

**DIAMONDS AND PRECIOUS STONES, A
POPULAR ACCOUNT OF GEMS.
CONTAINING THEIR
HISTORY, THEIR DISTINCTIVE
PROPERTIES, AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE
MOST FAMOUS GEMS**

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Diamonds and Precious Stones, a Popular Account of Gems. Containing Their History, Their Distinctive Properties, and a Description of the Most Famous Gems by Louis Dieulafait & Fanchon Sanford

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LOUIS DIEULAFAIT & FANCHON SANFORD

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DIAMONDS
AND
PRECIOUS STONES.



Fig. 25.—First wash of the Diamond-yielding Soil in Brazil.

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A POPULAR ACCOUNT OF GEMS.

CONTAINING
THEIR HISTORY, THEIR DISTINCTIVE PROPERTIES, AND A
DESCRIPTION OF THE MOST FAMOUS GEMS;
GEM CUTTING AND ENGRAVING, AND THE ARTIFICIAL PRODUCTION
OF REAL AND OF COUNTERFEIT GEMS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

LOUIS DIEULAFAIT,

Professor of Physics, Doctor of Sciences.

By FANCHON SANFORD.

ILLUSTRATED BY 126 ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD.

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P R E F A C E.

It would be easy for any one who had sufficiently prepared himself by previous study to write a purely scientific work on the subject of precious stones; but this is not the intention of the present writer, who aims at interesting a wider class of readers than a work of the kind indicated would reach.

In addition to the strictly scientific information to be given regarding precious stones, there are connected with them a great many facts not less interesting, and equally important for the public to know. To these we have devoted several sections of the following work.

In our times precious stones are used almost exclusively for the purpose of ornament, but in former times the case was very different. By reference to the authors of antiquity, as well as to those of the middle ages and the Renaissance, we have shown the important part that they then played, and what ideas prevailed regarding them.

From the thousands of fables and superstitions of which precious stones have been the subject, we have selected a certain number. In doing so we have disregarded those calculated only to interest the curious,

and have chosen such as were likely to instruct and enlighten.

In Parts iv. and v. it was necessary to introduce some of the elements of crystallography, without which those two important chapters would have lost a great part of their value. We have treated the subject, however, as briefly as possible, but, at the same time, in a strictly scientific manner. To attempt to popularize science, by stripping it, as is so often done, of that which constitutes its very essence, is not to popularize, but to disfigure and travesty it.

The part devoted to counterfeit precious stones will not be one of the least useful. The facts which it contains will carry their own teaching with them, and of this the purchasers of precious stones will know how to avail themselves.

In another part the methods are explained, by means of which modern savants have succeeded in producing the majority of the precious stones. These methods, and the remarkable results obtained by the employment of them, have hitherto remained locked up in collections of scientific papers, or in special treatises. We are glad to have had the opportunity of first making them known to the public at large.

The illustrations interspersed through the book all reproduce as accurately as possible by engraving the objects they profess to represent, and none of them are fancy sketches. The utmost care has been bestowed on this department; for, if the engraver's art is one of the

most powerful means of spreading knowledge, it can only be so by the exact reproduction of nature.

Lastly, we have constantly endeavoured to arrange facts according to their natural relations, so as, by the mere exposition, to exhibit, in a succinct form, a notable stage in the development of the human mind, both from an intellectual and a scientific point of view.

LOUIS DIEULAFAIT.