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THE ART

OF

Cutting and Polishing Diamonds,

INTRODUCED IN NEW YORK IN 1871,

WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM LIFE,

BY

I. HERMANN,

860 BROADWAY, COR. 17TH ST., UNION SQUARE.

NEW YORK,

1885.

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# DIAMONDS.

AN interesting article, written by Rosenthal-Bonin in "Ueber Land und Meer," narrates an interview at a Paris café, in the year 1865, with a poor, aged, careworn old man, who regularly visited the place at dinner time, drinking coffee and eating with hunger dry bread which he slyly took from his pocket. This man wore on his small bony finger a large diamond of rare brilliancy and of great value; the contrast created suspicion, and when kindly advising him that by realizing for that gem he could make his life easy, he exclaimed: "What? part with this gem? it is impossible! it is my only joy, my only love that I possess; in my greatest despair it is my support; I forget my misery when I look at it; it is to me a beacon of light, a heaven of bliss in all this world's misery; a visible and lasting symbol of purity, unchangeable and eternal." There was no other history connected with this diamond, but when a young man he bought it cheap, and possessing all the great qualities a pure and brilliant gem could possess, he as a good judge would not part with it at any price; it was his all in his adversity. This would seem insanity and hardly possible that such an affection for a jewel could exist, but it does; it is not only from the wearer, who adorns himself or herself for its beauty and brilliancy to draw attention, or the lover of art and science who finds in it a fountain of hidden knowledge, but it is a charm and life companion to the artist who finds "REWARD" for its beauty and all his exertions and anxiety to bring it to perfection and greatest brilliancy for the enjoyment of others; he, amid all his severe trials in life, found relief when at work in his atelier; it seemed to him when finishing the first brilliant facet as if "THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING" and the sun rising on the far horizon in all its splendor, playing its rays on the pure

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MOST KNOWN AND  
CELEBRATED DIAMONDS:

The Grand Mogul, . . . . .	Weighing 279 karats.
“ Orlow or Amsterdamer, . . . . .	“ 194 $\frac{3}{4}$ “
“ Florentine or Toscaner, . . . . .	“ 139 $\frac{3}{4}$ “
“ Pit or Regent, . . . . .	“ 136 $\frac{3}{4}$ “
“ Star of the South, . . . . .	“ 125 “
“ Koh-i-noor, cut by Hortensio Borgio,	“ 186 “
“ “ recut by Voorsanger,	“ 106 $\frac{1}{16}$ “
“ Schah, . . . . .	“ 86 “
“ Piggot, . . . . .	“ 82 $\frac{1}{4}$ “
“ Nassak, . . . . .	“ 78 $\frac{5}{8}$ “
“ Sancy, . . . . .	“ 53 $\frac{1}{2}$ “
“ Empress Eugenie’s, . . . . .	“ 51 “
“ Blue Diamond, Hope, . . . . .	“ 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ “
“ Polar Star, . . . . .	“ 40 “
“ Pasha of Egypt, . . . . .	“ 40 “
“ Star of the West, cut by I. Hermann,	“ 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ “

**I. HERMANN,**

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**UNION SQUARE, COR. 17TH STREET.**

**SPECIALTY**



**ENGAGEMENTS & WEDDING PRESENTS.**

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**CREATING THE UTMOST BRILLIANCY**

• I. HERMANN •  
OFFICE WITH  
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**NEW YORK.**



THE DIAMOND CLEAVER.



"TAKE CARE, PAPA, DEAR."

