



## THE FEATHERSTONE DIAMOND.

BY THOMAS KEYWORTH.

I.



It is well to be famous for something; so my friends often told me, and then they added that I was famous for my paper knife. This gave rise to a question which produced considerable controversy at the time: "Is a fact like that conclusive proof of the paper knife being extraordinary, or may it mean that the owner is insignificant?" I hope I took the banter in good part. Bowman said it was capital fun, and Sweepstone said

profession, and he referred to Sweepstone as a mercantile Bohemian. Sweepstone returned the compliment by saying that lawyers existed on a reputation which they won when ignorance prevailed among people in general, but that stock and share brokers were in "the foremost files of time;" they represented the scientific spirit applied to the region of commerce. But they never railed against each other long if they could find a third person to torment.

"The paper knife was a marvelous production, I must confess—only fit for a millionaire," said Bowman. "Or a lunatic," responded Sweepstone, starting the laughter which followed. Because of remarks like these I persistently refused to say how it came into my possession.

Let me describe it. The blade was nine inches long, and it consisted of richly tinted agate. The stone had been



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anything would produce mirth if properly treated, and others made similar remarks as they enjoyed the laughter which was produced. The men who were most thin skinned were readiest with their jokes, so I looked upon it as a compensation and tried not to begrudge them their amusement.

Bowman would have it that I had stolen the paper knife, and Sweepstone hinted something about a still more serious crime being connected with it. Then there were roars of laughter which would have put a light heart into a hypochondriac.

I may remark at this stage that Bowman and Sweepstone were two bachelor friends of mine, both good fellows, and both fond of a joke—at other people's expense. Bowman was a solicitor, and Sweepstone was a stock and share broker. Bowman always spoke about himself as a member of a learned

worked until it was thin enough for the purpose to which it was devoted. Agate is exceedingly hard and brittle, so that great care must have been exercised by the lapidary who ground and polished it. On the blade was engraved the motto, "Nothing but Leaves." The handle was silver—a good, substantial handle, which might have been on a dagger or a bowie knife. It was richly chased, and the ornamentation was very beautiful. On each side of the handle, in the thickest part, there was an oval framework, representing coral and seaweed. Inside the frame was a dolphin, which seemed to be swimming in water and bearing a child on its back. It was indeed a wonderful paper knife; its only fault was that no ordinary mortal would ever have used it for cutting the leaves of a book or magazine.

"Lend me that stolen paper knife," Bowman was fond of