

## THE GREAT HESPER OR THE SEARCH FOR THE BIGGEST DIAMOND IN THE WORLD.

By FRANK BARRETT.

CHAPTER XII.  
Continued.

I again thrust my arm in and explored the hole, thinking, though it was very likely—that the diamond had slipped out of the case or been put in separately. It was a kind of cul-de-sac—the earth had fallen in from above and blocked the passage at less than the length of my arm from the entrance; but I did not give up the search until I was absolutely certain that the Great Hesper was not there. It was not probable they would put the diamond in such an open place; the leather case was different. It was unsafe to keep that, but it was of little consequence where they abandoned it. But why had they taken the diamond from the case, and what had they done with it?

A clue to this mystery also I discovered before long.

When I got back to the Abbey, Brace, Van Hoock and Lola were in the library with the police officer, Sir Edmund, Mr. Wray—his lawyer—and a couple of friends, justices of the peace, who had been brought by the rumors which were already widely spread.

Lola was still under examination. She was sulkily silent. It was with the greatest difficulty that any response to the questions put could be drawn from her. But she admitted seeing the man drop from the oriel; and asked if it was one of the servants, she replied firmly, "No." But more than this could not be got out of her on this point.

To the inquiry how she had discovered the means of getting from the bay into the oriel, for it was by that way she had come to my assistance, she replied that she "had seen it done before," but she would not say whom she had seen.

The police officer asked me to go into the adjoining dining-room with him.

"May I ask," he said, "if you have any reason to suspect that you have been robbed by your friends—your partners in the diamond? Because they profess to have been in the woods all the morning, whereas I have good cause to believe that they have been in the town of Southampton part of the time."

"Are you sure of that?"

"I will take my oath that I saw the little savage in the red petticoat in the High Street as I started to come here."

CHAPTER XIII.

"I advise you, sir," said the officer, "to take the advice of Sir Edmund's solicitor, Mr. Wray."

I agreed and he called in the lawyer. I told him, without reserve, all that had happened, showing him the leather case I had taken from the hole where Brace had placed it.

"A couple of cunning scoundrels!" he exclaimed; "their pretended suspicion of each other was, of course, intended to blind you to their complicity, while each, by implicating the other, diverted suspicion from himself."

"I was never in my life so completely deceived," I said. "Brace seemed to me the embodiment of rough honesty. I liked the man, and it was a painful shock to me when I found him unfaithful and a thief."

"He is worse than that, Mr. Thorne; he is a murderer at heart; for there can be no doubt it was he who attempted your life; it was a sheer impossibility for the other man to do it. We have heard the story of the robbery from Sir Edmund. The intelligence that planned the attack was doubtless Van Hoock's."

"He looks like a man of subtle intellect. I do not see what other part he could have played in this affair."

"Sir Edmund told me, sir," said the officer, "that on your return from the left wing you heard snoring in Brace's room."

"I certainly did."

"That could very well have been Van Hoock, who had taken Brace's place while he slipped out into your room—another proof that the two were acting together."

"Precisely," said Mr. Wray; and then, with an air of business—"Well, now, what is to be done? That is the first question. The evidence is insufficient to charge either of the men even with being concerned in the robbery. The leather case proves nothing. They might declare they found it empty, and have concealed it through fear of accusation, or they might all three swear your statement to be false, and absolutely accuse you of being yourself the thief. And until we can substantiate the charge by absolute proof, we must be careful to conceal our suspicions from them. If they think they are likely to be brought to justice, they will quit the country by the first steamer that leaves Southampton—and we cannot stop them. The thing that must be done at once is to search for the diamond. That is your affair," he said, addressing the officer; "undoubtedly they have placed it somewhere in Southampton, in readiness to take it flight becomes necessary."

"I'll have all the kens searched before morning."

and silent as though he were carved in stone, and came to where I was standing. My face must have told him that my heart was hardened. But he stretched out his hand, and said hoarsely:

"Say good-bye to us, pardner."