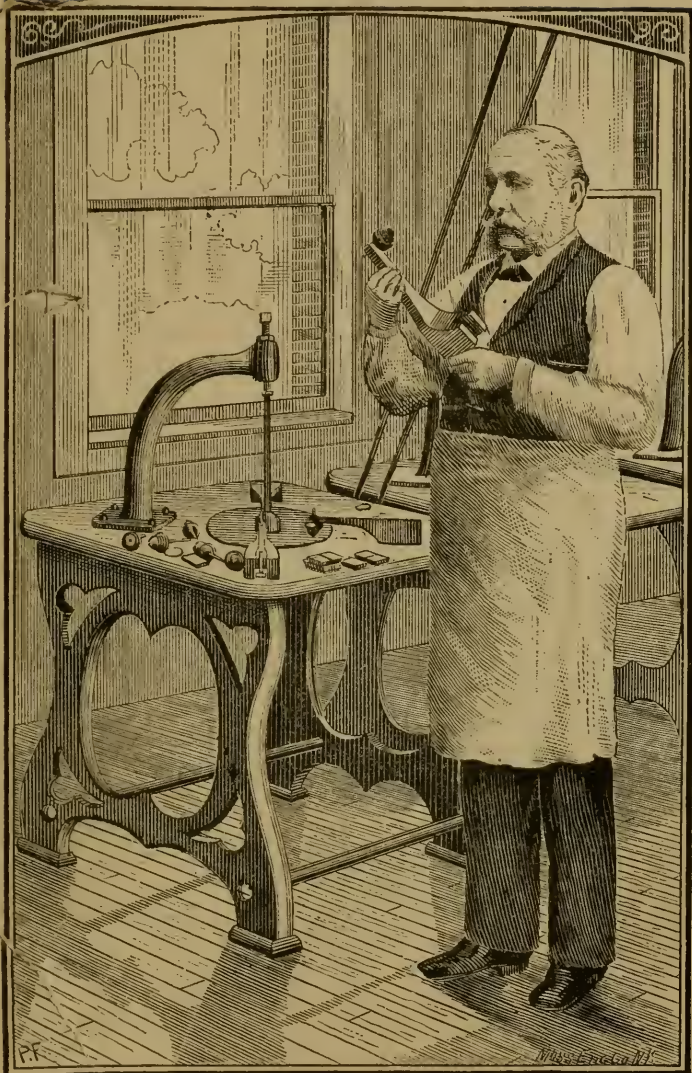


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this industry, the first of its kind in this City and State of New York. I formed, in 1871, with friends, a company which was incorporated as the New York Diamond Co., Importers, Cutters and Polishers, under my direction and management, advancing the art by inventing new machinery and the difficult task of having the import duty of ten per cent. on rough diamonds repealed, for the government seemed unable to perceive the advantage of thus increasing the wealth within the country; this expensive privilege obtained by me is now enjoyed by all others engaged in the trade; three years we worked with success; in 1873 we imported the largest diamond ever having entered this port up to that time, which weighed eighty karats in the rough, a crystal of octahedron form and by water, which was cut by me on a machine of my own invention, it produced a perfect gem, by water, of great brilliancy, weighing thirty-nine and three-eighths karats, it was exhibited to diamond merchants and scientific men and named the "Star of the West" at a banquet given to me by the New York Diamond Co., March 2d, 1874, at Delmonico's, corner 14th Street and 5th Avenue. I received many testimonials, amongst them an enthusiastic mention of my ability in the popular treatise on gems, by Dr. Feuchtwanger, an interesting description and illustrations of our works in the *Scientific American*, October 3d, 1873, and other periodicals. Since, larger diamonds have been cut and polished by me and other firms, consequently the claim laid to the Cleveland (?) diamond to be the largest ever imported and polished in this country is not a true one. The irregularities in the market for rough diamonds, the dullness in the trade, involved great losses, the burden of the New York Diamond Co. fell on my shoulders, and I became the successor of the company, it can hardly be believed what difficulties I had to battle with; hands that I educated, either established themselves or were taken away by richer firms; these induced me to depend entirely on myself. Encouraged by the acknowledgment of leading houses here and in Europe of the superiority of my work, I confined myself these last years to the recutting and polishing of fine diamonds only; there are great many old mine dia-



THE DIAMOND POLISHER.

