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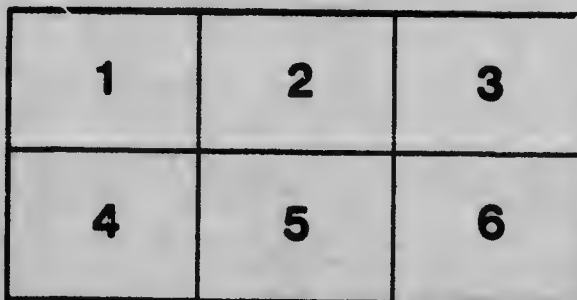
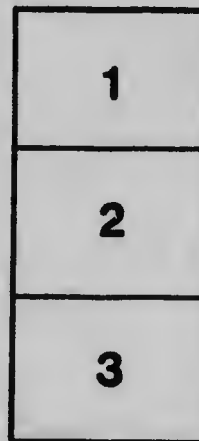
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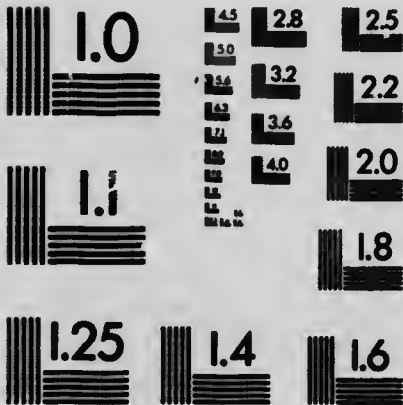
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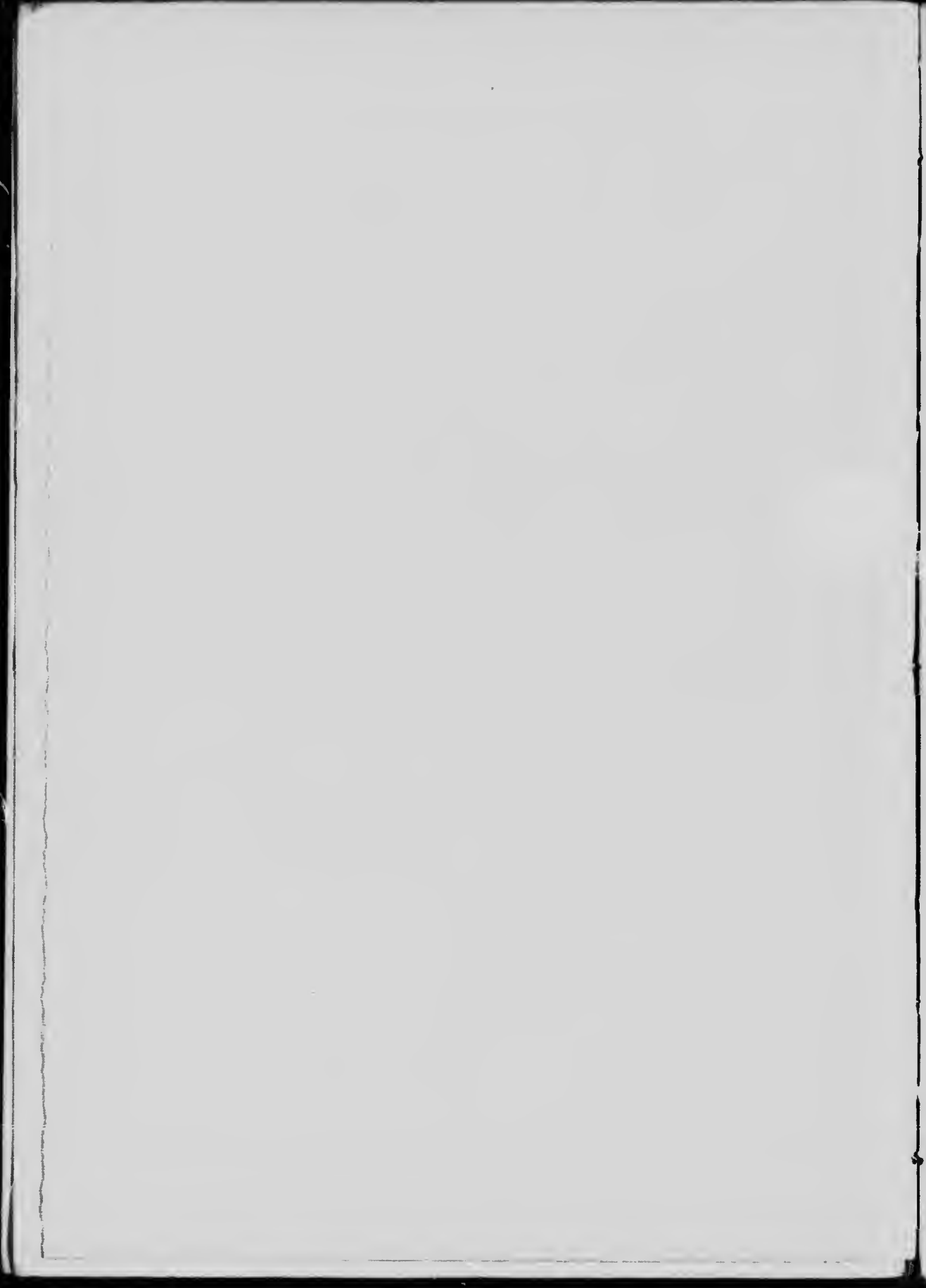
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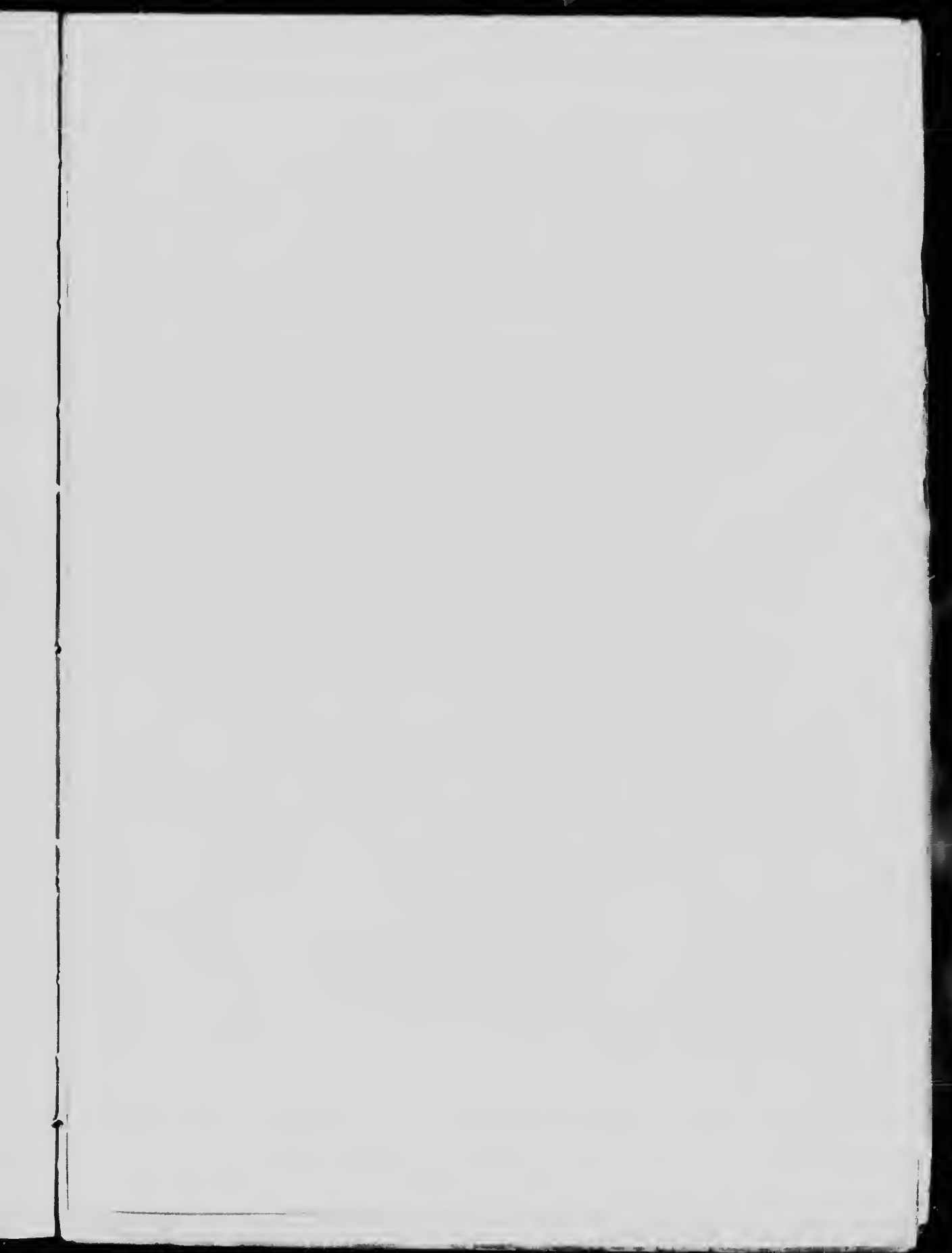
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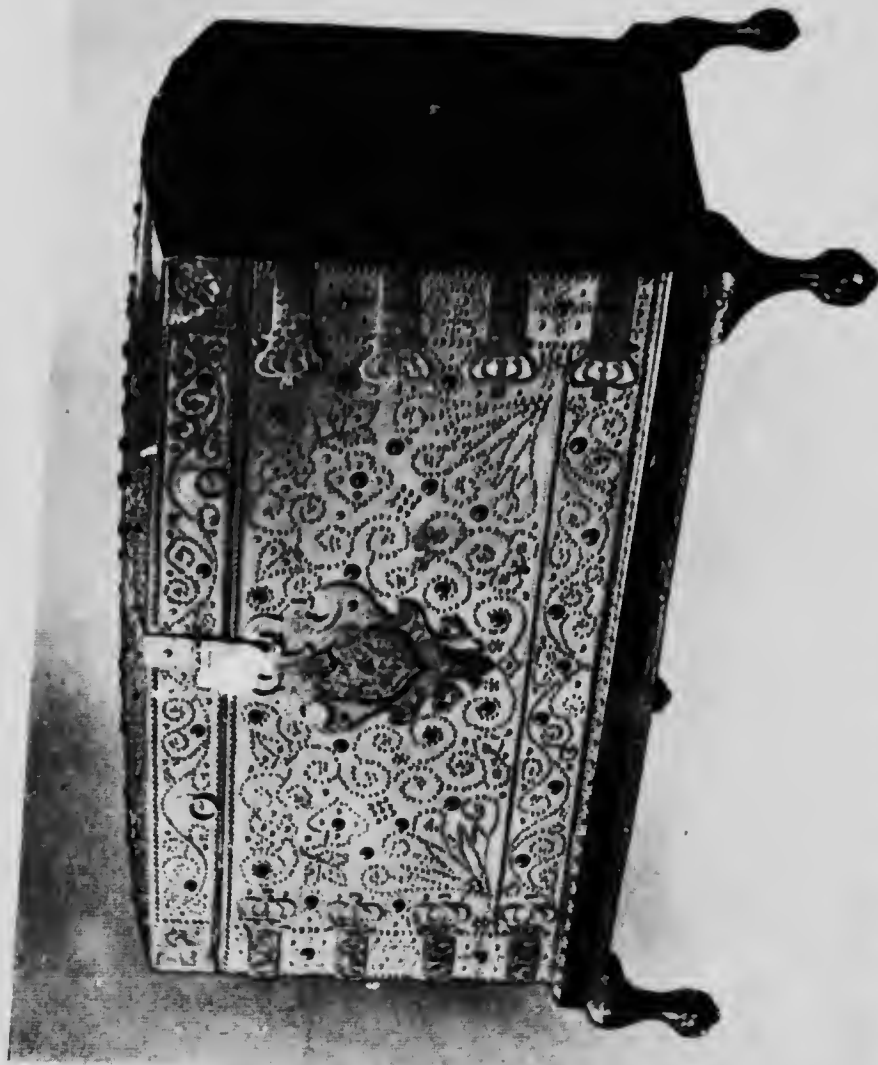
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CHEST OR COFFER ORNAMENTED IN LEATHER AND BRASS, UPON CHIPPENDALE-STYLE STAND.
Frontispiece

MORE ABOUT COLLECTING

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SIR JAMES FOXALL, M.P.

Author of "A B C About Collecting" and "The Wander Years"

WITH 109 ILLUSTRATIONS
IN HALF-TONE AND LINE

J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD

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TORONTO, CANADA



CHEST OR COFFER ORNAMENTED IN LEATHER AND BRASS, UPON GIBBERDALE-STYLE STAND.
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INTRODUCTORY

SINCE the publication of my "A B C About Collecting," changes in the collecting world have taken place which require mention in a book like this.

Most of the "lines" of collecting which were popular in the past continue to be followed assiduously, but the accumulation of objects in great museums and rich private collections has affected prices, and not only prices, but also the quantities available for "picking up."

Prices have risen. It is no longer practicable for brokers to obtain small curios for next to nothing, and to sell them for two or three shillings each. Dealers have multiplied in number, but as the supply of the genuine objects they deal in is limited they cannot compete with each other by "cutting" prices, as grocers, drapers, and other tradesmen do.

Time was when the Caledonian Market of a Friday offered many genuine chances to the acute snapper-up of unconsidered trifles: that has almost ceased to be the case. Forgeries, counterfeits, and frauds

have therefore come into existence there and elsewhere, in almost unlimited number, and these are sold at dearer prices than the real things used to fetch.

It is now more than ever necessary for a collector to be well versed in the signs and symptoms which distinguish the true from the false in the stocks which small dealers and furniture-brokers offer. The hints conveyed in this book, and in "A B C About Collecting" are now more than ever useful and important. Time was when marks upon old earthenware and porcelain were safe guides; fraud has rendered them only of secondary use, as confirming the other indices in the real things or contradicting them in the imitations.

Porcelain of the true old sorts has become so rare and costly that many collectors have turned their attention more to the old glass made in England and Ireland. Chapters on that are given in this book. But counterfeits are also numerous in glass.

A few years ago old silver with the hall-mark of George III was little collected. Now, because silverware made in earlier reigns than that has become so dear, George III silver is being acquired by collectors, at considerable prices per ounce. This has not extended to George IV, William IV, or early Victorian silver as yet, but soon may do. It is the smaller, lighter, and entirely hand-made pieces which are most in demand. A good brief rule to remember is to buy only silver hall-marked "before the King's head."

"Old Wedgwood" is now exceedingly rare, and

fetches big prices. Her Majesty the Queen is a collector of "Old Wedgwood," and during a visit to the museum at the Etruria works, Her Majesty's connoisseurship was evinced. Baxter prints steadily go up in cost. Fine old English mahogany furniture is in great demand in America, Canada, Australia, France, and Germany; old English oak furniture is therefore going up. It is reproduced in large quantities, the marks of wear and tear and style being cleverly imitated, not fraudulently but openly, as may be seen in any considerable furnishing shop.

Old brass-ware is fraudulently imitated and sold in great quantities. Chestnut-roasters, toasting-forks, candlesticks, door-knockers, and the like await the unwary by the myriad pieces, and are so doctored, coloured, burned, indented, and artificially worn in places, that hardly anybody can escape being deceived.

