reply; "and not only this, but half a dozen more right in sight of this. Just stand up and look."

The writer stood upon a seat, and, sure enough, five other heaps appeared, all within a radius of twenty-five feet, and all larger than the one first noticed. One was at least ten feet across at the base and four feet high, making the water shallow enough upon the top to step a small boat. Some of the stones weighed a quarter of a pound, but the most of them were of all shapes and sizes, from that of a pea up to an oblong stone of the weight given. In the largest pile there were probably seven or eight bushels, representing thousands of stones, counting the smallest, and each one of these represented a journey by a fish.

"Yes," continued the fisherman, who had hauled alongside, "all that work was done by a fish, and what is more, I have seen them do it—seen them take the stones in their mouth. If you take notice of a chub you will see that it has a mouth with a kind of smooth lips, and no teeth to speak of; in fact, the mouth is regularly fixed for lifting stones and the like."

"But what do they do it for?" asked some one.

"Why, to lie on, I s'pose," said the boatman. "I've seen them lying on the beds in June, half a dozen at a time, sometimes right near the top of the water. Some folks say how they build the beds so they kin get near the top of the water and see what's going on, but there don't seem to be much sense in that. What does a fish want with pyramids? It don't stand to reason. I believe they do it for a sort of loafing place, and all hands join in bringing a stone until, as you see, they build up a regular fish monument."

"Is this the only place in which they are found?" asked an observer.

"Bless you, no. You kin find 'em all along shore wherever there's a good sandy or clear bottom just like this, and up among the Canadian islands they're as thick as hops. I've often run into 'em when rowing along shore, but the biggest ones are those that have been grown for years, so to speak. They couldn't make a big one in a year very well, as you can see, so every year they add to them. They'd be bigger yet if it wasn't for the ice that clears the tops off every spring. But if you notice you will see that the top stones are the brightest and cleanest, while those around the bottom are dirty and moss-covered. The ones at the bottom are the old last year stones."

It was curious to notice the difference of opinion among the fishermen, who have lived here all their lives, as to the pyramids.

"What do you think makes them?" was asked of the intelligent man.

"I don't think anything about it," he replied. "I know it's muskrats."

"But the muskrats couldn't get into a pile of rocks and gravel," was suggested.

"That's just what puzzled me," continued the fisherman. "But I've seen a muskrat under water on a heap and killed it right there. No, I never see one bringing rocks, but what was he doing on the mound if he wasn't totin' stones?"

Everything that has been learned in youth, and everything that we learn day by day, can be converted into power that shall make us better parents and children, better brothers and sisters, better neighbors and citizens, better men and women, if only utilized and brought into living activity by character and will.

Contempt, real in its incipient state, banishes all benevolence or helpfulness. It kills the sentiment, destroys the desire, and banishes the power of doing good. Attempts to assist another made in this spirit are like aims thrown scornfully to a beggar; they can only insult and wound without benefiting either the giver or the receiver.

The distinguished U. S. Senator from Indiana, Hon. Daniel W. Voorhees, certifies that in a case of rheumatism in the back, he obtained instantaneous relief from St. Jacobs Oil. He says it is a remarkable remedy.

The French have more suspension bridges than any other nation on the globe.

When you visit or leave New York city, save baggage expenses and \$2 carriage fare, and stop at the Grand Union Hotel, opposite Grand Central depot. An elegant room, fitted up at a cost of one million dollars, \$1 and upward per day. European plan. Breakfast. Restaurant supplied with the best. Horse cars, stage and conveyance to Manhattan. A. Whence comes this? All recognized medical authorities tell us that the fire which consumes the brain is always kindled by derangements of digestion; that good digestion is impossible without pure blood, and pure blood is never known when the liver and kidneys are out of order. Under such circumstances, a preventive should be sought, and for this Warner's safe cure is sovereign—a fact conceded by the best authorities in the land, and it is especially commended by the celebrated Dr. Dio Lewis. —*Rochester Democrat.*

AMERICANS projected, built and now control the street railroads of Moscow, Russia.

