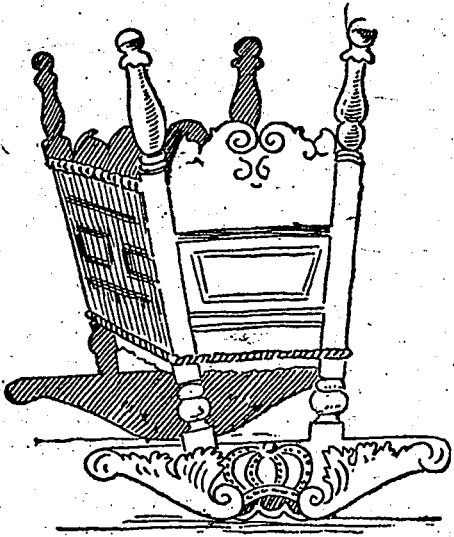


# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Some Historic Cradles.

(‘Silver Link.’)

The up-to-date infant does not use a cradle—that is, a cradle with rockers. The swaying motion, once so universally used in putting babies to sleep, is now declared to



CRADLE OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

stupefy the little brain into drowsiness, and so produce not a healthful, but a torpid sleep. Nowadays, therefore, a child is laid on a stationary cradle, or cot, and the time-honored rocker is relegated to the attic.

But in old days, before hygiene occupied the minds of men, the cradle of an infant king or queen was always rocked, and rocked by special attendants of high degree, who considered it a great honor to be chosen for this service. And as the more the royal infant slept the better it was supposed to be, the person in charge of the cradle was kept busy in swaying it to and fro.

The earliest cradles in English history are supposed to have been brought into England from the Continent, which has always had cradles from the dawn of history. Why the Ang'o-Saxons differed from their kinsmen across the Channel in not rocking their babies, we do not know, but apparently they had no cradles until long after the Conquest. Indeed, the earliest royal cradle of which there is any record was that of Edward the Second. This still existed a few years ago, but has apparently disappeared. It was an extremely rude affair, made of oak, with the nails showing plainly, and with two nondescript birds roughly carved upon it, which might have been either doves or eagles. It was hung by staples and rings on two uprights fitted with rude rockers, and was altogether far from suggestive of being born in the purple.

Not much of an advance on this royal cradle was the one supposed to be the cradle of Henry the Fifth, the great English warrior-king. It has no rockers, but was swayed to and fro by thongs inserted in the slits at the top of each side. There is no mitreing or dovetailing about this simple cradle, the ends being plain boards, to which the sides are nailed squarely. There are, however, some traces of gilding about it, and the birds, perched on either upright, are quite lifelike.

This old cradle was long preserved in the town of Monmouth, where Henry the Fifth was born, but has now passed into the possession of a clergyman in Somerset, who is an enthusiastic antiquarian, and very proud of this prize.

The illustration at the beginning of this article is connected with one of the most famous characters in all history—the charming, hapless Mary Queen of Scots, whose infancy, in this cradle, was perhaps the only

peaceful period of her unhappy life. The circumstances of her birth were pathetic enough, for the young father, James the Fifth of Scotland, lay dying just as she came into the world. In this handsomely carved cradle the little orphan queen was rocked, in Linlithgow Palace, and there it remained, long after her stormy life was over, as a memento of her infancy.

But in the last century Linlithgow Palace was sacked, during the Jacobite uprising, and the carved oak cradle disappeared. All trace of it was lost until, about sixty years ago, a man who was in search of old oak furniture for an antiquary's collection happened to go into a tumble-down house near the old palace, where a woman sat rocking a child in an old cradle with but one rocker remaining.

‘What are you doing,’ said the man (so the story goes), ‘jumblin’ your bairn’s judgment in a thing like that?’

‘Eh, mon!’ answered the woman, proudly, ‘do ye no’ ken that was the Queen’s cradle?’

‘Ye’ll be askin’ a lot fer it?’ said the furniture-hunter, cautiously.

‘I wouldna’ tak’ a poun’-note fer it,’ said the woman. Upon which, of course, the antiquary was informed of the find, and offered the woman a sum so generous that she was only too glad to exchange her treasure for it.

Since then the ‘Queen’s cradle’ has passed through various hands, and now belongs to Mr. Napier, of Scotland. It has been on view, with the missing rocker restored, at various exhibitions both north and south of the Tweed, and is remarkably well preserved, in spite of its vicissitudes.

A very queer cradle indeed is that of Henry the Fourth of France, the great champion of the Huguenots, who was rocked in a great tortoiseshell, which is still pre-

and laurel, a gift from the city of Paris at his birth, to the Imperial Treasury of Vienna when he became a resident there—an illustration, certainly, of the irony of fate.