I folded my arms and shook my head. He dropped his hand by his side.

"Perhaps you're right," he said, remorsefully, "perhaps you're not. Time will show that I've got a clean conscience, if Heaven is just." He paused, then in a still lower tone, and with an accent of reproach, he added: "Say yer hope so, pardner, say yer hope so."

"I hope so," I said.

He shook his head ruefully.

"Tain't yer old voice, Gentleman Thorne—there's no heart in it. We've thought it together, and we've shared our bacca out there, and his chin twitched convulsively, and turning away he muttered, "It takes all the pluck outa me to part like this."

Lola was standing in a corner of the room by the door, with her eyes fixed upon me. As Brace was about to pass through on his way out he caught her wrist savagely in his hand. As savagely she tore it away, and in her turn came and stood before me.

"I'm a-go'n," she said.

"And a good riddance," I thought, exasperated by the belief that she knew where the diamond was, and could reveal the whole mystery if she chose.

"You ain't goin' to let me go like him, are yer?" she asked; "you ain't goin' to let me go without sayin' good-bye?"

There was deep pathos in her voice. The friendless little savage loved me. She had saved my life. My heart smote me for forgetting that I gave her my two hands; she drew them round her slight body, and then, flinging her arms about my neck, she whispered with tender impulsiveness:

"Shall I be good? Shall I tell you where it is?"

But just at that moment her fine ear and, catching sight of Edith, who was entering from the dining-room, she started back.

Scowling over her shoulder at Edith, her eyes aflame with hate, she said, in a voice from which all tenderness had gone:

"For her sake? No!" and, without looking again at me she went from the room and joined her father.

CHAPTER XIV.

My engagement with Edith was broken off that evening.

I had not the slightest hope of recovering the lost diamond, and when I told Sir Edmund my reasons for despairing, he did not attempt to conceal his satisfaction with regard to my determination.

"A man should never be dependent on his wife. It must necessarily be a source of humiliation to him, and no man suffers humiliation without in time losing his self-respect. That will never, I hope, be your loss, Bernard."

"Poor girl, it will be a great grief to her, for though she has known you a little while, she has found in you a great deal to admire and love, and her affection is so tenacious that I doubt if she will ever cease to love you." He sighed, and for some moments sat in thoughtful silence. Then he said: "We must not break her heart, my dear fellow—we must leave her some hope. As it is necessary that for some time you should be separated, it is right that you should both be free from other engagements, at the same time there may be a tacit understanding."

"Should you succeed in making a position for yourself in a reasonable space of time, and then are both still firmly disposed toward each other, the engagement shall be renewed."

"There is no necessity for you having a large fortune, but it is essential, I think, and as you happily think also, that you should be able to provide yourself with the necessities of life. I promise that Edith shall bring with her the luxuries."

He then offered to use his influence in procuring me a secretaryship; but as I had never been accustomed to sedentary occupation, and such an appointment could never satisfy my more ambitious hopes, he generously placed his purse at my disposal, as if I might find occasion.

I have purposely abstained from dwelling upon my love affairs, for if I entered into them at all, my feelings would lead me to dilate upon the delights of my brief wooing, to the exclusion of the graver matters which form the subject of this book. For this reason I shall pass over the bitter record of our parting. I will only say that Edith's last words awakened courage in my sinking heart.

I could form no satisfactory theory with regard to the Great Hesper robbery, but I was disposed to regard Van Hoock as the least culpable agent concerned in it.

It was impossible to tell how the robbery affected this mysterious man. As I have said, during the investigation he sat perfectly motionless and perfectly silent. His face wore the inscrutable expression of a death mask.

Sir Edmund had no sympathy with him after learning from me the particulars relating to the adventures of the morning.

When we entered the library from the dining-room, where our interview had taken place, we found Van Hoock sitting where we had left him.