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Artificial cats are now made of celluloid.

THE temples in Dahomey are almost entirely built of human skulls.

Longfellow's Birthday Book is a beautiful present to give any lady. But there is a little book published in pamphlet form, with no pretensions to literary merit, that would be as appropriate, and might be the means of saving a life. It is called Dr. R. V. Pierce's treatise on diseases of women, for whose peculiar troubles the "Favorite Prescription" is especially designed. It is profusely illustrated with wood cuts and colored plates, and will be sent to any address for ten cents in stamps, by the World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

ONE-THIRD of all the banking done in the world is done in England.

If you are bilious, take Dr. Pierce's "Pleasant Purgative Pellets," the original "Little Liver Pills." Of all druggists.

THERE are 557 Grand Army posts in New York State.

FOR DYSPEPSIA, indigestion, depression of spirits and general debility in their various forms, also as a preventive against fever and ague and other intermittent fevers, the "Ferro-Phosphated Elixir of Calceola," made by Geawell, Hazard & Co., New York, and sold by all Druggists, is the best tonic; and for patients recovering from fever or other sickness it has no equal.

Valuable Horses are often lost through ignorance on the part of the owner. Send 25 cents in stamps to Horsebook Co., 134 Leonard St., N. Y. City, and learn how to detect disease and how to cure it. This may save the life of your animal.

FRUZZER AXLE GREASE is the best and, intrinsically, the cheapest. Don't work your horses to death by using poor grease. Try it. The population of the world is estimated at 1,400,000,000.

The Epidemic of Crime. Whence comes this epidemic of suicides and murders? Recent discussions have named several causes. Hon. C. H. Reeve, of Indiana, charges it to infidel teachings—holding that hopelessness of a future state cripples fortitude for bearing life's ills. Another declares suffering from the universal human depression the cause. A third writer attributes it to increasing insanity, a physician thinks much of the tendency is inherited, while temperance advocates lay the responsibility upon strong drink.

Free-thinkers have committed suicide, but so have orthodox churchmen. Financial straits have been many, but the wealthy have also taken their life. Insanity and dissipation have preceded suicides and family murders.

One feature common to almost every such crime challenges attention. Well nigh every report of suicide and family murder mentions the perpetrator as having "for some time been subject to melancholy." Whence comes this? All recognized medical authorities tell us that the fire which consumes the brain is always kindled by derangements of digestion; that good digestion is impossible without pure blood, and pure blood is never known when the liver and kidneys are out of order. Under such circumstances, a preventive should be sought, and for this Warner's safe cure is sovereign—a fact conceded by the best authorities in the land, and it is especially commended by the celebrated Dr. Dio Lewis. —*Rochester Democrat.*

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It has saved from lingering disease and death hundreds who have been given up by physicians to die.

It cures all diseases of the Kidneys, Bladder, Urinary Organs, Dropsy, Gravel, Diabetes, and Incontinence and Retention of Urine.

It encourages sleep, creates an appetite, braces up the system, and renewed health is the result.

It cures Pain in the Side, Back or Loins, General Debility, Female Complaints, Disturbed Sleep, Loss of Appetite and Bright's Disease.

SOLD PROOF. "God loved a cheerful giver."

Railroad Men. Springfield, Mass., April 20, 1893. "I am satisfied from personal experience and care that HUNT'S (Kidney and Liver) Bitters will do just what is claimed for it."—Albert Hill, Farmer B. & H. R.

"Be just in all thy actions."

The Druggists in Utah. Worcester, Mass., April 11, 1893. "I was troubled with weakness of the Kidneys. Did not know the trouble but constantly grew worse. Crinations were painful and accompanied with blood. Netting an advertisement of HUNT'S (Kidney and Liver) Bitters I procured a bottle. I began immediately to improve in many respects. My appetite soon became without pain. My appetite is now good and I feel renewed vigor, thanks to HUNT'S (Kidney and Liver) Bitters."—William Jones, Marine Engineer, 73½ Hanover Street. Price \$1.25. Send for Pamphlet of Testimonials.

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