Perhaps old Sheffield plate is even more liberally imitated. But it is cheaply and badly imitated, as a rule. Pawnbrokers' shops and silversmiths' windows contain fine new ware which is labelled "Sheffield plate." This consists of replicas from the old Sheffield plate moulds, in copper or nickel which has been electroplated. Sometimes the label "silver on copper" is used, literally misleadingly.

However, small collections of genuine old things are continually coming into the market, and collecting is as much a hunt and delight as ever. It has to be pursued with more skill and knowledge now, and at a

little higher cost than used to be necessary, that is all. It is the beginners, the people who never study books and museums, who buy the counterfeits: books of this kind are now more needful than before.

New "lines" in collecting develop, and should be taken advantage of: the man who collects one kind



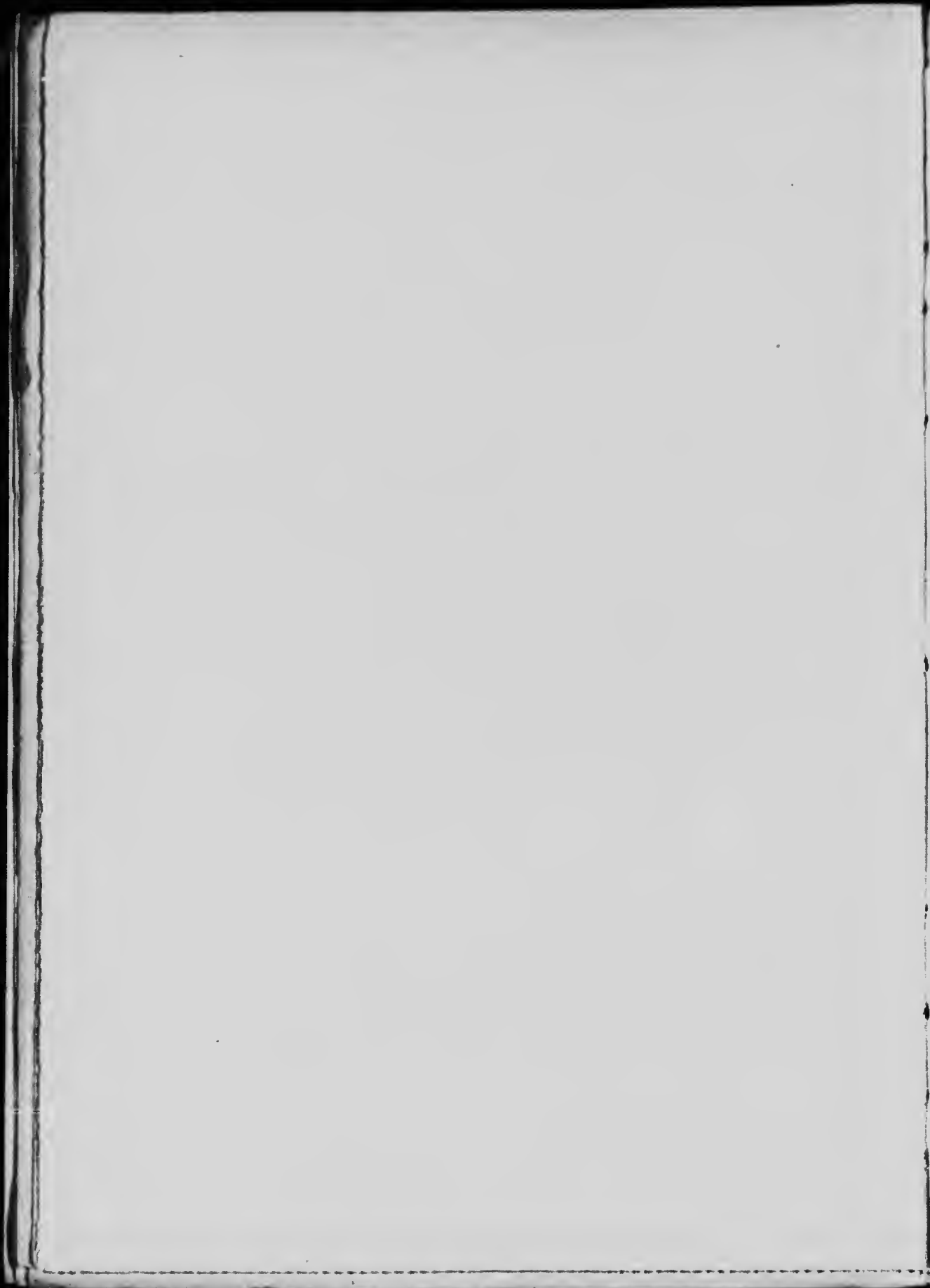
AGATE OR TORTOISE-SHELL WARE CAT.

of thing only is not unlike that uneducated student "the man of one book." Many volumes on separate "lines" of collecting are published, most of them repeating the information contained in their predecessors, but it is seldom that a writer on Collecting offers his readers the help of his own discoveries in the hobby and art. That, however, is what in this book I try to do. Not much here is "copy-book"

work, and much here is new and discovered, either in material or arrangement and explanation. I have not thought it needful, in *this* book, to give copies of the porcelain-makers' marks. This book does not, of course, pretend to cover the whole of any one field in collecting. But it does claim to throw new light on many old fields.



BRASS BOX.



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MORE ABOUT COLLECTING

PART I

GENERAL HINTS AND WARNINGS

THE SALE-ROOM

WHETHER he buys or no, a wise collector spends an hour in a sale-room now and again, never mind whether it be a dingy place where the auctioneer makes sixpence for himself on each article sold, or a sky-lit hall where the rap of the hammer on the desk may mean a commission of a hundred pounds. Perhaps the small suburban auctions, in private houses vacated by death, afford the thrifty collector the best chances, for there the assembled dealers are often few. But people who own collections, which will some day go to a sale-room proper, ought to know by the experience of others what to expect, and to observe for what prices the kinds of things they collect are knocked down or knocked out.

"The Knock-out."—The "knock-out" is the ghost which silently haunts many auctions. If the group of dealers present have agreed that only one of their number shall bid for certain "lots," those lots are likely to be knocked down very cheaply; I have known

a collection of Oriental china auctioned off for one-fifth of its worth. If then the group of dealers proceed to some private place together, and put the same "lots" up to auction among themselves, the real buying value will be obtained, but not by the owner who sent the things to the sale-room. A notable book was lately auctioned off for £60 or so, half its trade value. The difference—£60 or so—would be divided among the members of the "knock-cut," as reward for not having competed during the public sale.

Men of Straw.—To counteract this a little, experi-



AGATE C. TORTOISE-SHELL WARE
BOWL.

enced collectors usually employ a dealer to make their bids. But that is a transparent device if the collector stands next the bidder, especially so if he prompts him audibly in

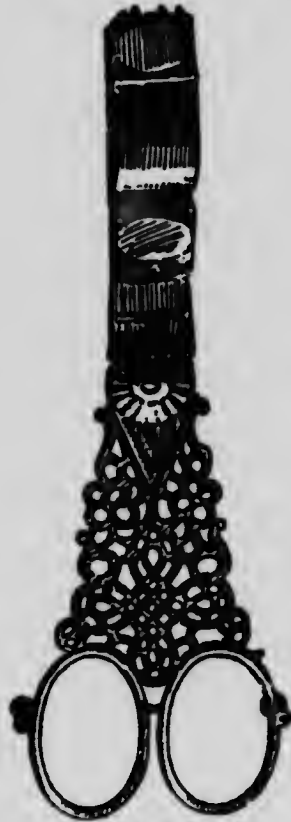
the intervals between bid and bid. Often a hanger-on kind of dealer is employed in this way, whom the dealers with capital know to be a man of straw. The proper thing to do is to go to the "view" the day before the sale, and mark your catalogue with your maximum prices; then watch the proceedings at a distance from your man of straw. Your commission to him must be such as to make it less worth his while to stand in with the "knock-out" than to bid for you.

Prices.—The effect of the "knock-out" system is to keep apparent prices low, except in those cases

where a "lot" is particularly coveted. The "knock-out" cannot always operate, because often a dealer has a customer whom he knows to be ready to buy at a fair price a certain kind of "lot." The small dealers often lament the "huge prices," as they call them, which "articles of bigotry and virtue" often realise in a sale-room; but that is because there are dealers with capital present, who have a certainty of selling the "lot" again to a particular client, at any price almost, if the article be really choice. There are collectors who never visit a "view" or attend an auction; they leave all that to their trusted dealers. There is a case in which a dealer buys pictures at between £2,000 and £3,000 for a wealthy *barvenu*, who knows nothing about art, but like them say to his guests: "There isn't a picture in this house that cost me less than two thousand pounds." Several private owners of really valuable pictures have asked me to advise them how to get their pictures sold for proper value, privately, direct to the buyers, and not through a dealer. It is an almost impossible thing.

Auctioneers and Adroitness.—Auctioneers are students of human nature—no better place for the study than a sale-room—and they handle their audiences with much skill, as a rule. Attend a picture-sale, when, say, a "head of a man, attributed to Holbein," is placed on the easel. A dealer near you whispers that it is quite genuine; another growls that it is "a dub," a daub, a fake from Munich or the

environs of Sheffield. But the bidding has begun ; the experienced auctioneer allows it to begin humbly with " Five pounds ! " though he says, in a tone half sarcasm, half wail, " Five pounds for a *Holbein* ? Gentlemen, gentlemen, *please* ! "



SILVER SNUFFERS.

A private collector present thinks he sees a chance. Five pounds it begins with, instead of five hundred ! For a *Holbein* ! He nods. " Five ten, " says the auctioneer, and nods seem to shower awhile, till " Ten pounds " is reached. Then the hammer pauses in air, and the private collector thinks the picture is his. But the hammer pauses long enough for a nod to come from elsewhere. " Eleven pounds ! " says the auctioneer, for a nod means a pound or a guinea after the ten pounds minimum has been reached. The private collector gets angry that at the

last moment he should be interfered with, and bids wildly. The picture is run up to forty pounds against him, and at forty guineas he is allowed to secure it, the dealers guessing pretty well at what point he is likely to stop. The collector may for years rejoice in his possession of " a Hol-

bein," but the thing will never sell for forty guineas again.

And thus the merry, skilful game goes on.

COLLECTOR'S PIECES

"Quite a collector's piece, you see, sir," a dealer will often say to you, and what he means by a "collector's piece" is usually the ordinary handsome, costly specimen, sought after by moneyed buyers. A silver-rose-bowl, hall-marked 1708; a Petitot snuff-box; a Chelsea group of figures, very well cleaned up with ammonia; a Derby vase, snake-handled, and a lot of blue and gold about it; or a Japanese *tsuba*, or sword-guard, lavishly inlaid—such are the "collector's pieces" which dealers mean by that term. Few dealers go deeper than that, and few collectors, either; they prefer to sell or buy the ordinary handsome specimen, the *banal* beautiful thing which is "everybody's money," the pieces which resemble the pieces seen in great public and private collections, and are pictured in every ordinary book on collecting such wares.

A Different Kind of Piece.—To me, however, a certain beaker, made of earthenware at Lambeth, between the days of Dwight and the days of Doulton, is a "collector's piece." It is rimmed with some of the earliest Sheffield-plate ever made; it is decorated with raised figures, which, by their costume, date the piece and typify its era; and I possess the same figures

in brass, used for mantelpiece ornaments in their day. This bit of earthenware, which cost me one-and-sixpence, is so full of hints, information, and chronicle that it is essentially an enlightened "collector's piece."

The studious collector, who goes deeply into his hobby, may enjoy it at small expense if he purchases pieces which, though cheap because neglected, are elucidative and rare.



JACKFIELD WARE.

Take *tsubas*, for instance; a small one, made for a sword no bigger than a bayonet, plain iron chased, not inlaid with gold or silver, costing two shillings only, but bearing the artist's signature, is truly a collector's piece, because small *tsubas* were so seldom signed.

Chippendale.—Chippendale-style chairs are a rage, both here and on the Continent; I say Chippendale-style because, of course, not one in a thousand of them was made by Chippendale himself. A collector's piece in Chippendale-style chairs is usually supposed to mean an elaborate, ribbon-back, thirty-guinea or three-hundred-guinea affair. Yet the simpler designs are the older and the more typical, and chairs of that period,

and style may still be picked up at from sixty to a hundred shillings apiece. In the Soane Museum, Lincoln's Inn Fields, stands an armchair so fine and beautiful and authenticated that, could it ever be sold at auction, it would sell for £1,000, I dare say; but it is not a "collector's piece," because pieces like it are no longer collectable either for love or money. Yet many a "Chippendale" collector sighs, and enjoys his collection the less. In Stationers' Hall a long set of Chippendale chairs is visible, of such simple beauty and workmanship as to be typical of the early Chippendale style; the fellows of these (unlike the Soane Museum example) are collectable yet.

Misled by Museums.—I have often urged readers to study the public collections, but the study of them may mislead. "This is a museum piece, sir," a dealer sometimes will say, as a variant upon "This is a collector's piece," but meaning the same kind of thing. Yet a quite small and apparently insignificant item in a public collection may be better worth a collector's study than an item handsome and costly and impossible now to collect. In a collection of "Old Wedgwood," for instance, the admiring eye goes usually to the splendid vases and the classic plaques, though the Wedgwood chessmen are much more uncommon. Wedgwood chessmen are exceedingly rare, but I possess more than a dozen, picked up one at a time in odd corners, for prices ranging from sixpence to not more than two shillings each. Magnificent and unmatched "museum pieces" often daunt a would-be or

beginning collector, too. The true way for people not wealthy to learn collecting and enjoy it is to look out for small typical pieces of ware which may still be found and purchased for a small price.

So I urge a reader to form his opinion as to what is a collector's piece, from his own information, and not from what a superficially-informed dealer may say. For this is certain, as the costly "museum pieces" and



SNUFF-BOX OF PAPIER MÂCHÉ AND METAL.

"collectors' pieces" become more and more absorbed into museums, or dearer and dearer at auctions, so in pecuniary value will rise the smaller typical pieces, which are still cheaply collectable to-day.

"ANTICHITA"

Not long ago a certain collector—Jones, let us call him—returned from Rome with quite a cargo of *antichita*. He holds the belief that collecting cannot be carried on in England any longer. "Everything's been snapped up here," he says. "Italy for me! Italy's still full of loose *antichita*."

So it is, indeed. Verona, Venice, Siena, Rome almost

swarm with shops which bear the word "Antichita" for ensign. Some of them are portions of old monasteries or palaces, and the ancient buildings around them seem to make the *antichita* appear more antique. Pleasant hours, and a lot of money, may be spent in such old places, and no doubt the art of collecting adds another joy to the art of European travel. But nowhere more than in Italian shops ought you to be on your guard.

The Statuette.—I have translated aloud to Jones some portions of a book by M. Paul Reboux, to serve as a calmate. Here is an episode :

"Lorenzo drew out of his bundle a statuette. It was terra-cotta, it was a Silenus, that seemed to stagger upon his pedestal—one of those smooth, high pedestals which characterise the class of pottery from Asia Minor to which this was said to belong. Silenus held back his bald head, crowned by a wreath that seemed about to drop off ; he laughed, his eyes were made little by his puffed cheeks, his nose was flat, his tongue was visible inside his mouth. The dealer examined the figure minutely. Yes, the terra-cotta displayed the swarthy tint of old Mycene figures ; you could see traces of white on the body——"

I break off here to remind you that you may see the same careful traces of white upon the false Tanagra figures and the false small Egyptian deities which wait for buyers in certain London shops to-day.

