

AMERICAN CERAMIC ART.

Poets have sometimes taken for their theme the rivalry in love which occasionally exists between mother and daughter. It is a painful subject, and of limited application, but, being true to nature, is therefore strictly within the domain of that kind of sentimental fiction which deals, whether in verse or prose, with the moral problems of human life. In more than one such poem both mother and daughter are represented as beautiful and attractive; and the younger woman is made to complain of the elder, that, having had and enjoyed her youth and its fruition, she ought not to stand in the light of the younger and less experienced generation. Most strangely, England and America, mother and daughter, seem as if they were destined to realize something like this personal rivalry—substituting the commercial arts in place of the affections. The United States are, it would appear, endeavouring to wrest the attentions of the world from the parent nation, and trying to charm away her former admirers. They learn from us, and it must be owned in some matters improve upon our instruction. Their illustrated periodicals are ahead of ours in printing and pictures; they produce playing-cards—"tinny"—to perfection; and now, so it is said, are likely to beat our glazed earthenware out of the field. How does this come about? Some twenty years ago America had no school of wood-engraving worth mentioning. Indeed, she was in the habit of importing every playing-card used from the Atlantic to the Pacific; and down to the present decade her earthenware industry could not pretend to cope with our own. Having no native school of wood-engraving, what America did was to import from England the very finest wood-engraver whom this country has produced since the revival of the art by Thomas Bewick, in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The United States offered that accomplished artist, who was also a man of letters, more money and greater consideration than he obtained, or was ever likely to obtain, here. Our loss was his and their gain, and the example of his splendid work spreading far and wide through a new and rich country has led to the happiest results for them. The same thing happened with the playing-card business, and it will be remembered, with the watch trade as well. We who, so to speak, taught them the trick of producing the best goods in the market, now import playing-cards of their manufacture, just as the Swiss trade returns bear witness to the native enterprise of Switzerland in the perfection of cheap watchmaking. Does some such open secret lie at the bottom of the threatened American earthenware rivalry with Great Britain? If so, our capitalists and employers of artistic labour are to blame; if not, there is no reason why Staffordshire should not beat any State in the Union. In this case the mother, in the plenitude of her strength and beauty, must not yield her power of pleasing and pride of place; or, to adopt an American colloquialism, "take a back seat."—*Daily Telegraph (London, Eng.)*

Trent Valley Canal.

The great necessity of the immediate construction of this artery towards the commerce of Canada, may be seen in the fact that Chicago is now shipping grain down the Mississippi and by Philadelphia, for the same rate as by the Grand Trunk and by New York. The shortening of the route some 500 miles by the Trent Valley Canal over New York route and many miles more over the Philadelphia route would give Montreal the control of the grain trade of the North-West. It is to be hoped our commercial centres will be able to look at it in its true light, and lend their influence in urging its immediate construction. Montreal people are asking to have the tolls on the canals removed to give them equal chance with New York in competing for the Chicago grain trade. This is another urgent reason for the construction of the Trent Valley Canal.—*Trenton Courier.*

Planting of Trees.

In an earnest and well written editorial upon "The Planting of Trees," the *Montreal Gazette* calls attention to the importance of the subject. With rather too sanguine a spirit, it says that

"a conviction of its necessity, with a desire as far as possible to prevent further waste and repair the mischief done, has spread over the whole of North America." We should be only too pleased to acknowledge it, were those sentiments prevalent in this part of the country. The editor highly approves of the work being done in the Forestry department of Agriculture at Washington, under the management of Professor Egglestone, and strongly recommends to our notice a little book just published by him, entitled "The Hand-book of Tree-planting," as being as well adapted to Canada as to the States. We hope that our booksellers will soon enable us to test the merits of this work.—*Orillia Packet.*

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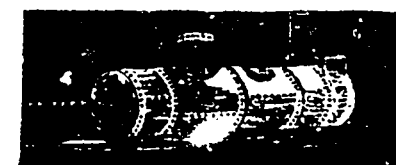
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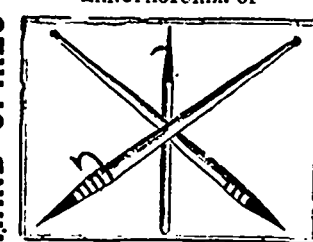
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