When Warren Hastings was in the zenith of his Indian fortunes, he sent to the Queen of England a splendid cradle, richly jewelled. It has not, however, been used in this century by the Royal Family, and no one seems to know exactly what has become of it.

Queen Victoria’s cradle was of mahogany, richly carved. Little Prince Edward of York had even a handsomer one—of mahogany, inlaid with gold, and with draperies of brocade and lace. However, the one he really used was without rockers and very simple. It was made for Queen Victoria’s eldest child (now the Dowager Empress of Germany), and, after being used by all the royal children, has now descended to the Queen’s great-grandchildren.

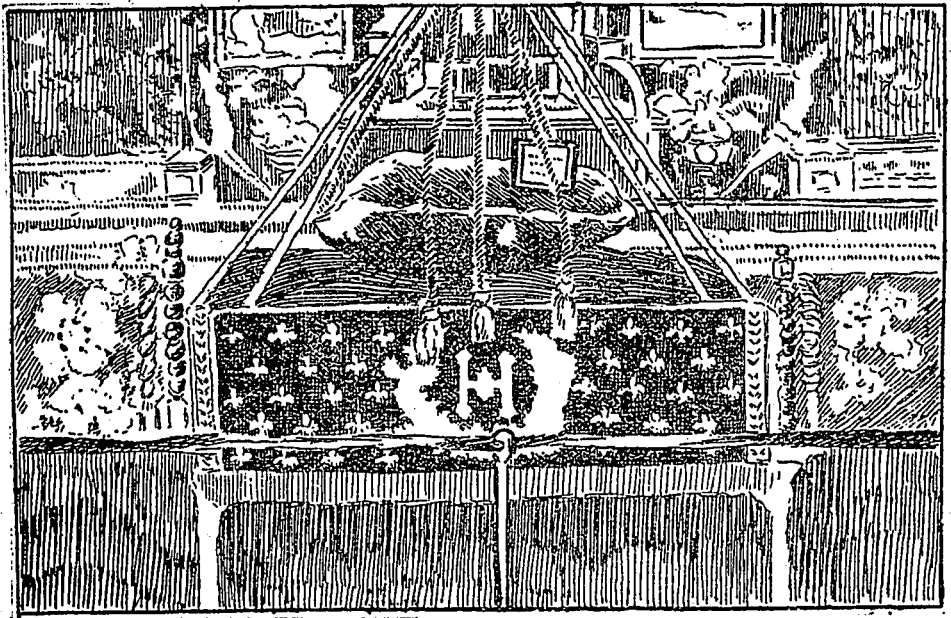
## Seeking Not His Own.

Yes, the sun was certainly shining!

Hugh gave a sigh of perfect bliss, and lay still for a moment without opening his eyes, rejoicing in the touch of the warm finger which had laid itself gently across his closed lids.

How often he had grumbled that he could not shut out that ray of morning light which would thrust itself between the closed blinds and waken him from his sleep! But to-day it was a harbinger of good tidings,—the promise of a perfect day!

Not long, however, did he lie there, kissed by the sunbeam. He was out of bed and had taken his cold plunge almost before the robin in the tree outside the window had half devoured his first cherry; and by the time his breakfast was finished, and he was taking a walk upon the lawn, Hugh came flying



THE CRADLE OF HENRY IV. OF FRANCE.

served in the museum at Pau. At the time of the French Revolution both the castle and town of Pau were destroyed by the mob; but the great tortoise-shell was carried off safely by a Royalist gentleman and hidden until peace came to the kingdom again.

Queen Elizabeth’s cradle is a remarkably handsome one. It is kept at Hatfield House, Lord Salisbury’s mansion, and has the initials of the ill-fated Anne Boleyn carved upon it.

Several magnificent cradles were prepared for the little King of Rome, the son of the great Napoleon. No child, probably, was ever born to a greater empire, nor sank into a more utter obscurity, than this poor little weakling. He presented one of his gorgeous cradles, all in silver gilt, with crowns of ivy

down the stairs, and bounded out upon the porch, frightening Sir Robin out of his seven senses. What rude and noisy creatures these boy humans were, to be sure! And he flew away, scolding.

Have any of my boy readers—even been invited to go for a whole day’s pleasuring with a ‘first-class’ elder brother and his particular college chum? If so, he will understand the anxiety with which Hugh had scrutinized the evening sky, and the delight with which he had felt the light touch of that first early sunbeam across his closed eyes.

They were to start directly after breakfast, go up the river in their boat; rowing, floating, or landing, as they felt inclined; hunting out the cool, deep pools where the