"Yes, you could also see signs of old gilding upon the cup in Silenus's hand, and on the hem of his tunic.

Nothing was missing—not even the potting-kiln hole, or the sand-marks that seemed to witness to a thousand years of desert burial. The imitation was perfect. 'Good—very good,' the dealer said to Lorenzo, and paid him twenty-four shillings for the fraud. A few days later the dealer sold it for sixteen pounds."

The Dealer's Little Ways.—Himself he knew how to crackle new ivories by boiling them like eggs; how to cook new pictures in the oven; how to smoke new prints; how to green new bronzes with nitrate of potassium. It was so amusing to see the things age in a minute! He would bring a new earthenware dish out of the oven, burning hot, and plunge it into iced oil; result, contraction, chill—chilblains, so to speak—and the glaze all cracked into the wrinkles of premature age. And then he would rub the surface upon ratty paving-stone, till signs of wear and tear appeared that might outwit anybody.

As for pictures, it was easy to find an old canvas or old panel for a faker; it was when the painter's work was over that the real science and art began. First of all, a wash of varnish that had been coloured with sepia; next, on the more raised portions, rubbings with liquorice-juice, to attract the flies. He could even imitate fly-marks with Indian ink. A few drops of salty water left on the canvas would produce mouldiness and mildew. A needle deftly used would cover the picture with a network of cracks.

He knew how to transfer the marks of plain old silver to new goblets more imposing to view. And in

quite a few minutes, by the use of nitric acid, powdered sandstone, a file, blows with a hammer, and whacks with a stir he would transform a new wooden chair into an old one, upon which a great-grandfather of the purchaser might have sat, you would think.

The Lace.—He had many genuine *antichita* in his shop, of course—among them some bits of old lace. Venetian, with salient ornaments that seemed to have been sculptured, not needle-worked, out of the thick material of which it was composed; Milan lace, that lost itself in arabesques and capricious efflorescence, madreporé-like, upon fine net. And, indeed, one can discover many choice and delightful *antichita* in Italian curio shops; but you need a special knowledge which English experience can hardly give.

I think, *pace* Jones, that the safer plan for a collector is to make indigenous things his "line," as a rule. Because there are more of them available. Because, also, there are more of them in the museums to study. And because the art of forgery is not yet carried here up to the Italian pitch. But, *how* I sympathise with a collector who longs for Della Robbias, Milanese marriage-chests, wooden saints belonging to the fifteenth century, and bronzes that Cellini may have made!

TREASURE TROVE

The crash of a pick through a wall at Fulham discovered the earliest English-made Bellarmine. A trench cut in a waste-heap proved that "Nottingham-

like ware" was made in 1680 at Crich. The making of a drain in a malt-house revealed what kind of porcelain was really made at Lowestoft. And other explorations of the sort await the enthusiast's hand.

Behind the Panel.—One of my correspondents writes to tell me of a discovery. "Every collector has



CABBAGE-LEAF ORNAMENTED JUG.

dreamed of finding a hidden store of treasures," she writes. "I have *done* it, too." The old house which her husband had bought was low-ceilinged, and wainscoted to the ceilings. Some former occupant with bad taste had caused the drawing-room panelling to be painted white and gold. The mantelpiece filled an angle, and the panelling above it apparently enclosed a chimney only; but one day my correspondent noticed

a small depression in the panel just above the mantel, and thought it looked rather like a keyhole which had been puttied-up. The panel turned out to be the door of a corner cupboard, within which, all dark and dusty, lay eleven pieces of rare old porcelain. One was a rose-coloured small vase—Dubarry *Sèvres*; two others were Bow candlesticks—figures in *bocages*, with the characteristic square hole at the rear of the base. (Though I have seen that square hole in a "Longton Hall" figure, by the by.) One was a fine Worcester cabbage-leaf jug.

Garrets.—Valuable, beautiful old things, only slightly damaged, have been found under the slopes of garret roofs, behind the low, upright wall of lath and plaster, with a small door in it, which usually masks a dark triangular recess. The garret was formerly used as a lumber-room; it became too crowded; some of the smaller things were put through the masking door into the darkness under the slates and rafters. Then death or removal of the family occurred, and the hidden things were forgotten. There they lay, becoming more and more valuable as they became more and more old, until accidental discovery took place.

The Hayloft.—A well-known antiquary visited a famous old country seat, and asked to see the muni-ments. He was told that they had all been lost; they had been mislaid more than a century before, after a famous fire, which had destroyed part of the great mansion; it was feared that the family documents had then been burnt. He asked to be allowed to

search, and in an old chest he found a big old key, with a bit of parchment attached to it which bore the words "Key of the hayloft." He visited all the haylofts above the long range of eighteenth-century stables, and found that the door of one of them was locked. The big old key fitted it. He went in. There in a heap, dirty, dusty, mouse-nibbled, lay the accumulations of centuries, the documents which had so long



INSIDE OF WHIELDON BOWL.

been lost. Carried to the hayloft hastily, at the time of the fire, a hundred and twenty years before, they had been left there a while, and then a while longer, until procrastination had passed into forgetfulness, and a generation came into occupancy who were quite oblivious to it all.

The Vaulted Chamber. — If any reader doubts that people can be so forgetful or dilatory as that, let him consider the historic case of the Scottish Regalia. In the year 1707 the Treaty of Union specified that "the Scottish Crown, Sceptre, and Sword of State shall continue to be kept in that part of the United Kingdom now called Scotland." That was done, but the Edinburgh populace so riotously hated the Act of Union that it was thought wise to conceal the Regalia until quieter times. That also was done, in 1707, and for 110 years thereafter nobody seems to have bothered their

heads as to what had become of the Crown of Robert the Bruce.

In the year 1817 it occurred to Sir Walter Scott to wonder what had become of the Scottish Regalia. They must have been sent to London in the troublesome times of the "Forty-five," he was told. "They will be in the Tower." But the Tower of London was searched in vain. George, Prince Regent, issued a Commission to Sir Walter Scott and others, empowering them to search for the Regalia, and, at length, on February 4th, 1818, these gentlemen entered a "windowless, vaulted chamber, in which the diadems lay deep. A cannon-ball, remnant of some bygone siege, lay beside the ashes of the last fire on the hearth, while all was lifeless and silent as the tomb."

There in the darkness lay a great oak-chest, iron-banded, with three padlocks, to which there were no keys. Neish, a blacksmith, was sent for, and with great labour forced open this ancient jewel chest of the Stuarts. There within, dusty, though wrapped in linen coverings, lay the fourteenth-century Crown of Robert the Bruce, the Sword of State, presented to James IV by Pope Julius II, with the Sceptre of James V; and all these jewelled insignia of a dynasty and a realm had been forgotten all this while.

Pictures, ivories, medals, jewels, bronzes, porcelains, all sorts of collectable rarities, lie *perdu* yet, and collectors should be on the look-out, in even the most unlikely places. A rusty iron box, offered for sale to a

dealer in scrap iron at Kelso, was recently found to contain old jewels worth many hundreds of pounds.

ANTIQUES ABLAZE

I was in France when news arrived that the Brussels Exhibition, and particularly the British Section, was flaming, and I searched the French newspapers for details in vain. English newspapers were hardly more explicit as to the destruction done upon the exhibits of old treasures, and one could only imagine what conflagration of antiques and uniques had occurred. When details of the disaster became available, it was clear that nothing so hard upon British collections and collectors had occurred since 1873, when the Alexandra Palace flamed to the sky.



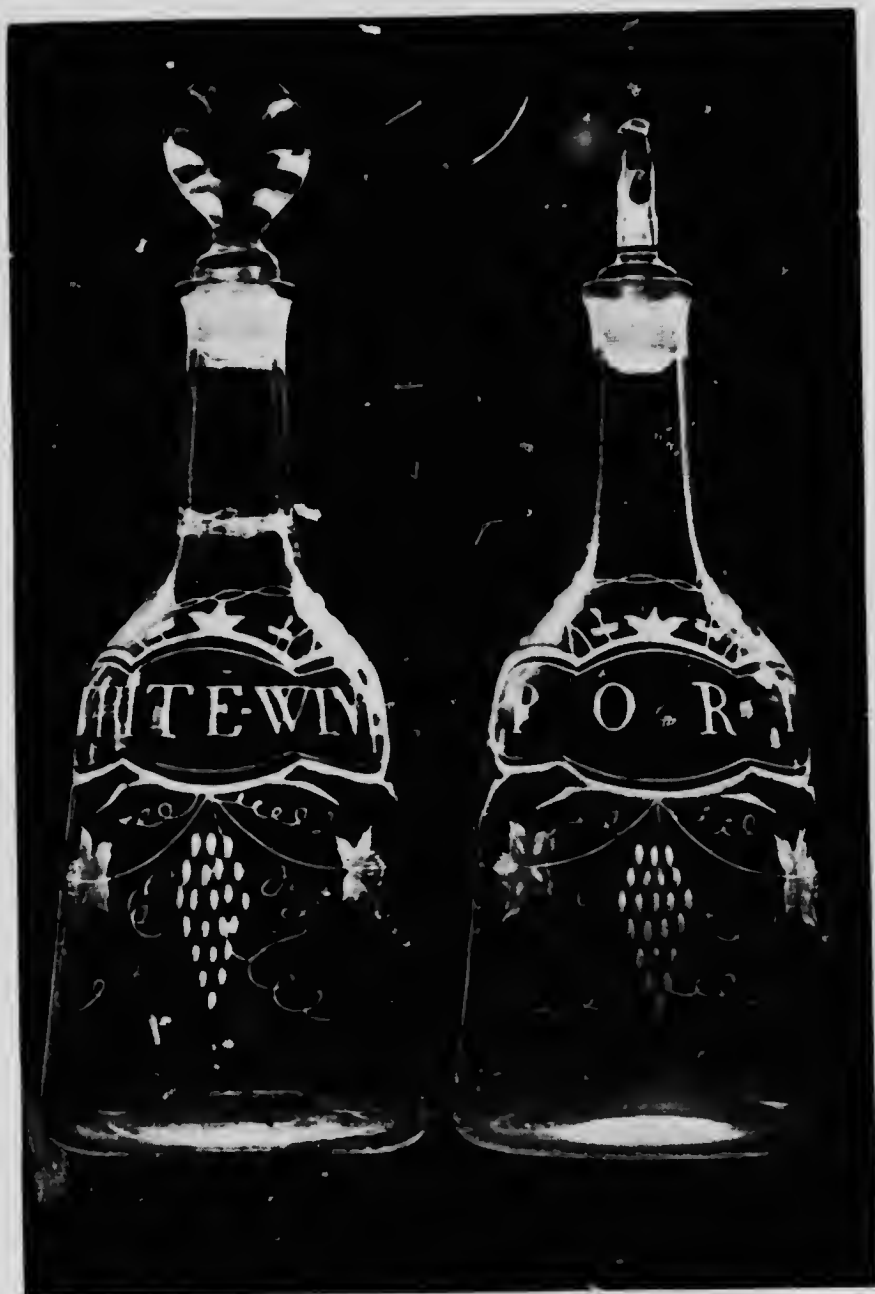
PEASANT-MADE WOODEN
NUTCRACKERS.

"Shutting the Stable Door."— To say that precious originals should never be exhibited in temporary structures is to be wise after the event; to say that fire services on the Continent are often unready and hysterical, is to say what every experienced traveller knows. Fireproof buildings, without a shred of wood in them, ought to be insisted on before any exhibitor

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DECANTERS, CUT AND ENGRAVED.



consents to send his treasures to a temporary exhibition. The Alexandra Palace was supposed to be a permanent structure, safe enough—"safe as houses"—but a light falling upon shavings was all that was needed to set the "permanent structure" ablaze. In a few moments the flaming roof had crashed down upon the first and finest collection of old English china and earthenware ever got together, before or since. Lovely and unreplaceable specimens were smashed, fused, coagulated, triturated, long before aid could arrive.

Done for at Brussels.—The Brussels disaster was more grievous than even the one at the Alexandra Palace. Listen: a splendid Chippendale china-cabinet, enshrining rare "Chelsea" and "Worcester"—four thousand pounds' worth gone at a puff! Listen again: another collection, containing close on a hundred choice examples of old furniture and porcelain—burnt to the last item.

An array of fifty-six rare old Toby-jugs, some of them unique, the pride and joy of their owner, and the triumph of many collecting years—soon *bis-cuit*, twice baked, and cracked into potsherds. A superb great panel of Mortlake tapestry, one of the few which England can set against the boast of the Gobelins and Flemish looms—mere dust. A group of fine seventeenth and eighteenth century English chairs, screens, and cabinets—embers. An Elizabethan room, of carved oak; an Elizabethan house, made up, but every component of it genuinely antique; two panelled rooms complete with contemporary furniture, one of

them adorned with Grinling Gibbons' carving—ashes. Part of the Old Wedgwood Museum from Etruria—*fini*! A "Chinese Chippendale" collection, delicate woodwork almost inconceivably fine—smoke! Rare "Adam" mantelpieces in Carrara marble—mere carbon again. Jacobean candelabra—melted. Tudor bedsteads, Cromwellian chairs, gate-leg tables, brocade settees— But the catalogue is too grievous to complete.

Compensations.—The insurance money was paid, but could not equal the values destroyed; the finest antiques go up in worth by leaps and bounds year by year. And it is always difficult to assess values *after* a fire. The chief compensation seemed to be the fine effect upon Belgian and other Continental opinion produced by the spectacle of British fortitude, pluck, and enterprise in reconstituting the British Section which had come to so tragic an end, and by the grace and generosity shown in not claiming damages from the Belgian Government. "Ah, ces Anglais!" people abroad have said, with envy and admiration this time, in place of the satirical emphasis so often put upon those words. But what can compensate the private collectors, whose pride and joy in their treasures is gone?

THE PLAGUE OF FRAUDS

The other day a dealer, who did not know me, offered me my "A B C About Collecting" as a book (he said) which taught people how not to be taken in

by "fakes." Bitterly he looked across the street to a shop-window full of frauds, as he said, "It ruins the business, sir, all this faking that's going on."

And a day or two later a dealer whose shop flanks a main London thoroughfare complained to me, with almost as much bitterness, that "it is only people who really know who dare to buy curios nowadays, because there are so many frauds about. Take pewter," he said. "I did a good line in old pewter till these German forgeries began to come over." And I remembered, as he spoke, that it was German chromolithographic imitations of Baxter prints which brought about the cessation of oil-printing by most of Baxter's licensees some forty years ago.



BRASS TAPER-STAND.

