

was performed that the plaintiff firmly believed his ring to have been somehow smuggled into the interior of an egg. Of course this was not really the case; the adroit prestidigitator had the trinket elsewhere all the time and only made it appear as if coming out of the broken egg. However there was no doubt about the stone being broken, and the sole thing, therefore, was to ascertain how it came by the injury. Only at one stage during the whole trick was the ring subject to the slightest violence, and this was when Dr. Lynn received it from its owner into a receptacle that already contained several coins. If the ring was either thrown in or let drop so that the face of the emerald struck against an edge of one of the coins the blow might have been sufficient to cause a fracture, especially if the stone had a flaw previously. Almost all emeralds are more or less flawed; indeed it is doubtful whether such a thing as a perfectly flawless emerald has ever been known. The chances are, therefore, that the gem in question was in this imperfect condition, and that the concussion consequent upon its fall on the coins completed the fracture. Such, at all events was the judicial decision in the matter, and Dr. Lynn carried the day. But warned by experience he now always makes an exception in the case of emeralds when he is asking the loan of a ring. Not all the magic of the conjuror's art can piece together a fractured precious stone: that feat beats Dr. Lynn himself, marvelous as are some of his manipulations, and it is just possible that some county court judge might hereafter believe, as did the plaintiff in question, that this Piccadilly Wizard has the power of wafting trinkets into the interior of unbroken eggs. Emeralds will probably play no further part in conjuring performances *London Globe.*

THE DEMAND FOR THE ANTIQUE.

"We do considerable trade in June and July," said a dealer. "People often come in from the watering places to get the first chance at any good things we may have discovered at the May auctions. It takes us some time to patch them up to suit the market. Yes, there is always a certain demand for these worm-eaten but pathetic relics of the infancy of the republic. We sell to many nice people, who have a taste for the ancient and honorable in furniture, and then we have another class who buy freely and pay high

prices. I refer to the newly rich. During the past ten years many of them have taken a kind of dislike to the word 'shoddy'; they have found out what it means, you see. As a consequence there arises a regard for the 'old antique,' as they call it, which increases our sales and raises our profits on everything classical and rickety in the way of furniture and decoratives. Folks that cannot show a long line of ancestors make up for it by good collections of not strictly reliable tables and chairs." "Is it in men or women that this mania predominates?"

"Women. Men get the fever, second-handed like, from their wives. We have to be wide awake in selling, for we can't make sales without asking high prices. Some months ago a hostler came in with an old rag of a rug to sell. It was large, but an ugly, queer, faded-looking thing, evidently a worn-out imitation of those Persian or Turkish mats which look as though they had been dragged through some retail shop. I gave the man a dollar for the article, and my porter gave it a half hour's experience with a club, then I cut a long breadth out of the threadbare centre, squared the ends, and put a carpet sewer to stitching the pieces together, adding of course a heavy black fringe. Within a week two ladies called, and being of the new artistic school, they, of course, picked out the mat—the ugliest thing in the shop. How tender in color, said one, and she about bit it. It was tender in other respects, too, if she had only known the fact, 'A precious relic indeed,' said the other; 'Is it Moslem, sir?' 'Pure Moslem, ma'am,' said I. 'all wool—comes from the Adams family.' 'What is the price?' she asked. Now I'm an old dealer, but I hesitated for fear I should not ask enough to impress her. She took my confusion for a reluctance to sell, and from that moment her mind was made up. She took a careless turn around the room, by that time my mind was made up, too. No, no; I would not be willing to state the figure we settled on. It was private rates."

"Do you sell many of these old things?"

"The sales are not very large, but the profits are quite fair, quite fair. Antique furniture is our main hold; it sells right along. It is hard to keep up a really good stock. Here is a fine old set—all mahogany. I had to pick that up piece by piece, and some of it was pretty well smashed up. You see, it is finished in a peculiar style; all the table and chair legs are mounted on a lion's claw holding

a brass ball—handirons to match. It's very rare and valuable—worth \$1,000, some call them Hancock's."

"After the General, of course—so solid and heavy?"

"Oh, bless you, no. After old John Hancock, Governor of Massachusetts, and signer of the Declaration of Independence. There have been at least a thousand sets of that respectable old gentleman's furniture sold here and in Boston. Mine is the only original set, and this is why I have taken the liberty to carve a rudimentary H on the the back of the roomiest chair. Every perfect set contains the old patriot's favorite chair. We always put a handsome silk band across the arms because we wish to retain for the purchaser the sole right to sit in it. This fine old piece is the chair known to have been used by Gen. Howe during his somewhat precarious residence in Boston at the revolutionary period. I have two letters strictly authenticating it. I regret to say, however, that from the number of Howe chairs in the market, that officer must have spent most of his time in moving from one chair to another, and done considerable more sitting down than fighting. This one is genuine.

"Certain lines of revolutionary articles are always good; people are only too anxious to believe in them. Washingtons, however, are difficult to sell. The public must draw the line somewhere, and its generally at Washingtons and Jeffersons. A dealer spoiled the market for Washingtons. You see he sold a secretary with a contemporary certificate, and some fool held it up to the light and found the water mark to be 1850. Such manifest rascality injuries' business; it wound up the Washingtons, and I had to mark down a Martha Washington bedstead to an Aaron Burr. I did sell a Jefferson hat stand three years ago, but it stretches an honest dealer's reputation to make many ancient sales. Mayflowers I cannot conscientiously handle; no amount of swearing will make them go. De Witt Clinton and Hamiltons are all sent to Boston just now, and they sent us B. Franklins and Adamses, all having ancient certificates and Boston post-marks—in short, the most reliable evidence. Some of the letters, you will observe, are pasted under the seat. Here is something from Philadelphia—a chair which belonged to the honored Penn. See its strength and capacity—evidently made to order. Now here is the original which