"I have ordered the carriage to be at the door in half an hour, Mr. Van Hoock," said the baronet. "Be good enough to make your arrangements for departure by that time."

To be Continued.

A Chinese soldier gets a dollar a month.

## OF INTEREST TO WOMEN

FORFEITS \$50,000-A YEAR TO WED  
Lady Maple, the widow of Sir John Blundell Maple, the racing man who died November, 1903, was married recently at Nice to Montagu Ballard. Sir John's will provided that in the event of her remarriage half of the widow's annuity of \$100,000 should be forfeited.

SCHOOL NURSES.  
There are now fifty school nurses in Manhattan and Brooklyn, and Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore, Cleveland, Los Angeles and Grand Rapids have followed the example set by New York only two years ago, in making nurses a part of the medical inspection of the schools.

PRIZES FOR SUFFRAGE ESSAYS.  
Prizes are now offered by the Philadelphia County Woman's Christian Union for the best essays on woman suffrage. The Temperance Union has long included women's franchise in its platform, but under the superintendency of Mrs. Olive Pond Aiken, it has begun anew to promote the discussion of suffrage in the Sunday schools, the teaching of it in the public schools, and the encouragement of it as a subject for college debate.

ENVOIUS CANADA.  
There is a great deal of gush about the charming and all-conquering American girl. What is the truth about this much-lauded damsel? The most attractive American is she who is educated abroad, who imitates the voice of the Englishwoman and the dress of the Frenchwoman, and who uses the money accruing from Chicago pork or New York stocks to buy, so far as such things may be bought, the Old World graces of speech and attire.—Canadian Magazine.

HOW A CHILD SHOULD SLEEP.  
One should not sleep with either arm raised above the head. It is a pretty gesture, as watched in the slumbers of a child, but it is better, if not so pretty, that the arms should lie by the sides than stretched upward. One knows, when one stops to consider, how fatiguing the attitude is, if preserved in for a few moments, of reaching up into a closet, or arranging high draperies at a window, says Woman's Life. What, then, must be the effort when kept up throughout a whole night?

LEGAL POSITION OF ALEXANDRIA  
The legal position of Queen Alexandria is very curious. So far as her private business is concerned she is not regarded by the laws and customs of England as a married woman. The idea of the law is that affairs of state consume all the time of the King, and, therefore, no responsibility for the Queen's private business rests upon him. If the Queen contracted debts in her husband's name he would not be responsible for them, as any other husband would. The King cannot be sued for debt, but the Queen can be.

DRESSING BY THE YEAR.  
About the newest contract between modiste and madam is one by which the former undertakes to clothe the latter for a year for a fixed sum, payable quarterly. The customer binds herself to buy everything from the modiste, who, on her part, is bound to supply whatever is required for each change of season. In this way the woman knows just how much she spends on clothes, and shopping is immensely simplified, while the dressmaker keeps her customer and makes something out of her.—New York Press.

QUEENS TALLER THAN KINGS.  
There is hardly a king in Christendom today whose wife does not overtop him by a head.

King Edward is quite six inches shorter than Queen Alexandra.

The czar is overtopped a full head by the Czarina.

Kaiser Wilhelm is of the medium height, but the German Empress is tall, and that is why the proud Kaiser will never consent to be photographed beside his wife, unless she sits while he stands.

The King of Italy, short and squat, hardly comes up to the shoulders of the tall, athletic Queen Helena.

The King of Portugal, though father, is less tall than his Queen.

Even the Prince of Wales is shorter a good four inches than the Princess.

The Young King of Spain is several inches shorter than his new bride.

The Queen of Denmark towers above her royal spouse.

A THOROUGHGOING BORE.  
It is an easier matter than most women realize to become a thoroughgoing bore. We have all met such a woman. She will recite for hours at a stretch the troubles—real or imaginary—which she experiences with her husband, children, and servants.

She also usually complains of being a bundle of nerves, and yet takes a keen delight in telling you the most sensational and barrowing news which she has read until she makes your flesh creep.