A Pest and a Plague.—The imitator of antiques is a pest and a plague. He injures the business of honest dealers by enabling dishonest dealers to offer what appear to be antiques at a little above the prices of new stuff. A dealer told me a few weeks ago that he had received a card of invitation to a certain address not far from Holborn Circus; printed invitations of the kind had been issued broadcast, for dealers to view a large consignment of counterfeit "Chelsea" which

had come across the Channel. "Did you go?" said I. "Not I, sir," said he. "But I know dealers who did go, and they tell me the stuff was imitated a treat." Such counterfeits used to be clumsy; now they are clever. There are hundreds of Chelsea-Derby cupids about copied well. There is much imitated scale-blue Worcester, wonderfully well painted as to the birds or flowers, but distinguishable, to the experienced fingers, by the touch. Such counterfeits used to be sent here in small quantities; now they come by the dozen crates at a time. And not imitations of china and earthenware alone; imitations of old ivories, glass pictures, needlework pictures, old brasses, old glass, and what not. Every dealer who knowingly harbours an imitation in his shop is a traitor to his trade. He is damaging the trade as a whole. He is also damaging his own business. What happens is that a connoisseur and collector "who knows," upon detecting a forgery in a dealer's shop, does not buy, patronises the shop no more, and gives it a bad name among friends and acquaintances of his who are collectors. The trade of that shop in veritable antiques goes down; the dealer trusts to make up for that by selling more and more of the cheap frauds; before very long his shop is a collection of counterfeits and nothing else.

The Arm of the Law.—The arm of the law can be invoked under two sets of circumstances. If a dealer sells a "fake" and gives a written guarantee, or a verbal guarantee in the presence of witnesses, that

the article is genuine, he can be proceeded against at law, with good hopes of success in punishing him and recovering the fraudulently obtained money. Or if the faked curio bears a faked trade-mark, and the mark be Wedgwood's, or Minton's, or "Coalport," or "Worcester," or any firm's which is still in existence and has inherited the old mark, the firm can proceed against the manufacturer of the frauds, *if they can find him*. But, as you see, the opportunities for legal protection in this matter are few.



BRASS CANDLESTICK.

THE GLASS SHELF

Lately I saw in a Bond Street shop-window a sight to distress any collector's heart. A huge marble and ormolu Empire clock had stood on a plate-glass shelf; below it, in the bottom of the shop-window, half a dozen fine pieces of Chelsea china had been exhibited. All of a sudden the excessive weight of the clock had its natural physical effect, the glass shelf snapping asunder; down went the clock, and to smithereens went the beautiful old porcelain below.

Precautionary.—I should have expected a Bond Street dealer to know better than risk his precious "Chelsea" under that heavy timepiece on that crystal

shelf. The simplest shelf of wood is safer for its purpose than even the most massive strip of glass. For glass is subject to effects of heat and cold, and glass has no self-sustaining because connecting fibre. Moreover, you cannot support a shelf of glass in the way you can a shelf of wood; often the little metal appliances which shopfitters and cabinet-makers supply for the purpose are quite inadequate to their task. There are calculations as to weight and breaking strain available for iron girders and other building material, but I do not know of any by which a collector can test the validity of his shelves of glass. The best safeguard is not to use glass shelves at all; I, at any rate, will get no more of them, and I have tested and verified those which I have, placing the heavier pieces of china upon shelves which are of wood.

The Attractiveness of a Glass Shelf.—And yet I know that collectors are strongly tempted to use glass shelves. In most old cabinets for china the old shelves are too few; they leave a disproportionate space between the top of the china and the bottom of the shelf above it; and they are often fixed so that you cannot well rearrange them or introduce other wood shelves like them, without knocking the interior of the cabinet about. To introduce a glass shelf between each pair of them almost doubles the capacity of your cabinet, and as light can penetrate them a cabinet containing glass shelves is particularly suited for the display of old china.

Other Drawbacks of Glass Shelves.—But there

are other drawbacks, besides the risk of the shelf itself breaking. Because the glass shelf simply rests upon metal supports at its corners, it does not always lie true; there is the risk of its cocking up if you touch one part of it, and of some of the china upon it sliding off and out, and down to the floor. I once owned a fine Wedgwood basalt statuette of the "Vicar of Wakefield"; exquisite was the modelling of the dear old gentleman as he stood peering at one of the gross of pairs of green spectacles which Moses Primrose, his greenhorn son, had brought home from the fair; the other 143 pairs, or what resembled them, rested, neatly ranked, in the open box at the vicar's feet. He stood on a glass shelf; a visitor put his fingers on one part and edge of the shelf; in a moment my "Vicar of Wakefield" lay in seven fragments below.

The China-Cabinet.—But a china-cabinet is subject to other risks which it is worth while to mention. In a dealer's shop at Fulham I saw a tall cabinet full of porcelain and earthenware lean slowly forward from the wall, fall, impale itself upon the top corner of a chest of drawers, and let most of its contents slip out into smashed fragments. Precaution suggests that a tall, narrow, flat china-cabinet should be secured to the wall itself, and that need not mean cutting and plugging the wall, or nailing or screwing the cabinet to the plugs. A hook in the wall, and a strong wire attachment both to the hook and the back of the cabinet, will give the needed security, if also the feet

of the cabinet be slightly wedged, so that they stand a little more than firm and level on the carpet.

Lining the Shelves.—One of the worst features of a glass shelf in a china-cabinet is that you cannot safely stand your fine Swansea or Coalport plates on edge at the back of such a shelf. The edge of the porcelain will slip upon the glass, knock forward any china standing in front of the plate, and cause "smashage." There is risk of the same kind of injury even if the shelf be plain wood. Now, it is desirable that fine plates *should* stand upright at the back of the shelf and the cabinet; it economises space, they hide a plain or ugly cabinet-back, and they afford a background against which your china figures, vases, etc., may show up. The safest shelf is one made of wood, slotted or pegged into the frame of the cabinet, and covered with velvet or plush.

A good deal in the way of effect depends on the colour of the lining. Pale tints, grey or blue or white, are less effective than darker ones. Black is the best of all for effects, but black is rather funereal. A rich dark brown, almost a chocolate, but not a red, is more desirable. What are called "old gold" and "crushed strawberry" are not so suitable for the lining of china-cabinets; they rather usurp the province of the porcelain, which is to be rich in colours and to shine out against some dark relief.

Philosophical.—With the best care and precaution in the world, porcelain *will* come to ruin. "Hast thou a vessel of earthenware?" Epictetus counselled,

nearly 2,000 years ago. "Consider that it is of earthenware, and therefore facile and obnoxious to be broken, and be not so void of reason as to anger thyself when breaking comes to pass." I have learned that wise lesson; when I picked up the "Vicar of Wakefield" in pieces I said never a word.

FOR CURIO COLLECTORS WHEN IN LONDON

Many copies of "The A B C About Collecting" have made their way into the United States and Canada, and that is why letters from the other side of the Atlantic reach me nearly every week. One of the chapters in that book is entitled "The Collector when in Paris"—the book was written for people in England mainly—and I have had requests for a chapter on "The Collector when in London" too. This chapter is an effort to fall in with such requests.

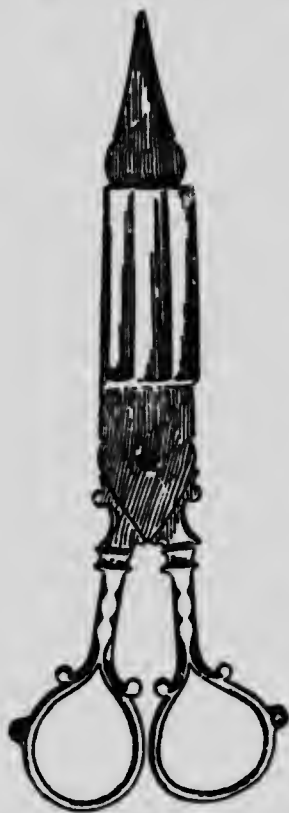
After all, London is the place for collectors. Quantity and quality also—variety and width of range too—are best consulted here.

The millionaire collector can find what he wants almost anywhere, but I venture to pity him; he buys through agents and without consideration of cost, and he does not know the keen pleasures of the hunt, the find, and the "kill," the searching out of what you collect, the detection of it in queer corners, and the buying of it for a few shillings or a few half-crowns. It is in that the pleasure of the collector lies—the joy of the hobby-rider is in the chase.

The wealthy collector when in London will visit

Christie's and the other auction-rooms in or near King Street, St. James', the great shops in Bond Street, Pall Mall, Piccadilly, Oxford Street, Hanover Square, Wigmore Street, Baker Street, Alfred Place West,

South Kensington, and so on. But I am not writing this article for him. Of those rich marts I will only say that, whether under the hammer or within the saloon, you may sometimes find a fine old thing going cheaply, or relatively so; and it is in such places, as in the museums, that one learns to know the best articles of the kind you collect. You see them, they are out of your reach, maybe, but you learn from them how to detect old articles like them, and to know the real value of a treasure in disguise when you run across it, by great good luck and with cheapness, elsewhere.



BRASS SNUFFERS.

Next in importance to these resorts of the moneyed collector come the smaller shops which are wholly devoted to the purchase and sale of antiques. You will find these places almost anywhere in the area bounded by the Law Courts on the east, Shepherd's Bush on the west, the Strand and Chelsea on the

south, and Hampstead on the north. You will find these smaller but suitable shops in the main streets of their locality: you will also find some of them in the by-streets near the great emporia I mentioned in the last paragraph. In all these shops you may depend on finding things of the kind you are after on sale at reasonable prices and, as a rule, genuine. When buying in these shops, as in the larger ones, at a good price, you have the right to require the dealer to give you a written guarantee that the article he vends to you is truly what it purports to be: this is a hint to buyers who are not very sure of being able to detect the false and fraudulent imitation when they see it, by themselves.

I often wonder why such beginners at collecting do not seek advice when in London from some reputable person who can guide them and prevent their mistakes. For in all but the shops I have already mentioned, and, indeed, in some of them, there are counterfeits waiting to delude the inexperienced. Not two or three times only have I seen Americans and Canadians being fobbed off with things which I knew at a glance to be spurious, and I have longed to be able to intervene. However, we all have to buy our experience; though some collectors are buying it all their lives and never get real value in the end.

To people who are skilled in collecting I recommend the smaller shops still, which you will find almost anywhere in West and West-Central London; around every suburb, too, and in each near town,—at

Richmond, Putney, and so on. The shops I now have in mind are the petty brokers', or the secondhand furniture shops that do not deal in antiques but buy them amongst modern things now and then at a small house auction sale. I have picked up hundreds of



BRASS
NUTCRACKERS.

pictures, prints, bits of old porcelain, old glass, old furniture, old brass, old books, and so forth, at this class of shop in London or near it, and in the English provincial towns. And these I have obtained for shillings and half-crowns, when pounds and five-pound notes would have had to be paid for them in the dealers' shops proper, to which I allude above.

It is interesting, if not always successful, to visit the Caledonian Market on a Friday morning. You should take the Tube railway to Caledonian Road Station, and ask the path to the Market, five minutes' walk away. Arriving there at eleven in the forenoon—not much later—you will find the vast expanse of what is a cattle market other days than Friday strewn with the miscellaneous contents of hundreds of little brokers' shops. Most of the stuff they offer—incredible in its variety—is ineffable rubbish, but the sharp-eyed collector who *knows* will often pick up a fine old thing for a shilling or two.

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Let me warn the visitor to London who collects against the numberless frauds which are placed in his path. Old brass-ware is the most numerously counterfeited, and the most difficult to detect. Old Sheffield



BRASS LIGHT-HOLDER.

plate ware comes next, I think, in this short list of spurious "antiques." Glass-ware that is like the old but is totally new will be offered you everywhere, "Baxter prints" of Nelson that are three-colour process prints, mounted on Baxter stamped mounts that have been forged, lie ready to the eye. "Old" oak furniture, too, is a constant bait. In my "A B C" book and in this I supply many hints as to detection. Of all the provincial towns in England which are rife with counterfeits of the kind, Chester is, I think,



METAL CANDLE-BOX,

the worst. There are many splendid old things to be bought in the reputable shops at Chester, but there are many forgeries there, in other windows and rooms.

I know some hundreds of likely places in Bloomsbury, Chelsea, Fulham, the Edgware Road, near Paddington Station, near St. Martin's Lane, and so on. Wander anywhere in London, almost, within the area I have indicated above, and you will come upon little curio-shops. Take tram, Tube, or train out to Clapton, Highgate, Hampstead, Wandsworth, Battersea, and outlying places like those, and you will find the main streets studded, at intervals of a few hundred yards, with the little marts you seek for. May luck attend you: I am sure that pleasure will.

THE NEXT COLLECTING STYLE

In the year 1893 Monsieur Teodor de Wyzewa wrote for the *Revue Bleue* what, being translated, amounts to the following:

“ There are still in Paris two or three of those old-fashioned curio-dealers who love the antique things which they buy and sell. They dwell within their sombre old shops happily—happy when they have sold something, because they can then buy something else, perhaps more delightful still; and happy when they have sold nothing, because they have not been separated from the old things which they love so well. And when I asked the wisest of these old gentlemen, the other day, how he explained the sudden rage for Empire furniture among collectors, he answered me thus:

Empire Furniture.—“ Sir, the public collect Empire furniture because Empire furniture *can* still be col-

GENERAL HINTS AND WARNINGS 47

lected. For fine old Louis XV and Louis XVI furniture has disappeared from the market ; the few bits left on sale have become terribly dear, and the forgers have imitated it to an enormous extent. So the collectors are turning their attention to something



LATE EMPIRE ARM-CHAIR, ENGLISH-MADE.

else, more feasible. In ten years or so, when " Empire " furniture has all been collected, and has become shut up in public and private collections, people will have to turn to something else. At present they pick up " Empire," not because it is more beautiful and attractive than the earlier styles, but because the earlier styles are out of their reach.' "

The " wisest of these old gentlemen " was not quite correct in his " ten years or so " forecast. Plenty of Empire furniture still awaits the collector even now, fifteen years after his prediction. When in Paris the



CHIPPENDALE-EMPIRE TABLE.

other day I saw great stores of it in the dealers' windows. But in substance he was a wise prophet, and his words contain a lesson for us over here.

In this Country.—For a parallel movement has



EARLY JACOBEAN CHEST AND STAND.



CHIPPENDALE-STYLE TABLE, ORNAMENTED IN FRET AND BAMBOO STYLE.

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gone on in England. When fine "Chippendale" had become as rare as snow in harvest, "Sheraton" must be taken up. Then, "Sheraton" becoming scarce, "Hepplewhite" was seized on, and then "Adam" (which was really an early "Empire" style; the brothers Adam may almost be regarded as the originators of "Empire"). After that came a harking-back to "Queen Anne" walnut furniture. Then the finest



SHERATON TEA-CADDY, PAINTED SATINWOOD.

work done by Ince and Mayhew, Copeland and Shearer and Mainwaring began to be hunted for. There is now a tendency to collect "Gillow." Old English oak furniture, too, is being exhausted. Even round-legged, brass-inlaid "Empire Sheraton" is hunted for now.

As forging of furniture increases, the collection of "Chippendale" and "Sheraton" becomes the more difficult, and the many frank modern replicas of "Chippendale" and "Sheraton" are causing a re-

action, for every drawing-room can boast what to all but the initiated seems "Chippendale" or "Sheraton" right enough. And the question for a collector of old furniture now is, "What is likely to be the next



LATE CHIPPENDALE TABLE.

collecting style?" Because the wise collector is always in advance of his hour.

