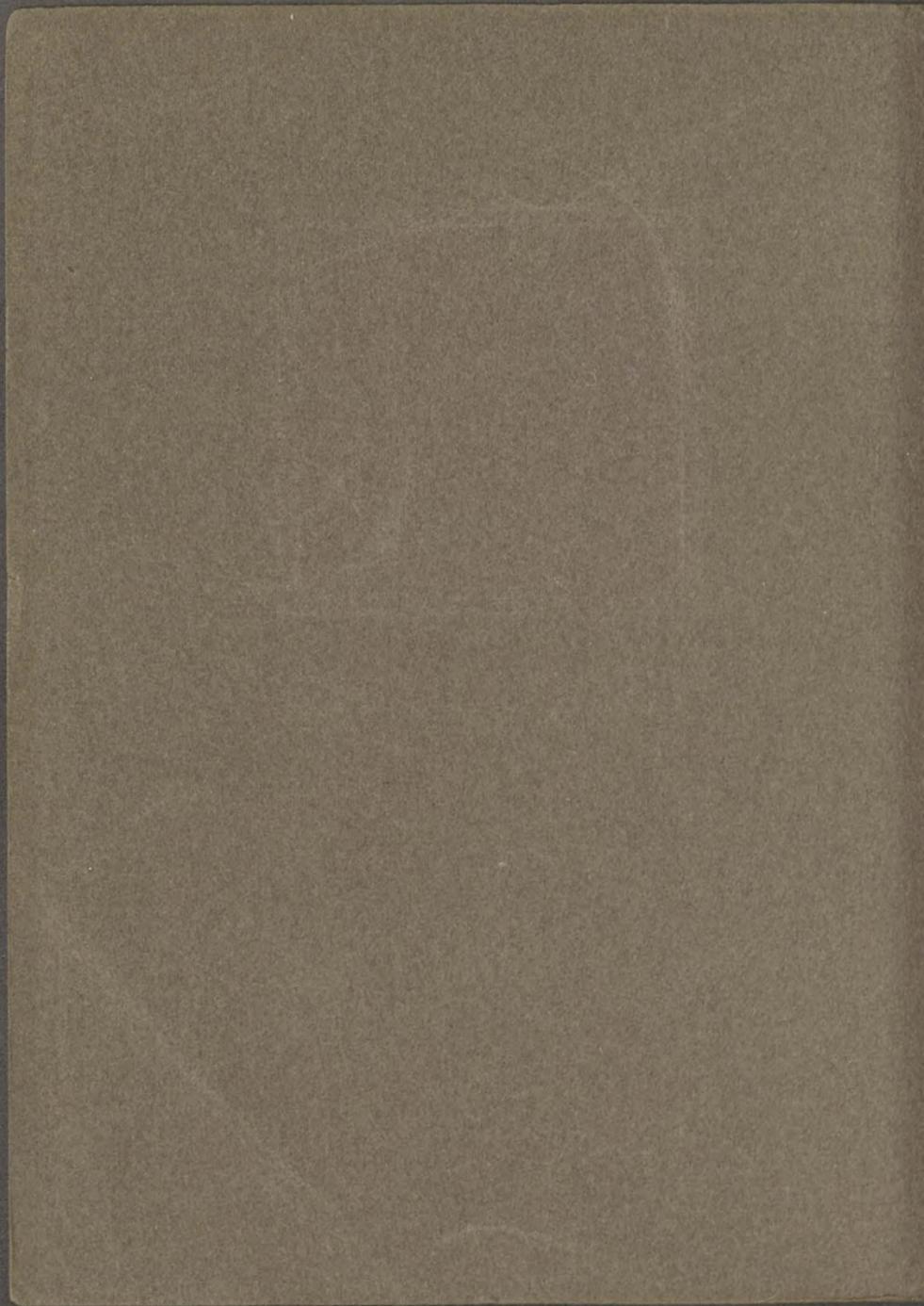




THE DIAMOND



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FOREWORD



THE associations of gems in the human mind are so numerous and varied that many volumes might be written upon them.

~~~~~ Most of our current newspaper and magazine literature about precious stones is a rehash of ancient fables written by men who, unfortunately, knew little of the things they wrote about.

To one who is familiar with the diamond, the wonders of fact are greater than the imaginations of ignorance, and it is with this in mind that we have written the following pages.

H · J · HOWE · INC.  
