

**STORIES IN
PRECIOUS STONES**

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Stories in Precious Stones by Helen Zimmern

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HELEN ZIMMERN

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BY

HELEN ZIMMERN.



WITH SIX ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON:

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1873.

249. 9. 105.



THE MAGIC GOBLET.



PREFACE.

IN all times and ages of the world's history precious stones have been valued and esteemed, and divers strange powers have been ascribed to them by the superstitious. Large or very brilliantly coloured gems were thought to confer health and prosperity on their owners. Some kinds were worn as amulets and preservatives against witchcraft and the evil eye; others were held potent to avert any dangers that might threaten the wearer, and to act as a cure for diseases, besides giving a command over the world of spirits. Indeed, there is no end to the value set by superstitious people upon precious stones.

Of the innumerable fancies and legends arising therefrom, one of the most charming is a belief which exists among various people that each month has a particular stone belonging to it, which is supposed to govern it, and to influence the destiny of persons born in its course. This conceit made it customary among friends and lovers to present each other on their natal day with some

trinket containing their tutelary gem. A similar idea was entertained by the ancients, who also deemed a certain gem sacred to each month. They called them Zodiac Stones, and often had them all set together in an amulet, hoping thereby, no doubt, to derive the various benefits each could confer, and thus to circumvent fate.

It is curious to observe how nearly always among different nations the same stones hold this high place in public esteem. On the opposite page is given in a tabular form the months with their several stones, according to the Romans, Persians, Poles, and Arabs. This will best show how slight is the variation that exists. The Persian form is the one I have chosen as my guide, and to this I add the attributes of the various gems. And here I must plead guilty to having swerved in one instance from the course marked out for me. Instead of the Topaz, to which the month of November has evidently been unanimously voted sacred, I have ventured to insert the Pearl, and trust to the indulgence of my readers to pardon this little divergence from the right path.

London, 1872.



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January	Beruna (<i>Illustration</i>)	Garnet.
February	The Magic Goblet (<i>Illustration</i>).	Amethyst.
March	From Sire to Son	Bloodstone.
April	How the Spell was broken (<i>Illustration</i>).	Sapphire.
May	Nellie's Locket	Emerald.
June	'Who beareth me shall overcome'	Agate.
July	'Clapper, Clapper' (<i>Illustration</i>)	Ruby.
August	Between sleeping and waking (<i>Illustration</i>).	Sardonyx.
September	Kept from Despair	Chrysolite.
October	The fiery Stone	Opal.
November	The Gift that fell from Heaven (<i>Illustration</i>).	Pearl.
December	'Only an old Bone'	Turquoise.



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