Early Victorian.—I fancy that "William IV" and "Early Victorian" furniture will have a run for collectors' money. It is customary to ridicule the furniture made in England during the twenty years immediately prior to the Exhibition of 1851, and I

GENERAL HINTS AND WARNINGS 51

by no means say that it was artistic and beautiful. But I say with much probability that it is furniture which people will shortly begin to collect. The "Amboyna" walnut and "rosewood" used in it were beautiful in grain and polish, and some of the sideboards, chests of drawers, etc., were simple and pleasant in shape. Wood of that quality in grain and colour seems not to be procurable to-day. Some of the bookcases and other furniture used in offices in the neighbourhood of Bedford Row and other quarters where lawyers congregate were fine enough to adorn even the most artistically decorated library or study. And pieces of furniture of this date and style may still be had "for a song." Moreover, there is no forger at work upon such pieces; whatever you see of them for sale is genuine, and that is a comfort to know.

SHAM ORIENTAL

I use the word Oriental widely here, not referring to Oriental porcelain alone. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as sham Oriental porcelain; the old English and French and German imitations of Oriental were copies, but not counterfeits. There is, however, sham Oriental porcelain in this sense, that common Chinese or Japanese stuff twenty years old or less is brought to Europe, and worked on by counterfeiters, who wish to produce something that greenhorns will buy as being *old* Oriental, heraldic or otherwise. About that I have written elsewhere.

Other Oriental Shams.—It is of other Oriental curios which are forged that I now wish to write. In principal London thoroughfares I have seen shop-windows full of these counterfeits, and they sell, for I have seen drawing-rooms also that were almost full of them. I do not doubt that many a reader will have a "Benares" tray at home that was made at Birmingham, or a pair of "Japanese bronze" candlesticks that are not bronze, and never saw Japan.

Before me lies the Official Catalogue of Indian Art at the Delhi Exhibition, 1903. It is a sumptuously illustrated volume, written by Sir George Watt, C.I.E. Here are pictured and described the real art-products of India; which are counterfeited in Birmingham and elsewhere, to be sold to unwary people with a taste for Indian curios and a wish to gratify it cheaply. Let us consider one or two items, as a warning.

"Benares Brass."—There is the big, round, shallow brassy tray which is bought, with a sham "gate-leg" stand, made up of wooden balls wired together, to adorn suburban drawing-rooms and be the pride of a hostess about five o'clock on her "day." Now as a rule such a tray is not brass at all. It ought to be of solid brass—it is common white metal, lacquered yellow; it ought to be punched *repoussé*, or cut into the most wonderfully intricate and unsymmetrical designs, but it is rudely chiselled—"done by a prisoner with a nail," is the legend which sells it—into crude, sparse, and balanced designs that would be impossible from an Indian craftsman's hand and eye. It speedily dis-

colours, and will not brighten again or polish; nothing but re-lacquering will make it again look seemly and clean. Much the same things are true of the "Japanese bronze" candlesticks, cast of white metal in moulds taken from the real things, and then coloured to imitate and sell for old bronze.

"Japanese Ivories."—I see pawnbrokers' shop-windows full of modern imitations of old carved ivory figures and old netsukes. Now, first of all, in these modern figures the "ivory" is often mere cut bone; secondly, it is often not even bone, nor carved, but celluloid or horn, moulded when hot. Thirdly, when it is ivory and carved, the carving is (for the Orient) very poor art and workmanship; and, fourthly, these modern figures at their best are not beautiful, not fine, not ancient, and not "art." Moreover, they are too plentiful ever to make an appreciating "line" for a collector, and they will become more plentiful still, for they are being exported to Europe from Oriental manufactories by shiploads every year.

Sham Netsukes.—A netsuke is a kind of button: not really a button, however, but, to be accurate, a knob or boss—something used as a weight or stopper for a slip-knot, to balance the fan, or tobacco-pouch, or what not fastened by a thin cord and depending from the wearer's sash. To be valuable, a netsuke must be old; it may have been finely carved, but the main thing is that age and use should have worn away the sharp edges of the carving; what Japanese connoisseurs consider a desirable old netsuke is one which

has been worn and used, and thereby rubbed, rounded, and smoothed. If you look at the sham netsukes in the pawnbrokers' shop-windows you will see how they differ from all this ; no age-long friction by silken wear has been at work on *them*.

The rarest and perhaps the oldest real netsukes are those which originally consisted of a knot, core, or root of hard wood ; the artist took the naturally shaped material, cut and carved it a little, and brought out the particular shape which his eye saw it resemble. But the sham netsuke is seldom of wood ; it is often moulded out of celluloid or horn, and when it is a moulded one, you will see, if you look closely, the places at which the half-moulds joined—there is a seam, and the seam is often darker in colour. When the modern thing is actually carved ivory it is so roughly hewn and inartistic as to be of no art-value, I say, and it has no collecting value at all.

ON SELLING CURIOS

Buying curios is one thing, but for a collector to sell them when he changes his "line," or for other reasons desires to part with his collection or some portion of it, is quite another matter. I have formerly pointed out that if one collects at all it is wise to collect pretty extensively, because then, at the end, the things can be sold together at a good auctioneer's with a *clientèle* of collectors and dealers. But what of a collector who desires to sell a few things just now ?

Dealers' Offers.—

I commend the wisdom of the experts who estimate values at buying prices and not the top figures which the articles might fetch if they were part of a known collection and sold altogether at Christie's or Sotheby's. The fact is that a collector may take a fine piece

or two to quite a string of dealers, one after another, and find himself offered very little, even by the most enterprising. It is not that the curio may not be valuable. What a dealer has to consider is how long it may be on his hands; how much sunk capital without interest accruing it may represent, and what his standing charges for rent, rates, insurance, service, advertisement, and depreciation are. Consequently the dealer must buy very cheaply whenever he can. His best chance of buying very cheaply is not at an auction sale, but when a collector comes into his shop and



WHIELDON CAULIFLOWER-STYLE.



WHIELDON CAULIFLOWER-STYLE.

offers to sell him a curio or two. The dealer knows that a purchase may be on his hands a long time. A collector who goes past a curio-shop time after time will see the same curio in the window time after time.

Dealers' offers to collectors who want to sell are therefore low. One cannot blame the dealers for that. But when the point is, how may a collector realise reasonably on a few pieces which he wishes to sell? it is not by offering them to dealers, I am sure.

Putting into Auctions.—A collector may sometimes get an auctioneer to put a few pieces into a sale of the contents of somebody else's house or of somebody else's collection. But auctioneers are quite properly chary of that. And, unless a reserve price be set on the objects they may sell for next to nothing; while, if a reserve price is fixed by the owner, the object may not sell at all.

The Newspaper Advertisement Method.—Advertisement in periodicals with "curio" sections may be used to much purpose. But even advertisement does not always provide a quick and certain mode of disposing of curios at something like their value, estimated reasonably.

OF PORCELAIN MARKS

"If you need some mark to distinguish the truth before you accept it, why not also require a second mark to verify that the first mark is genuine? And so on, to infinity." So Renan wrote, though of other

things than keramics, by the by. And he denounced what he called "the horrible mania for certitude." Temperament, habit, and instinct formed by observation and experience are surer guides for a collector than any trade-mark can be. Marks on keramic articles and signatures on pictures are the chief agents of fraud in such things. Now and again one hears of a bit of porcelain, a painting, or a piece of furniture being ejected from a museum or gallery because it has been



WHIELDON CABBAGE-STYLE.

found out as false. If that were to go on at all regularly there are museums and galleries which would soon present great gaps. Indeed, in the vestibule of every gallery and museum there ought to be a sphinx—an emblem of the perpetual question, "Is it true?" Not every keeper of a museum is a Franks, or of a picture-gallery a Holroyd. A collector must so study as to know for himself, without marks or museum-labels, whether a piece is genuine or not; himself he must answer the question, "Is it *true*?"

The Use of a Mark.—The easiest part of a counter-

feit is to imitate a mark ; therefore a mark is the last of the things a collector should go by. Regard a mark as the confirmation of other proofs, not as itself the only necessary evidence. Look, touch, quality of paste, quality of glaze, form, colour, decoration, general air, physical indications of age—these are the true criteria ; the trade-mark should come in that catalogue last of all. A specimen should be judged by the presence or absence of the merits, and of the faults also, of the pieces which are generally accepted as having come from the pottery of which it bears the trade-mark. I say “ trade-mark ” in preference to “ mark,” the usual word, because a piece of old china or earthenware bears countless *marks* by which it can be judged ; the trade-mark is only one of them. And a true piece without a trade-mark on it will be “ marked all over ” to knowing eyes and sensitive finger-tips.

Some Deceptive Marks.—Scores of pounds per piece have been paid, by outwitted collectors, for pieces of porcelain bearing the double L mark of Sèvres, with the letter C in between. The Sèvres system of marking was to date the issue of a piece by the date-letter placed within the interlacing L's. The date-letter C in genuine old Sèvres stands for the year 1755, the third year of the fabrique ; but upon the spurious pieces the letter C stands for the surname initial of a certain Monsieur Caille, who painted porcelain made in Paris about forty years ago. The mark of LL with a C is therefore, in itself, a worthless index ; the finger-tip, the cheek, the finger-nail, the ground colour, the

finish of the painting, are guides a thousand times more reliable than the letter C between the double L. For Sèvres porcelain made in the year 1755 was *soft* porcelain ; the Caille counterfeit is hard.

I am rather tired of having people, into whose houses I go as a friend or acquaintance, bring to me what they call " a pretty bit of old Dresden," and triumphantly show me the word " DRESDEN " in blue on the base, with a cross-tipped crown above the word. That is the misleading mark adopted by a firm of makers when, about thirty years ago, the Government of Saxony took action and caused them to disuse a still more misleading mark. In the case of the ware marked with " DRESDEN " and a crown, the test of " hard " or " soft " cannot be applied, for the ware is hard, and real old Meissen (commonly called Dresden) also was hard. But so poor is the " Dresden and crown " marked porcelain in design, shape, colour, and painting (though the decoration on it is ambitious) that surely nobody who had ever seen a bit of old Meissen could mistake the one for the other.

Among my own earliest purchases were five figures of the Muses, part of a series which Meissen initiated, and Berlin and Rudolstadt and other German fabriques copied at the time. On the base of my five figures appeared a blue mark rather like a hay-fork, and this, as a beginner, I took to stand for *Rudolstadt*. I know now that the version of the hay-fork mark on the figures which I acquired is what is known as " a colourable imitation." I ought to have guessed that at the time,

however, for the modelling and colours of the figures, compared with the real old things, are very poor. I am glad to remember that this experience cost me no more than five half-crowns. We all have to buy our experience, but let us purchase it as cheaply as we may.

PART II

FURNITURE

MAHOGANY AND CHIPPENDALE

"**T**HEY don't grow mahogany like that these days," a cabinet-maker said regretfully. "Not for love nor money you can't get it, sir."

We stood admiring the size, grain, and sheen of the panels in a book-cupboard, used for generations by a firm of family lawyers in their Georgian offices, Bedford Row. "I wonder why they can't grow wood like that nowadays?" the cabinet-maker said. The answer is simple; the centuries-old trees were cut down long ago, and there has not been time for others like them to grow.

It was Raleigh who brought mahogany over here first, but the real extensive importation did not begin until the year 1725 or so. Spanish walnut was ceasing to be the fashionable timber for furniture then, and the rage for the "red wood" had set in. By the hundred, British mercantile ships went off to the Spanish Main, to buccaneer for mahogany; the crews landed on the coasts of Spanish America, cut down the huge trees, sawed them into great logs, and carried

the spoil away without leave or licence, not even paying for them, except in local battles and blood. By the end of the eighteenth century the great, old trees had all been cut down, and the commoner, more meagre Honduras stuff had to come into use.



CHIPPENDALE WIG-STAND.

A Rough Rule.—Fine furniture under William and Mary and Anne was walnut; under the Georges and Victoria it was mahogany. By a broad generalisation we may dub fine old mahogany furniture that is decorated by carving, "Chippendale"; and fine old ma-

hogany furniture that is decorated by inlaying, "Sheraton." But these names must only be used descriptively; a collector or dealer who calls a bookcase "Chippendale" cannot imply thereby that it was made by Thomas Chippendale, or by one of his workmen, in St. Martin's Lane. "Chippendale" indicates a period and its style, because Thomas Chippendale's examples and designs affected his competitors and the subsequent cabinet-makers in their work, profoundly. That, too, was the case with the designs of Thomas Sheraton. You will be lucky, indeed, if you come upon a piece of Chippendale's own work; if you do, you will know it by the reticent decoration and fine balance of its design. But you will easily come upon pieces of "Chippendale period," and Chippendale worked and designed in rose-wood, and in soft woods lacquered, as well as in mahogany.

Chippendale's Styles and Examples.—A recent classification assigns to Thomas Chippendale three differing styles, but there were more than three, and we can adopt a more precise classification.

He modified Queen Anne style furniture into what we may conveniently call *Queen Anne Chippendale*—the cabriole legs (something like a goat's, with carving above the knee in place of the shaggy hair), the claw-and-ball foot, the clubbed foot, and the curving, solid splat.

Then came the *open-work splat* and the *ribbon-like decoration*—adapted from the French.

Then there was the *Chippendale Chinese* style, hang-

ing bookshelves, cabinets, and mirrors crowned with pagoda-like ornaments, Oriental birds, and dragons copied from porcelain, all carved in wood, and often gilded.

There was also the *Chippendale Roman*—broken-arch pediments with small urns in between, or places for busts, mahogany adaptations from stone pedestals and Roman altars, with hollow urns (to contain knives and forks) standing upon them.

Fifthly, we must recognise the *Chippendale Gothic*, due, no doubt, to the influence of Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill—chair-backs badly imitating in mahogany the mullions and tracery of Gothic windows.

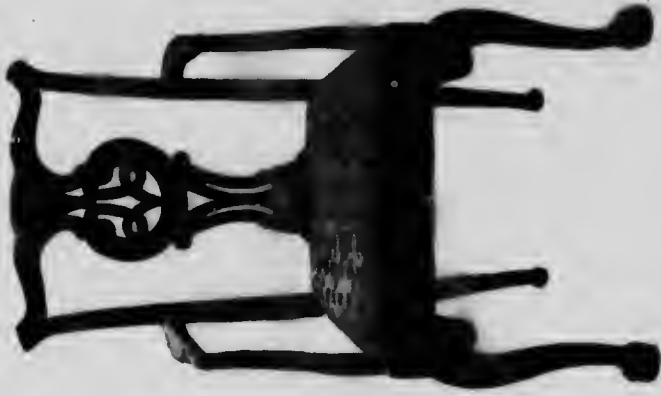
Happily, Chippendale's designs for his Chinese and Gothic monstrosities in furniture can seldom have been executed; at least, you seldom see any of them now. They must have been particularly costly to carry out at the time, and nobody seems to have found it worth while to forge them.

The Interplay.—And yet the "Chinese" influence, applied to details only, resulted in some of the pleasantest features of "Chippendale." A table, for instance, with a fretwork rail edging it, and with open fretworked legs; the fret is a Chinese fret, often. At the place where the front legs of a chair join the frame of the seat the angles are broken by open-work, and it is often Chinese open-work. The ornament of fretwork along the top of a bookcase or *secrétaire*; it is often Chinese openwork.