SYRACUSE

For the information contained in this little book, we are indebted to the following authors, to whom we wish to extend our thanks:

MR. JULIUS WODISKA  
DR. GEORGE FREDERICK KUNZ  
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MR. FRANK B. WADE  
MR. G. F. HERBERT SMITH  
MR. W. R. CATTELLE

# THE DIAMOND

## Birthstone for April

### Symbol of Purity



OF ALL precious stones, diamond, "King of Gems," has the simplest composition. It is crystallized carbon, a material familiar to all of us in the humble form of graphite, the writing substance used in lead-pencils. By what process in Nature's laboratory carbon was crystallized into the diamond is unknown, but scientific investigators agree that the transformation was slow, and that a titanic pressure was a prime factor.

The name diamond is of Greek origin, being derived from *adamas*, meaning unconquerable. To the same root we owe our word, adamant.

The first source whence diamonds were procured was India. The lore of that country informs us that the gem was known and prized at so early a date as 3000 B. C., and indeed, if we are to believe tradition, the Koh-i-noor, one of the world's greatest diamonds (now the property of the British Crown), was worn nearly five thousand years ago by one of the heroes of Indian legend.

The gems obtained from India are generally of a remarkably fine quality, those coming from the

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famous mines of Golconda being second to none. However, India's diamond supply has been practically exhausted, and most of the gems obtained in recent years have come from comparatively new sources.

### DISCOVERY OF DIAMONDS IN BRAZIL

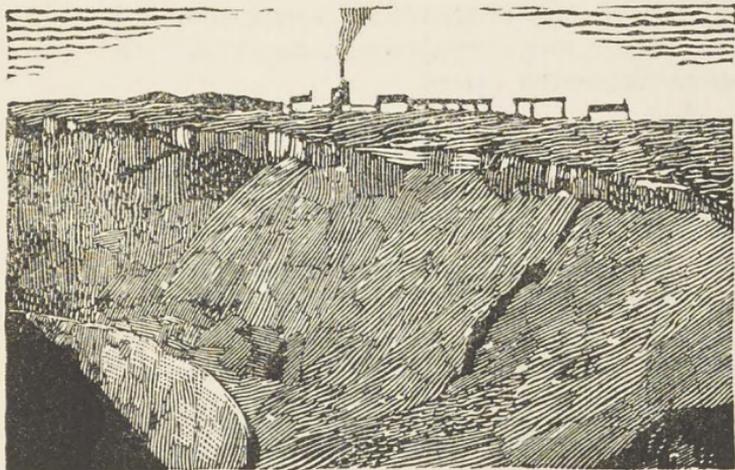
Diamonds of the first quality were discovered in Brazil in 1725. It is said, however, that as early as 1670 the gems were known in the gold-washings and were frequently used by the miners, who were ignorant of their true value, as counters in games of chance. While the Brazilian gems are in no way inferior to those obtained from India, it is interesting to note that in the early days, dealers in Indian diamonds succeeded in arousing great prejudice against the gems from the newer source. It was necessary for many years to ship the Brazilian stones to Goa, a Portuguese possession in India, whence they were sent as Indian stones.

### THE DIAMOND IN AFRICA

The discovery of the African diamond fields, which has not only founded the fortunes of thousands throughout the world, but has also become a potent factor in the creation of a new empire, is

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*The Kimberley Diamond Mine*

ascribed to the chance finding of a diamond, in 1859, among a child's playthings.

As the story goes, the little son of a Boer farmer was in the habit of gathering pretty stones to play with. One of them attracted his mother's eye and she spoke of it to a neighbor who became interested and offered to buy it. Laughing at the idea of accepting money for a stone, the woman gave it to him. Later this stone found its way by a circuitous route to the hands of a mineralogist

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who at once pronounced it to be a diamond. This gem was a fine crystal weighing twenty-three and three-sixteenths carats.

The finding of diamonds in South Africa did not cause any great excitement for several years, but in 1869 a fine gem weighing over eighty carats (now known as the "Star of South Africa," and valued at over \$125,000), was picked up by a native. From that time on, the diamond became the object of diligent search on the part of many, with the result that within the next two years many small stones and two or three gems of outstanding size were obtained. The news of these finds quickly spread, and shortly a rush for the diamond fields followed, which eclipsed in excitement and magnitude anything of the kind that the world has ever seen.