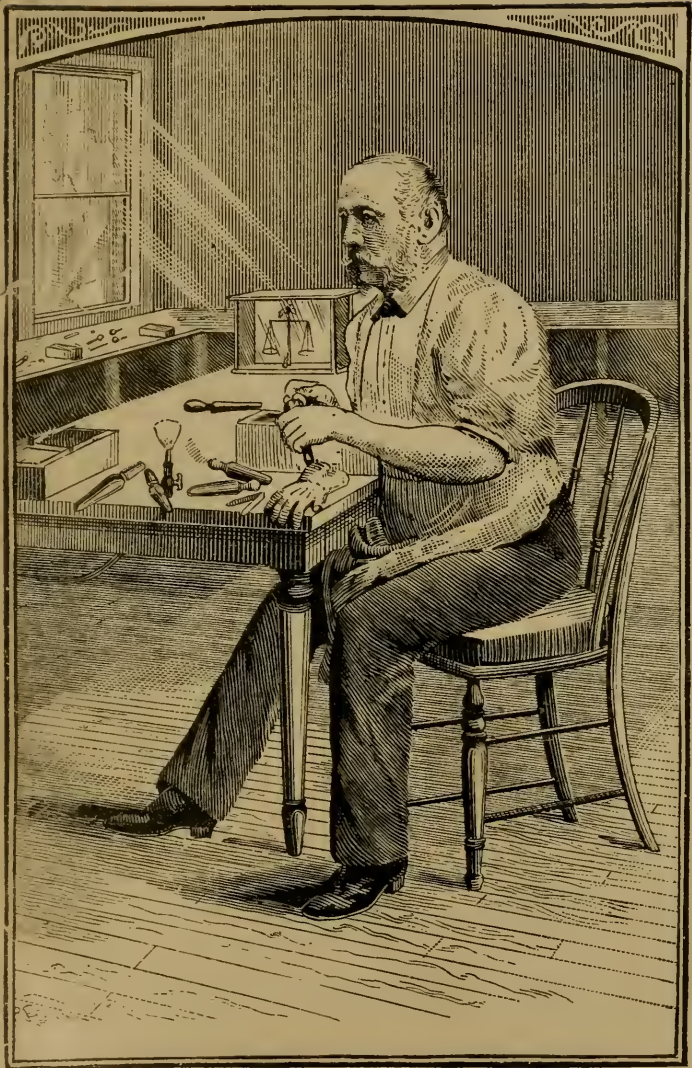


"THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING."

for Karl the Daring, Duke of Burgundy, three large diamonds, the first one a thick stone was faceted and in years after named "Sancy," which was lost at the battle of Granson; the second one came into the hands of Pope Sixtus IV, and the third was in a form of a triangle and set in a ring as a symbol of truth, the faithless Ludwig XI, got it as a present from the unhappy Duke. The pupils of Ludwig von Berguen scattered and were found later in Anvers (Antwerp), Amsterdam and Paris, struggling along for want of rough material. In 1666, through the great influence of Cardinal Mazarin, the art again flourished, he had the twelve thick diamonds of the Crown of France repolished by French artists, which were called the twelve Mazarins, nobody knows what has become of them, in an inventory of the crown jewels taken in 1774 only one is mentioned "the tenth Mazarin," the same is a pure brilliant weighing sixteen karats. It seems that this industry lost gradually ground in Paris, and Amsterdam became the great centre of the same and remains so to this day, only comparatively very few factories existing in other parts of Europe; London is the great market for rough diamonds, receiving the supply from all diamond producing countries. The finest diamonds were found in India, but they were very poorly polished, because they had the mistaken idea that they could realize greater prices on account of size and weight, they were cut irregular and without symmetry, called thick stones; the Kohinoor was so badly polished by the Venetian cutter Hortensio Borgio, that the Shah Jehan not only refused him his wages but fined him 1000 rupies, after recut by Mr. Voor-sanger of Amsterdam, is one of the finest jewels of the Crown of England; great many of these old East India diamonds which come into the possession of lovers of art are repolished, increasing their value.

In 1870, soon after the discovery of diamonds in the South African fields, I received through a friend a few specimens, supposed to be diamonds found in the Cape, for my inspection, which I pronounced diamonds and had them cut with a firm in Boston, who had at that time two mills running, it resulted as expected, and it encouraged me to introduce

THE DIAMOND CUTTER.



“PERSEVERE.”

monds owned in this country which by recutting and polishing can be turned into gems of the greatest brilliancy and their value enhanced. This industry is only in its infancy in this country and there is no reason why it cannot become flourishing, the wealth of this country is increasing from year to year and with it the taste for art, why cannot in time the market of rough diamonds be turned to this country? Our principal jewelers have offices in London and Paris to watch the market for fine material, they bring it now here to have it polished; only fine diamonds are selected for the American trade, time will come when every leading jeweler will have an atelier for cutting and polishing diamonds attached to his establishment, he often requires the advice of the cutter in setting, who knows best the nature of the diamond to effect brilliancy in the setting, often by careless handling the diamond is chipped in setting of which the owner knows nothing. I have succeeded in making arrangements with

**MESSRS, TAYLOR & BROTHER,**

**860 BROADWAY, COR. 17TH ST.,**

**UNION SQUARE.**

who have all the facilities for importing the rough and cut stones, and I should be most happy to give my old friends the benefit of my long experience and skill in this beautiful art and serve them as faithfully as in former years.