The grievances which such a woman has to tell you are inexhaustible. No matter how earnestly she may work for the good of others, she is always sure that no one appreciates her efforts. The truth of the matter is that she really does nothing at all without



largely advertising the fact, and nobody can appreciate self-praise, says Modern Women.

The woman who would avoid becoming a bore must remember that her personal affairs and petty domestic troubles are of no particular interest to any one, except, perhaps, to spiteful neighbors, to whom they form food for gossip.

THE PRETTY THROAT.  
The most beautiful neck in the world loses its charm completely unless the texture of the skin is fine and the color creamy white. Yet how few necks are there which have not suffered in some way from high and tight collars, starched neckbands, or dyed ribbons? Starch, by the way, is often accountable for the brownish rings seen on so many throats. Boas, furs, turned-up coat collars, all seem to leave some sort of stain on a woman's throat, and yet these can be removed by the simplest means. Pure alcohol, or, if preferred, pure cologne, is about the best way of taking off an ordinary collar stain. It should not be forgotten that alcohol need not be used on the face should always be of the very best quality, says Woman's Life.

In ordinary street dress a woman's neck, provided her collar is pretty and fits well, never causes her a second thought; but when she is in evening dress and the lines of the throat are revealed, the lines and creases she has engraved on her neck by carrying her head awkward are a source of real concern to her.

CONSIDERATION FOR HOSTESS.  
Give the hostess some time to herself. She cannot discharge her duties satisfactorily with you following her everywhere, distracting her thoughts. Keep out of the work-rooms unless especially invited to them. Have letters to write in your room or a book that must be finished while she is busy with household tasks. Choose a corner in the veranda or a walk in the shrubbery when you know that father or the children are wanting a talk with mother. Find when she takes her siesta and have yours at the same time. Then when she has an hour to give to you, you will find her rested and delighted to talk with you.

Contribute to the pleasure of each member of the family. Pater-familias will enjoy talking his hobby to you, if you will read up enough to be an intelligent listener. The little ones will be enchanted with story-telling or reading aloud, and it will keep them from following the footsteps of tired mother. The busy housewife is sure to have some piece of embroidery or sewing whose unfinished condition is fretting her. Complete it and see how pleased she will be.

When any little treat or surprise is prepared for you, enjoy it openly and heartily. Do not decline it as well-meaning guests will sometimes do, saying "I cannot allow you to do anything extra for me." Let the hostess know her thoughtfulness and labor on your behalf are appreciated and give her the satisfaction of witnessing your enjoyment.—Philadelphia Record.

CLEANINGS  
Pale gray is the leading tone of the new season.

The figured gauzes, which are innumerable, are to veil figured silks.

Rhinestones are more worn than ever in belt buckles, hair ornaments and purses.

Long silk gloves are now obtainable in all of the pale tints to match costumes.

Chiffon taffeta, foulard and various other silks come in the double widths, which cut to such advantage.

Embroidered buttons find a place on some linen suits, the suit left untrimmed except for them.

Colored gloves are being favored with combination costumes. They have made their appearance in the shops in a bewildering array of colors.

Persian patterns bordering black and white materials were startling at first, but a hint at the possibilities before them brought them at once into favor.

Shadow embroidery, owing to its simplicity in every detail, will be extensively used on parasols, shirt waists, lingerie hats and infants' bibs, caps, etc.

In feathers a new type of aigrette is called the "Sheaf"; it has an ostrich base with a small clump of brush or preening feathers fastened to the tip instead of upstanding.

There is a prediction that "white summer" is before us. Certain it is that white accessories, from the hat to the shoes, are all ready and were never more multitudinous.

The touch of black is again evident in smart toffets. The tendency is somewhat less obvious than it has been at times, but it is always a smartening note if deftly employed.

In flowers, roses are most prominent; rosebuds or half-opened flowers are preferred. Pansies come next in favor and are shown in all the natural colors, and foliage of all descriptions will be extensively used.

