

SOMETHING ABOUT NEGLECTED GEMS

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Something about Neglected Gems by Jaques & Marcus

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JAQUES & MARCUS

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New York

JAQUES & MARCUS.

1882

THE METROPOLITAN LIBRARY,
—*—
OF NEW YORK.

INTRODUCTION.

A **STRONG** tendency to individuality has of late years manifested itself throughout the great Art universe in the renunciation of old conventionalities, and in a determined stride in the direction of free taste.

A complete revolution has overturned the old province of æsthetics, and forced a decided change in every department of Art productions.

To realize this new condition in the material world, it is only necessary to consider the present style of house furniture and decoration, and contrast it with that of less than a quarter of a century ago.

We are a people given to extremes, and eager enthusiasm for novelty is but too liable to overstep the bounds of moderation.

Still, this same tendency to impatience under restraint, and to audacious independence, if directed in the right channel, would in time develop a national taste

both daring and original. The fashions of the day tend to the encouragement of decided personality in dress, and the question naturally suggests itself: If in apparel, why not in articles of adornment?

This leads to the consideration of the scope afforded us for originality in the selection of jewels for personal use and enjoyment, in the stones that are here introduced.

There is a large class of gems of rare beauty, color and brilliancy, among which there are many instances of stones that it is almost impossible to duplicate.

Strange to say, these gems have until recently been entirely neglected, overlooked perhaps through ignorance of their very existence, certainly through ignorance of their beauty.

Why should not jewels, possessing such attractive properties and unlimited variety, be more sought after by the public?

A more general knowledge of their beauty would undoubtedly insure their popularity, and consequently increase the demand. It is only because they are so little known that few specimens are at present found in the market.

As far as scarcity is concerned, many of these stones are even rarer than the diamond or sapphire—the green garnet and the blue and pink tourmalines may be mentioned as instances.

Others might also be cited, but they are left to appear under their own special classification, without further introduction.

Illustrations
OF NEW YORK

SOMETHING ABOUT NEGLECTED GEMS.

THE ZIRCON.

The names *Hyacinth* and *Jacinth* are applied indiscriminately to the red variety of this family; whereas the yellow, gray, brown and green specimens are termed *Jargoons*.

It is difficult in many instances to distinguish at a glance the members of this family from some of the other precious stones; but classification can always be determined by the specific gravity, which is greater in the zircon than in any other gem.

The ancients showed a marked predilection for the Hyacinth on account of a pleasing superstition that it would induce sleep, and procure for the wearer wisdom, honor and riches. Evil spirits were supposed to

have a particular aversion to the stone, and to flee the presence of the possessor.

The Hyacinth is particularly well adapted to *intaglios*, the grain being fine, and the stone showing distinctly all the lines of the engraver. Even stones that have a dull center are susceptible of great beauty, as the design covers the dull portion, while the edges remain full of fire and brilliancy.

Gems of various kinds are placed in the hands of the engraver, who forces even the hard sapphire to yield to the merciless diamond point of his tool, and receive the image, now of an ancient warrior now of a mythological deity.

THE CHRYSOBERYL.

This is the name of the crystal most resembling the sapphire in hardness, but differing entirely from it in color.

The several varieties of the chrysoberyl family are so totally unlike in appearance that one would never recognize as sisters the Oriental *Catseye* and the *Alexandrite* of the Ural Mountains.