Unfortunately the space in this little book is too limited to tell much of the romance, the adventure, the financiering which reconciled warring interests and heterogeneous human elements, the history of the contest between Briton and Boer, the genius for management which finally gained control of most of the world's diamond output, and all else that grew out of the discovery of diamonds in South Africa. Suffice it to say that

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these things would furnish the material for one of the greatest stories in the history of mankind.

Today, the greatest part of the world's supply of diamonds comes from Africa, although Brazil furnishes the gems in noteworthy quantities, and small numbers are still obtained from India. Diamonds are occasionally found in Borneo, Sumatra, British and Dutch Guiana, Australia, Russia, China, and the United States, but the supply that is obtained from those sources is not of commercial importance.

### QUALITY IN THE DIAMOND

The quality that makes the diamond so supremely beautiful is its surpassing property of reflecting and dispersing light. Obviously, the colorless gem that will allow the most light to pass through its top surfaces to be broken up and flashed back from its internal faces in myriad prismatic hues, is the gem of finest quality. Excepting in the case of the "fancy" stones (diamonds that display red, green, blue, yellow, brown, or orange of decided color), the colorless gems command the highest prices.

Of the white stones, the "Jagers," named from the Jagersfontein mine whence they are derived,

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easily lead all others in beauty and value. These gems are of a snowy-white or almost imperceptible steely-blue body-color. Next to the "Jagers" in point of quality and value are the "Rivers." After these come the Top Wesseltons and Wesseltons, Top Crystals, Crystals, Top Silver Capes, Silver Capes, and Capes.

Quality in a diamond does not depend entirely upon color, however, for the scintillating beauty of the perfect gem is seen only where fine color, freedom from flaws or spots, and geometrical perfection of cutting are combined in happy union. As a rule, the purchaser of a diamond fails to realize the important part that cutting plays in making for the quality and value of a gem. Briefly, a perfect, brilliant-cut diamond is fashioned in such a way that the total amount of light that enters the gem is reflected back through the top surfaces. This effect is obtained only when certain geometrical proportions are most strictly adhered to, the latitude of divergence from these proportions which may be permitted without detracting from the brilliancy of the gem being *less* than two degrees. As diamonds are bought by carat weight there is a tendency on the part of some cutters to sacrifice beauty for weight and gems are

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often given a spread that is too great for their depth. These are, of course, ultimately found among the "bargains" of which we so often hear, that may be obtained for much less than the figure that the jeweler of unquestionable reputation placed upon gems of the same weight. Such stones are expensive bargains in the long run, for they lack brilliancy, and will not bring so high a figure in a re-sale as would a perfectly cut gem of a slightly lighter weight.

### HISTORY

As we have stated, the history of the diamond extends over a period of more than five thousand years. In early times, however, the stone was used as an engraving and cutting tool more often than as a gem. The reason for this is easily understood when we consider the fact that until the Middle Ages the art of cutting this material and developing its beauty was unknown. The diamond was known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, and was highly prized by them and made the subject of much legend, but in their hands it was at best a cumbersome gem. Its surfaces were cleaned and polished by the crude expedient of rubbing one stone against another, after which it was utilized

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in a gem-piece without alteration to the original octahedral form in which the gem crystallizes.

The art of improving the diamond by cutting was discovered in 1475 by Louis de Berquem who shortly afterwards essayed his new art upon three large stones entrusted to him by Charles the Bold, to the entire satisfaction of his patron. It was not, however, until the end of the seventeenth century that Vincenzo Peruzzi, a Venetian, introduced the brilliant form of cutting and revealed for the first time the diamond's amazing "fire." It remained for one of our countrymen, Henry Morse, of Boston, to make a scientific study of the effect of the diamond upon light, and when he cut his diamonds in accordance with what he had found out, little room for improvement was left. For many years Holland maintained what amounted to a monopoly of the diamond cutting industry, but today the finest diamond cutting is done in the United States.