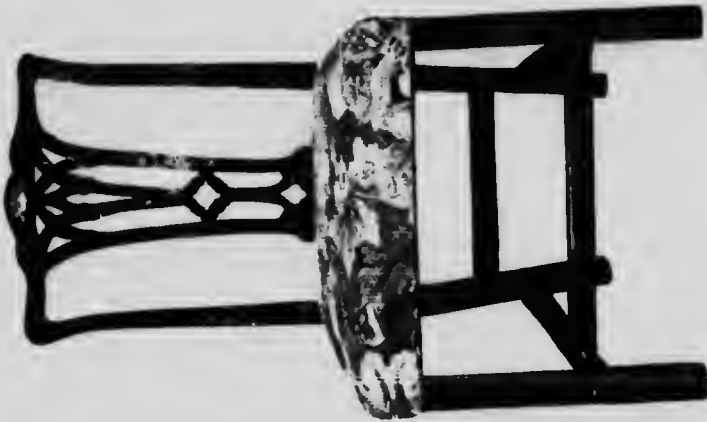
And as for the Gothic, the raised lines, something



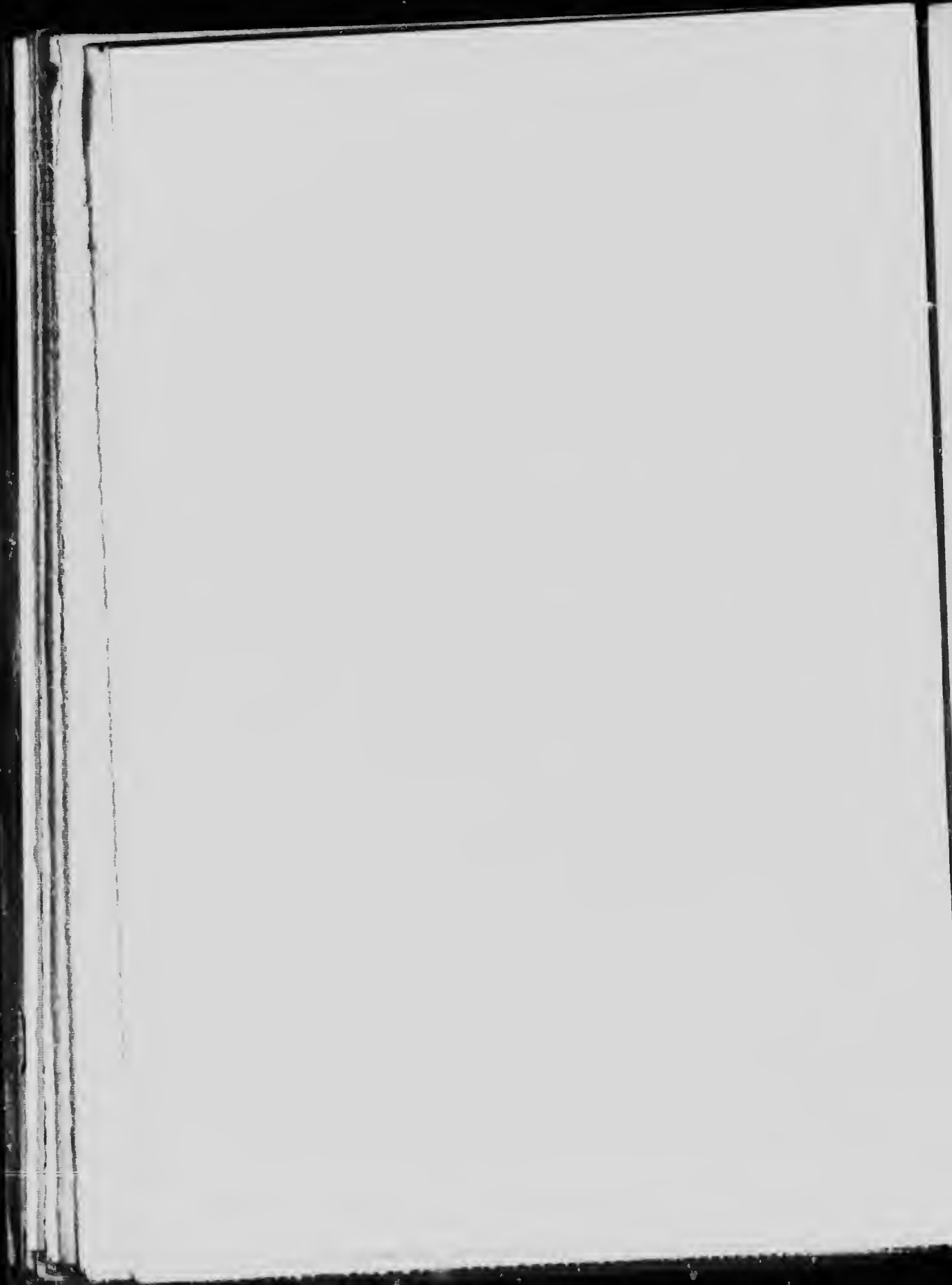
HEPPLEWHITE CHAIR.



EARLY CHIPPENDALE ARM CHAIR.



CHIPPENDALE CHAIR.



like inlay inverted, which adorn an oblong cupboard door, were meant to resemble the tracery of a severe Gothic window; while the "mullions" or "tracery" which contain the panes of a Chippendale bookcase were meant to resemble both Gothic windows and Chinese lattices. When the panes were plain in form, the icicle-like drip of mahogany from above them, sometimes seen, was Chinese in origin.

It is, of course, the ribbon-back chairs which are the most sought after kind of "Chippendale."

THE WORM-EATEN FRAME

I bought it in the little back room of a dealer's shop at Cambridge recently. One should always penetrate to the little back room of a dealer's shop, by the by, if one can. Delightful old things lie *perdu* there, which the dealer thinks not important and showy enough to put in the window or keep in the front shop.

The Portrait.—The worm-eaten frame enclosed an early Wedgwood oval in white relief on green—the portrait of a Georgian princess. It must have dwelt in France some time, for at the back of the jasper are words in faded ink which I make out to be "Don du Prince de Belgiojoso"; but that is no matter. The topic here is the frame.

The Frame.—"Men have died, and worms have eaten them," Rosalind says in the painted Forest of Arden, but in this instance the Georgian princess's profile and bust are intact, and the worms have eaten the frame.

Thereby hangs a tale ; a good deal of pith and moment for collectors lies in these worm-holes. A little dissertation on worm-holes may be helpful to people who "go in for old furniture," as they say, and—some of them—too fondly believe.

Often I have pointed out the charm of an old oval frame. A hundred and twenty years ago a wood-turner—in Soho probably, near Wedgwood's, in Greek Street—set his lathe in motion and turned out an exquisitely proportioned ellipse, deep and rich in moulding, and yet simple, with just enough beadings to give it due ornament, but no more than perfect taste requires. Being a very conscientious craftsman, he finished his work off superbly, even at the back of the frame. Then somebody equally trusty went to work, and by long and careful hand polishing gave an egg-shell surface and lacquer to the wood. Now, after more than a century of wear, it puts the modern-made varnished frames to shame.

The Worm.—But the wood had tenants. Larvæ of the boring wood-beetle, or "furniture-worm," inhabited it, lying more *perdu* than even neglected treasures do in a dealer's back-room shop. The wood-worm possesses a boring apparatus which is relatively more powerful than the machines which burrowed the London railway tubes, and is a foe of which, for several reasons, collectors of old furniture need to beware.

It may even have been the death-watch beetle, genus *Anobium*, which deposited its eggs within the piece of soft wood out of which the frame was turned. The

ticking noise which the death-watch makes is connected with the instinct of sex, and has nothing to do with mortality, so that people who sat near the wall where this frame hung, a century ago, may have shivered and gone pale with forebodings, quite needlessly. Quite a colony of wood-worms were burrowing in the frame, and now, on this small area of wooden surface—six and a half inches by five and a half over all—I count a hundred and forty perforations, some deep, some shallow, and some close together in couples,



TEA-CADDY, circa 1800.

showing where the little beasts went in, tunnelled an eighth of an inch, and emerged.

Worm-holes as a Guarantee.—I knew the medallion to be "old Wedgwood" directly I saw it; the paper glued at the back is also old, for the worms have neatly burrowed through that. Worm-holes in furniture do not develop in a day, nor even in a year; wormy furniture is old furniture, as a rule. "Look at the worm-holes!" people say, as they exhibit a chair or a bureau they have bought. "It must be old!" But worm-holes are faked sometimes. Everybody has heard that

fakers of old furniture let off blunderbusses loaded with fine shot at their handiwork, and then darken the lips of the orifices thus made. They do not now; in the early days of furniture-faking they used to do that, no doubt—I saw one of them do it, in Sheffield, a quarter of a century ago. But their methods are more artful nowadays. Made-up "old" furniture, nowadays, is usually constructed out of genuinely old wood; old planks and blocks of the right wood have a special market value. A faker of furniture who chooses a piece of wood for his purpose selects one that is old but not wormy; he knows that no instructed collector will buy a really wormy piece of furniture, that the worms may ruin entirely in the end. What the faker does is to drill three or four holes here, and two or three there, enough to seem a guarantee, but not so many as to appear to indicate ultimate total perforation.

The Counter Tests.—But there are methods of discovery also. Use a fine probe, having wetted the point of it; it will bring up particles of wood-dust, infinitesimally small sawdust, if the worm-hole *be* a worm-hole; under a lens you will tell by the colour if this drill-dust be new or old. Moreover, true worm-holes will be more numerous than the faker chooses to imitate, and they will be close together, almost honey-combing the wood where they are at all.

To Extirpate Wood-worm.—To rid a piece of furniture of wood-worm is a difficult bit of work. Paraffin with naphthalin dissolved in it may be injected, or burning sulphur in a sealed chamber containing the



CHEST WITH A DRAWER, circa 1600.

piece of furniture may be tried. Sometimes one or both will succeed. But the surest plan is to have the wormy parts cut away with a chisel. That is obviously a delicate piece of carpentry or impracticable when worm is in a chair leg, a spindle, or a scroll of ornament.

If the object be small, it can be enclosed in a box and fumed. "Formalin" vapour is used, in a tin dish over a spirit-lamp. Essential oils such as eucalyptus



TEA-CADDY, circa 1830.

and pennyroyal may be added to the paraffin with good results. Paraffin is better not applied to old oak, it stains it. For worms in old oak use naphthalin dissolved in petrol—2 oz. to the pint. Do not use this near a light.

TALLBOYS AND THE LIKE

One could not collect anything more "practical" than chests of drawers; satirical wives, who, I am told, are thorns in the side of some collectors, would

probably admire and applaud. They could fill every one of them; and presently neo-Empire skirts and *lingerie* from the Rue de la Paix would repose where Jacobean cloaks, Cromwellian buff-jerkins, or Georgian laced waistcoats used to lie. For chests of drawers can be of considerable age and antiquarian association.

Mr. Haldane Macfall has shown how the long, low bridal chest of oak, being raised and modified a little became a chest *with* a drawer, a single drawer in it; that was in Charles I and Cromwell days. Then how, by the time Charles II came to the throne, the chest *with* a drawer had become the chest *of* drawers, raised from the damp, mice, and insects of the floors by a stand or low platform.

The chest was seldom fastened to the stand; often, indeed, the stand was a mere board, held up by ball feet very big, round, and disproportionate. The typical chest of Charles II's reign contained a shallow upmost drawer, a deeper below that, and then, lower still, a nest of drawers shut in by doors.

A chest of this type and date will have knobs, not handles—except sometimes the hinged drop-handles, very small, which were more used a little later. The knobs will be of wood, ivory, or bone. But often nothing, not even a wooden knob.

Evolution of the Tallboy.—Next the stand on which the Jacobean chest of drawers was posed began to develop. The stand itself became a "chest *with* a drawer." The stand now consisted of ball feet or bracket feet, supporting a simple plinth, above which

rose, as if in resurrection, a replica of the Cromwellian chest pierced by one drawer. The slab at the top of the chest, ornamented at its edges by a simple moulding, was the plinth for the already developed chest of drawers which was placed upon it. The developed chest of drawers now contained three long and two short.

Gradually the "stand" grew higher and higher, with more than one drawer in it, until itself it became a chest of drawers. Thus the tallboy—one chest of drawers superimposed upon another slightly larger—came into being, the lower being the upper's plinth.

By now the tallboy had become so very tall that a stool or steps must be used to deal with the upper drawers of it. Such apparently inconvenient receptacles are capital for a husband's clothes, the wife of a collector tells me; you keep the summer garments in the upper drawers during winter, and the winter garments replace them there during summer.

Other Developments.—I think it likely that the "bureau-bookcase" developed out of the tallboy; almost certainly the "Queen Anne" two-storied bureau did. In the second half of the seventeenth century tallboys and chests were elaborately decorated by panelling and by inlaying in mother-of-pearl and ivory. About the beginning of the eighteenth century the Chinese influence came in, and the drawers became irregularly arranged sometimes. Right on through the Chippendale period, and the Sheraton, the tallboy continued to be made; the Hepplewhite tallboy was

a simple, plain, sensible construction, suitable for the small bedrooms of the period, when floor space was a consideration ; it consisted of three drawers in the lower part and five in the upper ; it rested upon an almost invisible stand supported by plain bracket feet. This is the kind of tallboy which you find to-day in auction-rooms.

Take away the lower part, bring the upper part to the floor, and behold ! two chests of drawers proper. Dutch influence came in, to splay out the lower tiers. French influence came in, to bow-window (so to speak) the whole of the front of the chest, and the fronts of the drawers accordingly. Inlaying began again in the Sheraton period. In the Jacobean period the inlaying had been done with mother-of-pearl and ivory, upon panels of foreign wood set into an oaken frame or "carcase" ; the Sheraton marquetry was tulip and satin wood upon mahogany.

At Dordrecht, Delft, or Middelburg you may buy a good old Dutch chest of drawers for forty shillings, and a tallboy for eighty ; in England English-made similars will cost you at least thrice as much ; but the English workmanship, style and finish, and fit were far superior to the Dutch.

In some Georgian bureau-bookcases you find a shelf which pulls out above the top drawers ; that is a relic of the tallboy days ; clothes used to be folded and brushed upon it.