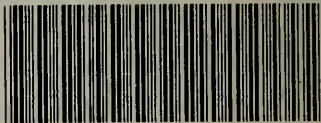


waters of the calm sea, reflecting all the rainbow colors which no other precious stone possesses with such changeable brilliancy; when engaged in the hard work of cutting the diamond he imagines to encounter the loving eyes of a dear one in heaven urging him on to "PERSEVERE"; and when at the dangerous and skillful operation of cleaving the diamond, he hears the sweet voice of his darling boy with the warning, "TAKE CARE, PAPA, DEAR!" A false stroke may involve the loss of thousands, like a false step in life may ruin a man's happiness, and lose him all the fame gained in the great victories of battles won! This is no fancy, it is all truth; it exists in life, it is sublime, it is divine; I recognize in the diamond the greatness of our Creator; one diamond is different from the other not alone in shape, hardness or color, but of different character; it requires good judgment in the treatment of the same, like a good parent will have to exercise over his children. I have taken off chips from a yellow diamond, perfectly white, and have cleaved a perfect diamond of forty karats in two even parts, in order to produce a perfect match from one material; they were cut and polished alike to perfection, yet there was a difference, though not perceptible to the eye; the diamond will also wear by friction with his own, yet it would take thousands of years to wear it off, but it proves that all is perishable in time; only the Creator is perfect and liveth forever.

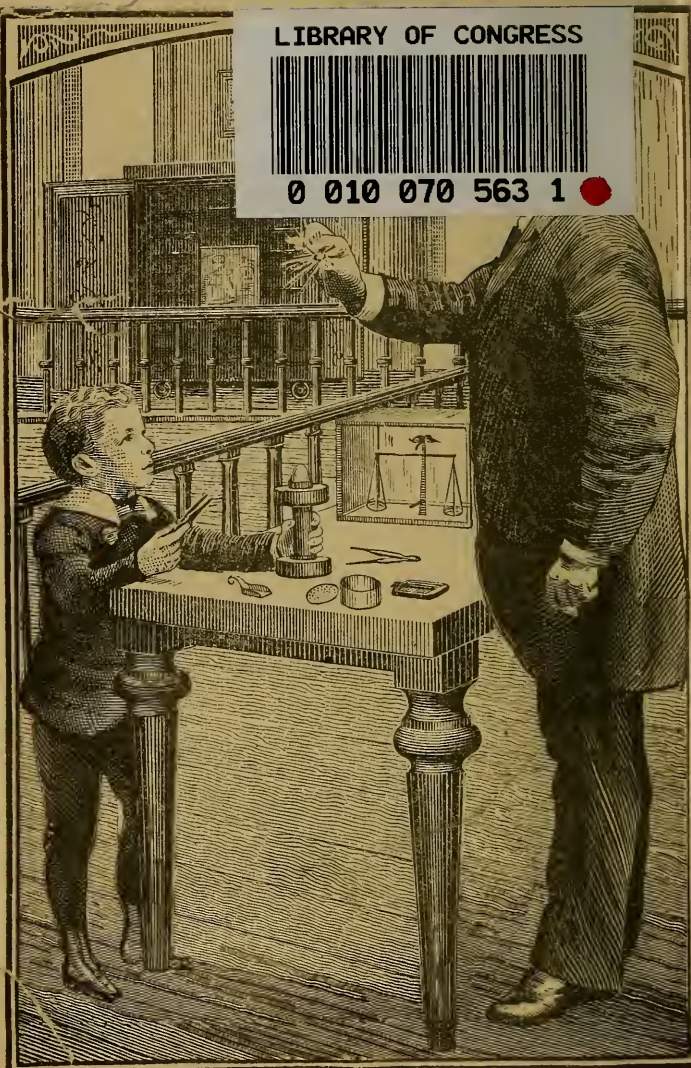
The art of cutting and polishing the diamond was invented in the year 1456, by Ludwig von Berguen, of Brügge, Flanders, it is said that it has existed already in 1373, in Nuernberg, and that Karl the Great wore polished diamonds in his robe, in the inventory of reliques belonging to Ludwig, Duke of Anjou, taken in 1360, several polished diamonds are mentioned. In 1403, my namesake HERMANN, was renowned for his skill in that art, having polished eleven diamonds, which were presented to the guests of the Duke of Burgundy, at a banquet given by him at the Louvre in honor of the King of France. The polishing by Ludwig von Berguen in regular facets created a revolution in the trade, and he was accredited the actual inventor of that art, in 1475 he polished



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"REWARD."

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