Tea-Time.  
It's time for tea, it's time for tea, The nicest time for you and me. With lessons over, books all done, And for a treat perhaps cake or bun.

And nurse said something about "jam," "It's rude," she says, to "stuff and cram," But we'll be well-behaved, nor fake Before the bread and butter, cake.

And don't begin till all are ready, "Now hold that cup and saucer steady," I'm sure our manners, you'll agree, Are very good at nursery tea.

—London News.

Answered at Last.  
Why did the antelope? Only the gun knew.  
Why was the sideboard? Because it heard the table talk.  
Why did the ice cream? Because it saw the acid drop.  
Where was the salad dressing? In the green room.  
Why did the scarlet runner run? Because the dog-roose.  
When did the baker bake? When the loafer loafed.  
Why did the coal scuttle? Because the tongs were snappy. — Boston Transcript.

Never-Failing Chickadee.  
Chickadee is the only bird in my little world that I can find without fall three hundred and sixty-five days in the year. From January to the end of March he comes daily to my lilac bush for suet; from April to early July he is busy with things domestic in the grey birches of the wood lot; from August to November he and his family are talking quietly and hunting in a little flock through the trees of the farm, and from then on to January again, Chickadee is back for his meals at "The Lilac."—Dallas Lore Sharp in Country Life in America.

A Pretty Japanese Custom.  
No people on earth love trees and flowers more than do the Japanese, and the blossoming of the plum trees and the cherry trees they make a time of special holiday. The Plum tree is the popular favorite, and when it flowers, the people, dressed in their best, go out into the gardens and groves and sip tea under the fragrant branches. There they give vent to their aesthetic delight by writing little verses on bits of paper and hanging them up on the boughs of the trees. A fete of a similar kind takes place when the cherry trees bloom. There is a road in the outskirts of Tokyo that is lined on both sides with great old cherry trees for a distance of five miles, and the branches, meeting overhead, form a perfect canopy of blossoms.

A Treasure Party.  
A treasure party makes a funny party, especially where part of the guests are inclined to take a funny view of what they consider their treasures. Each is asked to bring her treasure concealed and hand it to the hostess, and as each one is exhibited the guests are asked to write on numbered lists to whom the treasure belongs. This has some of the features of an heirloom party, as things made a generation or two before are apt to turn up among the treasures, while some of the more practical ones will bring that which she values most from the utility standpoint.

At such a party lately some "bargains" were brought which were valued over and above anything else just at this time by the owner on account of the low price at which they were procured. One girl who had a penchant for the top gallery brought her opera glasses. Another brought a pocket watch which always proved an inspiration and which was afterward read. Souvenir treasures brought from foreign lands are apt to turn up and make a good feature with their little history.

Goose Party for the Children.  
Where children are to be entertained there are delights in a goose party. A sheet is stretched in the doorway and a goose head is thrust through it which is made of white flannel with a bill lined with red flannel, and which has black bead eyes. It has a long, stocking-shaped neck, which is slipped over some one's arm and the head is just padded enough so that the bill can be nicely manipulated with the two fingers.

Interest in the goose is led up to by having some young girl tell the story of the golden egg, after which she announces that she is to appear in the part, which she does with a great deal of bowing. Little bags of popcorn are given to the children, and each is sent up in turn to feed her. She responds by disappearing after taking the corn, and coming back with the small package in her bill for the small person who has been feeding her.

At the table there is a pond in which small, downy geese are swimming, which afterward are given as souvenirs to each one of the little guests, and in the bill of fare the bird appears as often as possible, small geese cakes being baked in goose shape, the croquettes molded into little geese, and the ice cream geese being the crowning triumph.