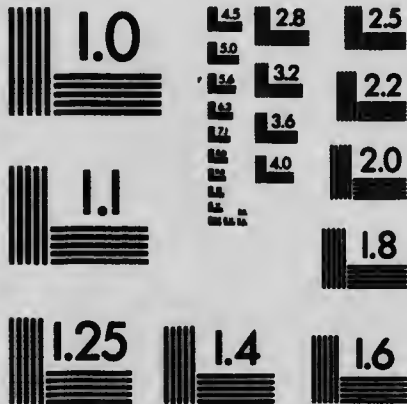


SECRÉTAIRE TALLBOY OF HEPPLEWHITE PERIOD



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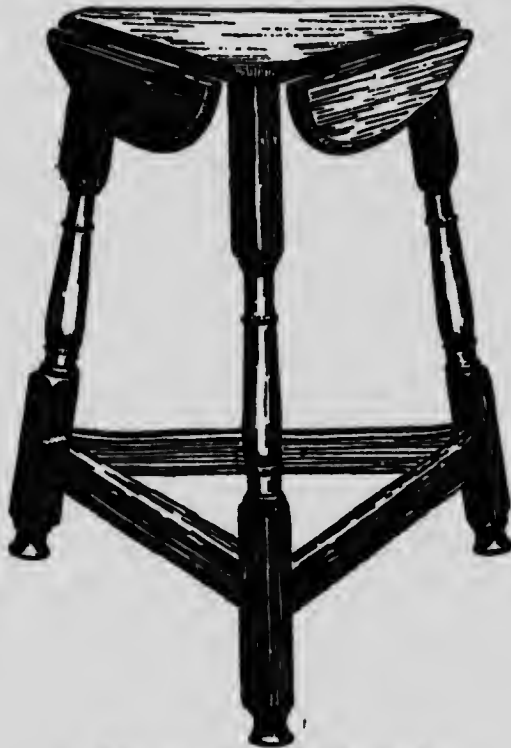


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THE SPORT OF OAK

There is all the delight of the chase about it—you never know what you may not find and “kill.” For old oak furniture is not yet so marked down and defined, in numberless books of illustrated erudition, as is old



JACOBEOAN OAK STAND WITH LEAVES.

walnut and mahogany. Now that Queen Anne, Chippendaie, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton things are so difficult to acquire cheaply, “Jacobean” is looking up. And Jacobean furniture is almost all of it oaken, while Tudor furniture is “even more so,” as a dealer informed me once,

But the sport of oak-hunting has its risks. I say nothing of the labours of that "professional worm-holer" who is said to have recorded his avocation in a recent census; you will avoid worm-eaten furniture, of course. The real risks arise with modern *contrefaçons* made out of sound old wood. I need not warn against the black-oak dining-room and hall *suites* made for Tottenham Court Road smallish shops, in a travesty of Jacobean, about thirty years ago, in such quantities; the merest chip with a knife will reveal the soft white wood underneath the stain. The time-honoured hue of "old oak" is deep honey-brown, not inky-sable; and, besides, you will look for the characteristic, unmistakable grain of oak wood, no matter what colour the surface may show. No, the really deceitful pieces are those "made up."

Concocted.—A "Cromwellian sideboard" was offered me the other day. There were buffets, but no sideboards worth mentioning, in the time of the Cavaliers and Roundheads, but that does not matter. About half this glorified buffet was genuinely antique—indeed, much older than Cromwellian, for that half consisted in six fine carved panels, Gothic and fifteenth century. There were also two twisted pillars of Renaissance style and date. Now all this fine, antique genuine stuff had been fitted into a carcass lately made up out of an old pew, and the Gothic panels *swore*, as the French say, at the rest.

Yet the price was cheap at £18; the Gothic doors of the hutch or cupboard, with their contemporary metal

hinges, lock-holders, and escutcheons, and the fine carven pillars were worth the money themselves. To fit into an oak room wainscoting—the panels—and the pillars to support a mantelshelf, I mean. Such use of them is a praiseworthy case of making-up. But as a “Cromwellian sideboard” the effect was meretricious, to say the least; it flagrantly bore the mark of the concocter.

Known by the Tools.—Now, the mark of the unskilful maker-up is the mark of the plane. I do not say that the saw and the plane had nothing to do with fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century oak furniture, but the older it is or is professed to be, the more you will expect to see the mark of the chisel that laboriously and imperfectly smoothed the plain surfaces, and even the mark of the axe that hewed into the plank or log. This chiselling, instead of planing, is a test of age in the panels on which pictures were painted, by the by; old Dutch and Flemish pictures were painted on panels of fairly thin oak. But also, in regard to furniture, expect to see rabbeting, dove-tailing, pinning, and pegging rather than nailing; and be extremely suspicious of glueing unless the bit of furniture has obviously been repaired.

And when you examine the carving, look for the mark of the gouge, particularly in the under-sunk decoration of old dower-chests and chair-backs. By whatever tool the carving was done, however, if its surface be smooth the suavity felt by the finger will not be due to sand-paper; it will have come from endless dustings,

polishings, and elbow-greasings, continued through hundreds of years. Even if in these respects the front of a panel seems satisfactory to you, you will not fail to look at its back, for fear you may there discover the

mark of the plane. And expect to find on every raised or angular part of surface the veritable, and not feigned signs of wear and tear.

Eighteenth-Century Oak.

—So far, I have dealt with Jacobean and Tudor oak, but you will come across Georgian oak that is worth picking up. You will find chests of drawers, boxes, clock-cases, and other plane-surfaced articles, usually adorned by a band of mahogany inlay. And you should not despise a set—

six ordinary and two “car-



PEASANT-MADE WOODEN
NUTCRACKERS.

vers,” as they are called—of early Chippendale-design oak chairs.

OLD BRACKET CLOCKS

The gilt or marble horrors which people buy to place upon their mantelpieces as clocks! Though honest copies of eighteenth-century English bracket clocks

can be had for the same money, and some of the originals can be bought for £10.

The works of old bracket clocks have been so often renewed that most of them are capital timekeepers still, and to own one is utilitarian as well as an item of collecting. I should hardly advise a collector to set himself the task of obtaining clocks in which the works are all original and intact. Only a clockmaker of great expertness can be sure about original insides.

Cases can tell us a good deal about clocks which bear no date or name of maker. I treasure a certain anonymous bracket clock because the shape of the mahogany case at the top shows the "Chippendale-Chinese" influence, by somewhat resembling the roof of a low pagoda. But the earliest, and, therefore, the most desirable, old bracket clocks belong to a date considerably prior to Chippendale's, which was *circa* 1760; and I do not say that you can pick up a bracket clock made in 1690 for £10.

Data Indicating Dates.—In my "A B C About Collecting" I have mentioned data which indicate the age of a grandfather clock; let me try to do something of the kind for the clocks now under notice. If you examine the earliest wood-cased bracket clocks, you find a plain, square case of walnut, ebony, or mahogany, flat at the top, with a plain metal handle set upon it—in that respect resembling what are called carriage-clocks to-day. The presence of the handle shows that these clocks used to be carried from room to room, ponderous for that purpose as they may

seem to us now. These plain, square cases belong to the middle part of the latter half of the seventeenth century.

During the last quarter of the seventeenth century—about 1680, say—the top ceased to be plain and flat: a kind of “dome” in “basket-work” metal rose from it, and the handle, itself becoming ornamented, rose from that. Sometimes this “dome” was doubled, one edifice of open-work metal arising from another, with the handle at top of all.

About the year 1700 the “bell-top” for these clocks was adopted in place of the “dome”; a super-edifice of wood, not very aptly described as a bell. It is really an incurving plinth of wood rising from the flat, real top of the case like an oblong pedestal for the support of a statuette; but what it really supported was, at first, the metal handle, and, later on, when such handles had been done away with, a small wooden or metal ornament shaped like a vase or urn. A “bell-top” does not necessarily indicate the period of 1700–1720, however, for bell-tops were popular till nearly the end of the eighteenth century.

If the metal or inlay “ornament” on a case be rather overdone, it suggests lateness of period. The early clocks have square dials; the arch-dial came later. The “back-plates,” to which the works were screwed in the early clocks, are elaborately engraved, with flourishes or other decorations, and generally show the maker’s name. Clocks with engraved back-plates were fitted with glass back-doors to display the ornament; when

ornamenting the back-plate fell into disuse, the back-doors began to be wholly of wood.

The ornamentation of the dials tells something about date. The dial is usually of brass, with the hours numbered in Roman figures on a silvered circle. The spandrels, or corners of the dial outside the hour-circle, were filled in with designs in cast brass; the earliest and simplest were cast after Grinling Gibbons' design of two cherubs; the later spandrels are the more elaborate. If chasing tools have obviously worked, upon the brass casting, that usually indicates earliness.

Late Eighteenth-Century Cases—About the year 1760 the "bell-top" used to be in vogue for this use, and on some clocks was replaced by one of several other shapes of top. There was the "broken arch," a bad name for a simple segment of a circle planted on the real flat top, not quite so wide as the dial. The "balloon" shape is more readily recognised, when you see it in a clock with a waist and bulging shoulders, like an armless dummy at a dressmaker's. The "lancet" top is shaped like the top of a Gothic lancet window, two simple curves meeting in a point. Brass inlay indicates the "Adam" or "Empire Sheraton" influence and date. Very big bracket-clocks, in ebonised wood with brass edgings, are likely to belong to the early nineteenth century. Very large bracket clocks in mahogany, heavily carved and moulded, but without inlay, and rather resembling sarcophagi, are very late Georgian.

THE CHAIR AND THE DRESSER

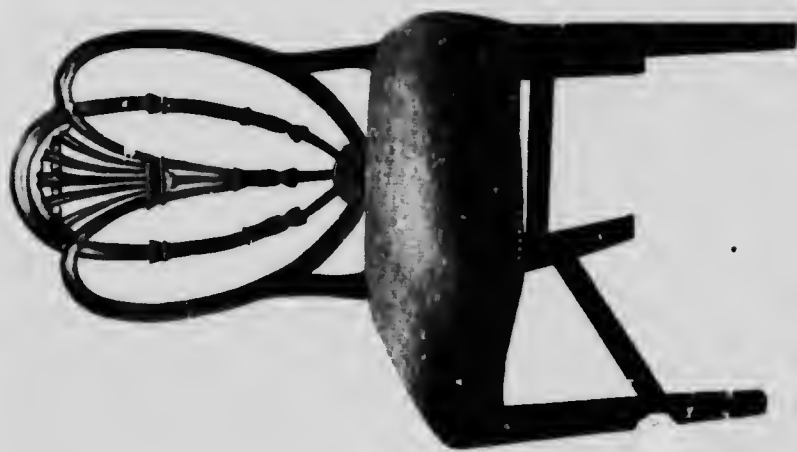
"Fifteen shillin', sir."

The fifteen shillings' worth was the ruins of a chair. A few straps hung from a few flocks of wool—all that was left of the seat. The woodwork had been blackened all over, a hundred years ago or more, in imitation of lacquer, and on the dingy blackness of the broad top-rail of the back I could just distinguish three rosettes of yellow paint, as streaked and lined across with brown as the splotches of yellowed white in a Rembrandt picture. This lacquer-paint had been worn away on those parts of the arms which had been much handled, and the wood was a dirty putty-colour just there. A more forlorn and apparently valueless fifteen shillings' worth can seldom have been seen anywhere.

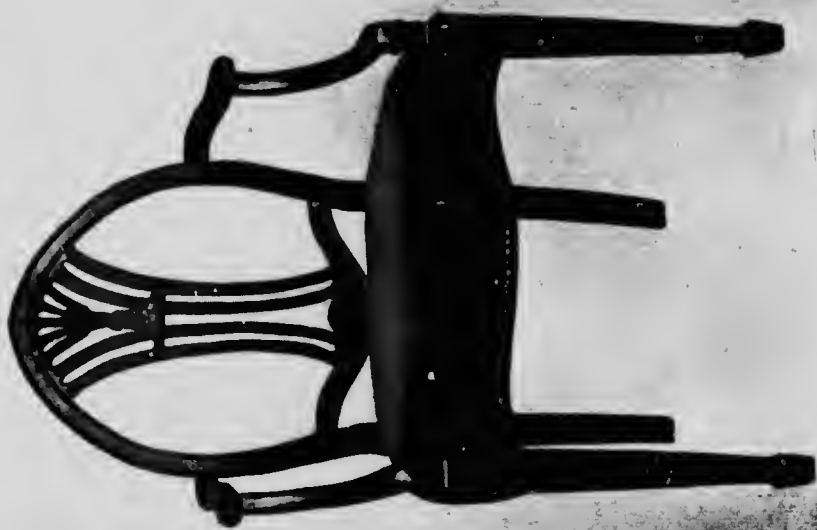
The Outlines.—But the shape of the chair was perfection. The arms sloped down and out, in the "line of beauty," widening in bulk and curve from the width of the chair-back to the width of the seat-front. The arms showed a double bent, down and outward, so that each must have been patiently chiselled out of a solid block of wood; and where they joined the top of the front legs there was simple but graceful leaf-carving. The front legs went downwards *diminuendo*, and had the Sheraton ankle and foot. The top-rail of the chair-back was more than three inches high, and, like the arms, was outlined with a simple, dignified moulding; its rectangular shape suggested the

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CHAIR WITH BACK OF INTERLACING HEARTS,
PROBABLY MADE BY GILLOW, CIRCA 1788.



CHIPPENDALE-DEPPLEWHITE ARM-CHAIR.



Adam influence. But it was curved, and the bottom rail curved also. The splat, or upright portion of the back between the top and bottom rails, resembled two letters X set between three letters I, and suggested the Chippendale influence. So I knew that the chair had been made by some eclectic craftsman, and probably about the year 1790.

The restoration.—I said to a skilful and intelligent master-workman, "Clean all the lacquer-paint off it, polish the wood which you discover underneath, and upholster in plain, dark velvet." When the restored chair was brought back to me, the master-workman nearly went down on his knees in adoration of it; his hands caressed the curves almost amorously. The wood had turned out to be a fine yellow birch, almost as beautiful in colour as satinwood, and chosen originally because of a lovely satinwood-like grain in the top-rail. Fifteen



LACE-MAKING BOBBIN.

guineas could not purchase such a chair as this fifteen shillings' worth is now.

But that is not an everyday experience by a hunter, of course ; you may search in a hundred likely corners without twice discovering such a find, or you may come too late ; I discovered the ruins of a fine Empire arm-chair which had been disfigured by black paint and gold paint. "Sold, sir," said the broker disappointingly. "Then how much did you sell it for?" I asked. "Six-an'-sixpence," said he. Yes, there are bargains still.

The Dresser.—Being in Shrewsbury, I eyed the best of a dozen Welsh dressers, all in the same "antique" dealer's shop. They all were dark, polished, and *pim pant*, fresh from the restorer's hands, and yet all warranted to be "genuine old." Now, a good Welsh dresser is worth acquiring ; you can range plates of old pewter or old earthenware along the shelves in the back of it very decoratively and conveniently indeed. Welsh-made dressers *did* have top backs to them, by the by ; dressers of the kind and date made in England were often made without top backs to them at all. But the restorer kindly adds the top backs in every such case, using panelling from Victorian church pews. "How much this one?" I asked. "Sixteen pounds," was the reply. Ten pounds' worth of labour and material must have been put into it quite recently, and all to no purpose, from a collector's point of view, for the dresser had been spoiled.

Fifteen shillings, perhaps, had bought the original

article out of some cottage in the Welsh hills ; it was then a plain, honest piece of useful furniture, made of oak which time and use had browned, and it had been adorned at the most with the simplest possible lines of mahogany inlay and plain brass "droppers" hanging from the drawers. But the restorer had zealously gone to work upon it. First he had scraped all the time-stain and the "elbow-grease" off the wood. Then he had inlaid "Sheraton" shell-ornaments in to all the panels. Then he had fret-sawed all the plain rectangular mouldings into ugly curves. Then he had put "Queen Anne" legs to the lower front. And then he had rubbed "dark oak stain" into the wood, and oiled and oiled the whole until it assumed a burnt-umber brown. Then he had screwed in new "brass furniture," of drawer-handles in place of droppers. Then he had brought the thing to the "antique" shop, elaborately spoiled. Yet the dealer's profit, you will see, could not be exorbitant after all.

The fact is that bargains cannot be cheaply acquired in antique furniture, except very rarely, if you buy things already furbished up. It is better to buy from second-hand brokers, or from dealers in the "rough" only. That is where the furbishing-up dealers procure the dilapidated old stuff. Then you can instruct some craftsman, who will do what you wish, and no more, for a reasonable charge.