### TRADITION AND SUPERSTITION

Volumes might be written upon the tradition and the superstition that have surrounded the diamond throughout the ages. This gem was supposed to bring victory to its wearer by endowing

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him with strength, fortitude, and courage. It served to drive away nocturnal spectres, and was generally regarded as a "gem of reconciliation," as it was believed to enhance the love of a husband for his wife. Of the many medicinal virtues attributed to the diamond, one of the most noteworthy is that of an antidote for poisons. Strangely enough, the belief in its efficacy in this respect was coupled with the idea that the stone in itself was a deadly poison. In the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini mention is made of the virulent qualities of the gem in an account of an attempt upon the life of the author at a time when he was suffering imprisonment. However, in spite of its poisonous qualities the diamond was regarded as a potent cure for many ailments, including diseases of the bladder, the plague, insanity, jaundice, pleurisy and leprosy.

### THE HISTORIES OF CELEBRATED DIAMONDS

The diamond in its brilliant beauty is white, but if a tenth part of the stories that have been fabricated about the famous gems were true, the stone might better be of deepest crimson. Tales of bloodshed and intrigue in sufficient quantities to supply the most colorful sheets of our Sunday

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newspapers for many years to come, have been interwoven with the histories of celebrated diamonds. Many of these stories are to be regarded as purest fiction, invented to account for the manner in which certain stones came into the hands of individuals whose possession of such gems might have been open to suspicion. Many were formulated merely to give a greater sales value to certain large stones. In some instances, however, the stories seem to have been well founded, as in the case of the famous Pitt or Regent Diamond.

The Pitt Diamond was found by a slave working in an Indian mine, in 1701. To secure the gem he lacerated the calf of his leg and after having the wound cared for, he concealed the stone, which weighed 410 carats in its rough state, in the bandages, and managed to escape with his treasure to the coast. There he offered his gem to the captain of an English ship in return for a small amount of money and passage to a free country. The skipper, professing to accept the poor native's proposal, took him aboard his ship, and having obtained possession of the diamond, flung its former owner into the sea to avoid the payment of the money. Upon selling the gem for a pitifully small sum, the captain drank himself

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into a state of delirium tremens and committed suicide. The gem was later sold to Thomas Pitt, grandfather of William Pitt, for the sum of 20,400 pounds. After having the stone cut and polished at a cost of 5,000 pounds, Pitt sold it to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, for 135,000 pounds. In 1791, in the inventory of the French Crown this gem was appraised at the equivalent of \$2,400,000. During the "Paris Commune" it was, with other valuable jewels, stolen and buried in a ditch to prevent its recovery. One of the robbers, however, turned state's evidence, and revealed its hiding place. All of the criminals were sent to the guillotine with the exception of the one who turned informer. Later Napoleon pledged this gem to the Dutch government, to raise sufficient funds to make a success of the Marengo campaign. Upon its redemption from the Dutch government it was placed as an ornament in the hilt of the First Emperor's sword, where it is now to be seen resting quietly in the Louvre.

## THE CULLINAN DIAMOND

The Cullinan Diamond, discovered in 1905, is the world's largest diamond. In its original state it weighed  $3025\frac{3}{4}$  carats. Because of a flaw in the

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body of this gem it was necessary to cut it into several pieces. The two largest gems secured in this way, however, hold first and second place for size amongst the world's great diamonds. The gems resulting from the cutting of the Cullinan are the property of the British Crown.

### HOW TO BUY A DIAMOND

Excepting in so far as the pleasure to be derived from the ownership of a diamond is concerned, the purchase of a diamond is not an investment. A diamond is, however, one of the least expensive and most practical of luxuries. Unlike the fur coat or similar articles, it does not wear out or become less valuable with changes of style. It does not require expensive upkeep in the form of gasoline or repairs. It is easily transported and it is nearly as negotiable as money. In the event of a forced sale it will almost always bring a figure nearer to its original purchase-price than real estate or any item that might be mentioned.

In the selection of a diamond, quality should always be the paramount consideration. The perfect gem will give the most pleasure to its owner. It will have the highest intrinsic value.

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Obviously there are two methods by which you can be certain of obtaining the quality that you desire. (1) You can familiarize yourself with all of the phases of the diamond industry, a task which has taken many an entire lifetime in its attainment, or (2) you can go to that jeweler whose name and reputation guarantee the quality of his merchandise and his integrity, and accept his word at its face value. The latter is the safest plan, as one who has gained an insight into the diamond industry soon realizes. While there is plenty of latitude for error in judgment on the part of one who is not in the trade, the jeweler knows his merchandise, and if he is a dealer of good-standing in his community he will represent his merchandise *exactly* as it is, for the maintenance of his standing, his patronage, depends upon scrupulously honest dealing at every turn.