Magical Experiments.  
To make a banana peel itself. Take a bottle with a neck of a size that would be a close fit for a banana with the skin off. Pour in the bottle a



small quantity of spirits of wine, which burn by throwing in a lighted match. Quickly place the end of a ripe banana in the top of the bottle, having first made a few lengthwise slits in the peel. With a noise like a glutton sucking up his soup, the bottle will begin to "take it in." You will see the peel pushed up and aside as the fruit enters the bottle ready for eating.

The bent match problem. Bend a wooden match in the middle, so that it will be almost broken through, the two parts being only held together by a small section. Now place it at an acute angle across the mouth of an empty bottle and lay a nickel on it. Ask the spectators how they would set about making the coin fall into the bottle without either touching or breathing on the bent match or the nickel. They may suggest several things, but are hardly likely to guess the trick, though it is not hard to do it.

Dip your finger in a glass of water, and, holding it above the angle of the bent match, allow a few drops to fall on the broken part. Swollen by the moisture the fibres of the wood will tend to straighten themselves, and little by little, you will see the angle of the match growing larger and larger, until, no longer supporting the coin the latter will fall into the bottle. That is "all there is to it."—Philadelphia Record.

"Bill" and "Sam."  
Edward Crossman, of Ely, Minnesota, owns one of the oldest teams in America. He has succeeded, in the unusual task of breaking a pair of moose to drive in harness. In his sleigh Mr. Crossman spins about as rapidly behind these animals as if drawn by a prancing span of horses. Ordinary reindeers have long figured in the mythical doings of Santa Claus and are actually driven by the Laplanders, but the moose is a much larger and different representative of the deer family and should not be confused with the reindeer.

The moose were captured at Bear Island lake, a few miles to the southwest of Ely, three years ago. The mother had been killed by an Indian, and a trapper in the vicinity, hearing his dog barking furiously, hurried to the spot, where he found the two moose calves. Mr. Crossman bought these calves from the trapper and secured a permit from the governor to keep them in his possession.

At first the moose didn't relish being hitched up, but, as they are young in years, they became accustomed to it much sooner than if they had been full grown. Their antlers are now growing and by the time these animals are five years of age will be of large size. At the start the problem of feeding them was no small one. When running wild they live on pond lily roots, leaves of trees or tender shoots of willow; and to get the lily roots it is very common to see them wading in the shallow water of their native haunts.

At first Mr. Crossman fed them on willow twigs and young birch; but this became quite a task, for they required about three wagon loads a week. Today they eat hay, turnips and cabbage and seem to enjoy the diet as much as the one to which they had before been accustomed.

One of these moose will eat as much as two horses. They nibble at something most of the time except when laying down during the middle of the day. Each weighs about 700 pounds or thereabouts. When full grown their shoulders will be higher than those of a horse. Their antlers will then add materially to their weight, often weighing 50 to 60 pounds. The moose have a coarse, brown hair. "Bill" and "Sam" have become quite tame. When captured they made no resistance, but seemed to look upon their captor as their protector. A full-grown moose, it is said, is not regarded by hunters as a dangerous animal under ordinary conditions, though his antlers and hoofs alike furnish him means of protection which he uses at times with terrible effect.

The speed which Mr. Crossman's moose team attains is about the same as that of a horse. This is when hitched to a sleigh. As yet they have never drawn a carriage. They know Mr. Crossman's voice and will come to him when called. One of the team, which he named "Sam," he saw when he was one day from the park in which they are inclosed and wandered away a distance of five miles. A picnic party found it, and a young boy to whom it belonged, notified Mr. Crossman and he soon reached it. Mr. Crossman has refused a large sum of money for this interesting team. — Philadelphia Record.

Attorney General No Lawyer.  
The present labor government of South Australia has an attorney-general, A. H. Peake, who is utterly ignorant of law. In the Adelaide Criminal Court recently a defending counsel raised the objection that the information had been sworn by an attorney-general who was not legally qualified to hold the position, but it was not sustained by the judge.

King is Hearty Eater.  
Don Carlos of Portugal is considered the heartiest and most frequent eater of all the crowned heads of Europe.