PART III

PICTURES AND MINIATURES

PICTURES INCOGNITO

IT lay forlorn, "a gem of purest ray serene," incognito—like the necklace of black pearls that was recently sold as glass beads. It had for neighbours three or four napless tall hats, some chipped enamel saucepans, a pair of dingy corsets, and a few odd table-forks from which the electro-plating was gone. Chalked on the back of it were the figures which signify eighteen-pence. And yet it was a painting in oils by Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

It was, in fact, a fair-sized portrait-study of Eleanor Siddall, who afterwards became Rossetti's wife; the likeness, as well as the art, is recognisable. She rests in a window-seat, looking into the room; her pensive face—she was poet and painter herself—her high brow, her wonderful coppery hair, her full, long, drooping eyelids, her rich lips, her graceful shoulders and simple dress, her shapely arms, and one hand, are all here. Yes, this was indeed the woman in whose coffin Rossetti buried his manuscript poems, an oblation of woe.

Her other hand, the cushion upon which it rests, the window which frames her, the curtain at one side, and a tassel, are sketchy and unfinished, while the rest of the canvas is hardly tinted at all. But stretching away to a hilly horizon behind the figure is a moorland landscape, just glimpsed, and tinted with the last level rays ; while over it all is one of Rossetti's blue-green twilight skies. I think my eighteenpenny Rossetti must have been painted at Matlock, when Eleanor Siddall was there in 1857.

Unsigned.—The canvas is unsigned, as many studies and sketches are, that none the less are signed all over to the recognising eye. And it is not studies and sketches alone that thus may go incognito. Some of the most famous great pictures, complete, and for centuries enshrined in galleries and collections, bear no painter's name. Among the list of great artists who signed their work very seldom, or never signed it at all, are Correggio, Domenichino, Giordano, Gorgione, Guido, Pa'na Vecchia, Raphael, Rubens, Tintoretto, Titian, da Vinci, and Van Dyck. Only the Dutch, Flemish, and German painters systematically signed their work ; great English artists have been chary of signatures. It is true that signatures have been put on *for them*, upon canvases which they may or may not have seen.

Signed.—Signatures and monograms of artists have only a secondary value in authenticating pictures ; they may even be disproof. A signature in *itself alone* is hardly more worthy of notice than a doubtful mark

upon porcelain; forgers have been rather more busy with pictures than with old china, in fact.

All the same, a painter's signature is not to be sneezed at; Rembrandt's, for instance, is highly characteristic, and so are the dates he added. A real judge of Rembrandts well knows the three Rembrandt periods of style, the contemporary signature, and the appropriate date in each case. If any contemporary signature appears on a picture which answers to the signature in the known respects, the signing adds to the collecting value. Like the gold anchor mark upon a sumptuous bit of "Chelsea," a real signature is worth much, in authenticity and money. And the question whether a picture signature is contemporaneous or posthumous can be tested; for—*a signature of the same date as the painting will be incorporate in the substance of the painting, but a little spirits of wine or turpentine will soon loosen and remove a modern forgery of the name.*

Yet that is a dangerous process in unskilled hands; used by inexperience upon a genuine signature or monogram, the methylated spirit may soon bring away not only the name-marks but that part of the picture too. Some artists signed with paint so fluid and unstable that too harsh a rubbing in of the spirits, in bringing off the varnish, will bring away the signature also.

Indeed, the fraudulent sort of dealer, and occasionally the unscrupulous collector, will sometimes have a second-rate artist's signature removed from an old pic-

ture, so that it may be assigned to the chief master of the artist's particular school. That is the way in which Van Oost becomes a "Rubens," and a Hoogstraaten a "de Hooge."

Incognito.—Not signatures, therefore, alone and in themselves, but the study of known pictures and famous artists' styles, are what may enable a vigilant collector to rescue from neglect a picture that has gone incognito and little thought of for years. Eyesight, knowledge, and judgment may still acquire a good old picture for next to nothing now and again, and surely one may be prouder of finds like those than of canvases bought by force of guineas at Christie's.

THE SHIPLOAD OF PICTURES

Some day some collector with a turn for writing may give us a history of collecting, and meantime it is almost a duty to jot down memoranda on the subject, for historians build with bricks and mortar procured by others, as a rule.

I have printed some material of the kind concerning English porcelain and earthenware, in "The Wander Years" and "The A B C About Collecting"; but who will search out the history of picture collecting in such a way as has been thoroughly done concerning the collecting of old books? It should be a delightful piece of work for a collector with leisure; for, to speak frankly, the mere getting a collection together, irrespective of research and the accumulation of lore, cannot commend itself to the intelligence. A magpie

is a kind of a collector, of things that glisten, and a dog is a hoarder, of bones. If we do not note, read, and cogitate about our treasures we miss the intellectual part of our hobby.

To Picture Collectors.—The eager picker-up of old pictures, for instance—does he know when the canvases he seeks for came to England, and why? The *Times* of September 1st, 1846, contained the news that "a vessel has arrived in London from Leghorn with a cargo of paintings by ancient masters." In the year 1845 the Customs return showed that the number of pictures imported into the United Kingdom was 14,091. Count was kept in those days, because of the dues—a shilling a picture, *plus* one shilling per square foot up to £10. At that rate, a million old pictures must have been brought in here during the nineteenth century alone; where are they all to-day?

And it began long before then. We travel and admire the galleries on the Continent, but they all either are or were the property of kings and Popes; *our* National Gallery did not begin like that. When, early in the sixteenth century, pictures ceased to be church ornaments mainly, and became articles of commerce, how many collectors and galleries for them were there abroad? Except those belonging to kings, Popes, and sovereign princes such as the Medici and the Gonzagas, practically none.

The Start, and the Fashion.—In point of fact, the earliest non-royal great collector was an Englishman, Lord Arundel (1586-1646), of whom the Arundel

Society prints commemorate the name. The current Duke of Buckingham emulated him, and Lely got together "many Titians and twenty-six Van Dycks," together with "drawings, of divers finishings, which had been the heart of great designs." Fine private collections of such drawings—the *materia* of pictures—began to be made, also. What had been taste with Arundel, show with Buckingham, and art-study with Lely, began to be fashion with Englishmen of rank and wealth. Sending pictures home to England became the part of every travelling milord.

The collecting was not always done with taste and discrimination, of course, and that is why rather bad old pictures swarm in this country to-day; I say *rather* bad, because those that remain loose abroad are worse. English taste deserved some of the gibes at it. There is a story of an English nobleman who employed a local dauber to put periwigs on the heads of his ancestors portrayed by Van Dyck! But English taste was then the best taste in Europe, and I am not sure that it is not so still.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century really fine old pictures began to crowd in here. The French Revolution, Napoleon's conquests in Italy, the wars of the Empire, and then the Peninsular campaigns, caused the dispersion of foreign royal and princely galleries. The pictures which had belonged to the Regent of France came here to be sold. Napoleon's Army Commissioners sold loot of the kind to English bankers and British Consuls in Italy and Germany, who bought

them for patrons and customers at home. And even Napoleon's *vendetta* with us could not stop the export; amazing the number of canvases and panels shipped to England even during the height of the war.

The Hertford Taste.—Then, when peace came, milords went travelling about impoverished countries, buying pictures by the score for a song. The contemporary Marquis of Hertford posted through Italy, from town to town—imagine his hauls at remote places like Bergamo and Brescia—with *fourgons* full of pictures and *bric-à-brac* lumbering behind. It was thus the Wallace Collection began. But the Hertfords were connoisseurs indeed; many other purchasers were incompetent judges. Rubbish came over to England by the shipload, and that is why there are so many small, poor old foreign pictures in this country to-day.

The Copyists.—After a while the travelling Englishmen with money formed a fashion of ordering copies of the great gallery pictures which they liked but could not buy. Then there were also the earlier, contemporary copies, done by pupils or friends of a great artist, and often now supposed to be the work of that artist himself. This made confusion worse confounded, but it is one reason why you may still pick up a really fine old picture now and then for a small sum. I confess I like those contemporary copies. "I am not the rose, but I have lived near it," such pictures seem to say.

WHAT PICTURES TO BUY?

I suppose there are few professed collectors of other things who do not go in for a picture now and then, preferably an old one, in water-colour, in pastels, or in oil. You may swear by porcelain, books, Wedgwood, furniture, lustre-ware, lace, miniatures, brasses, enamels, paste, embroideries, rococo jewels, silhouettes, book-plates, cameos, ivories, spoons, snuff-boxes, nutmeg-graters, costumes, glass, stay-busks, pinchbeck, chap-books, watch-cocks, tankards, harness-amulets, coins, armour, medals, bronzes, or what not, but you still have the upper part of the wall-paper in your rooms to adorn.

People who collect mezzotints, colour-prints, etchings, aquatints, Baxters, stipple-prints, copper-plates, glass-pictures, and so forth, may hang the walls with their larger treasures, and not need to buy an oil-painting, a water-colour drawing, or a crayon-sketch at all. But for the rest of us the question "What pictures to buy?" is imperative; and by the word "pictures" I here mean not oil-paintings only, but water-colours and pastels, too.

The Possibilities Still.—I think it is good to be catholic in picture-buying. I am sure it is good to purchase pictures when you come across them casually, rather than to go hunting for them specially, and buying them all at once. The chances of casually coming upon a treasure of a picture are still numerous, if you possess the seeing eye and the knowing lore. There is

a man—not myself, alas!—who, within the last two years, motoring through a village in wild Wales, found in the same little shop a great Del Mazo, a perfectly lovely Carlo Dolci, and a Lely, with two late *Sèvres* vases, on sale for less than £25 in all. The vases alone are worth the money.

By the side of that taken chance, other "finds" may well look meagre—and note that the purchaser in this case was not a collector, but a business man, who thought, and rightly, that he knew value for cash when he saw it, even in an unfamiliar "line." But when I look around a room I know, I am almost surprised to see what, in the course of only a few years, a wandering collector with alert eyes, some taste, and a fair knowledge of schools of painting and artists' styles, can do with a slender purse. I see on the walls of that room an Etty, an Opie, a likely Morland, a Stark, two Varleys, a Bright, a Kneller, a de Hooze, a Pothoven, a Carlo Maratti, a Nash, a Taverner, a Madox Brown, a Pyne seapiece, a group of boors that may be by Ostade, and a sketch of cattle that Troyon may have done; and only one of them cost more than three pounds. Most of them cost less than two. No doubt some money has since been spent on each in restoring, varnishing, mounting, stretching, or framing, and many of them are smallish or small. But what does that matter? In these days of flats, bungalows, and small villas big pictures cannot well be hung. Some of them, too, are sketches, I know, but what then? A fine painter was often at his best in a sketch.

Buying Sketches.—Out of every artist's studio go numberless unfinished essays, sketches, and "bits," that often are bits of pure delight. They are going out of studios to-day, "unconsidered trifles" by painters who will be famous a generation hence. If you have the *flair* and the patience you may collect such "bits." They will afford an exercise for taste in mounting and framing so as to make the best of them; but, how do you suppose most of the countless water-colours kept at the Print Room, British Museum, and in the Victoria and Albert Museum were first got together? By contemporary collectors who picked up bits by contemporary brushes in the way I describe.

To do the same thing to-day one must know whose "bits" to acquire. If you cannot afford to buy off an exhibition wall a Brangwyn, an Orpen, an East, a Clausen, and so on (not to say a Sargent), you can study them in the exhibitions, and thus learn to recognise a chip from those workshops, so to speak.

You can study the illustrated books and periodicals which tell about the best pictures being painted in England and Scotland to-day. New or old, there are sketches and bits on mill-board, paper, or canvas to be found by tireless seekers yet; and these, I think, for people with more taste than spare five-pound notes, are the kind of pictures to buy.

TESTS OF AGE IN MINIATURES

Miniatures are delightful things to collect. Of those which lie in wait for a collector many are beautiful and some are old.

The origin of miniatures is "lost in the obscurity of the ninth century," a great French authority once said; but in "Gossip about Portraits" by Walter F. Tiffen, published forty-six years ago, it is written that "Adam and Eve wore each other's miniatures from the very day of their falling in love," and Mr. Tiffen quoted Tom Moore in proof:

Look in my eyes, my blushing fair!
Thou'lt see thyself reflected there:
And, as I gaze in thine, I see
Two little miniatures of me.

Beware!—Take note that hundreds of frauds await the unwary collector of miniatures. Seldom adventure upon a *round* wooden snuff or patch box with an *oval* miniature let into the top of the lid. Be chary of ivory boxes with miniatures on or under the lid. Be more chary of buying a poorly painted miniature in an old frame than of buying a well-painted miniature in a new frame. And keep in mind the classification in the following paragraph:

Seven Kinds of Old Miniatures.—1. The earliest English miniatures are those on *vellum*; these are seldom portraits, and have usually been cut out of missals and other illuminated books.

2. Then came portrait miniatures on *cardboard*.

Holbein, Hilliard, Cooper, and their contemporaries worked on this surface. The cardboard was usually the back of a playing-card, because the best cardboard then made was used by playing-card makers.

3. About the same date *paper* was sometimes used.

4. Miniatures in *enamel on metal*, though early in France, came into use much later here.

5. Miniatures painted on *silver or gold* were almost contemporaneous with those on cardboard and paper.

6. Many early miniatures were painted in oil-colours on *copper*, but hardly anything is yet known about the painters of these.

7. *Ivory*, as a material, did not come into use until the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The Materials as Tests.—Thus, if you are offered a miniature of Queen Elizabeth painted on ivory, you may be sure that it was not painted in the Elizabethan Age, and it will be, in that respect at least, a fraud. And so will almost certainly be a miniature of Lady Hamilton painted on old cardboard or paper. The material should correspond with the date of the supposed sitting for the portrait.

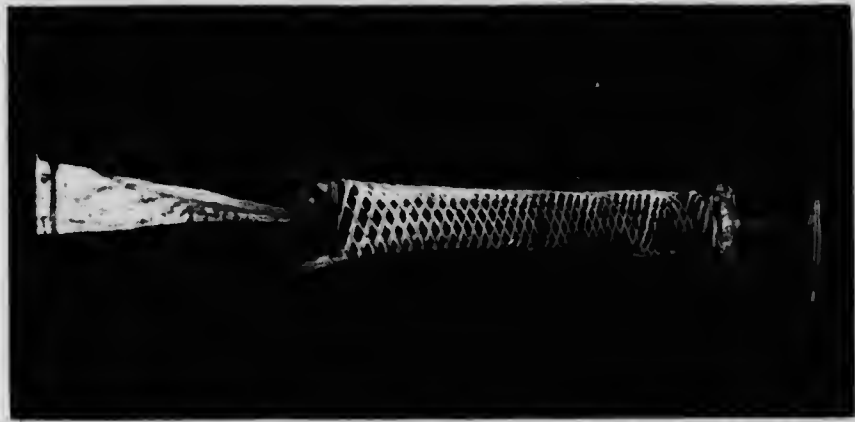
The pigments guide you also. Except on copper, oil-paint was seldom used. Water-colour mixed with white lead or "Chinese white" was the vehicle of the old miniature-painters—body-colour, or *guache*, as it is called. Transparent water-colour—*not* touched with Chinese white—was hardly ever used at all, and certainly not before the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The Hard Dryness of the Pigments.—If with a needle you can cut the thick parts of the painting in oil or *guache*, depend upon it the work is not more than twenty-five years old. It seems vandalish to suggest the use of a needle in that way, and it should only take place as a last test and resort; it can, however, be done almost invisibly. In an old miniature the pigments have become hardened by age. They have also become friable, however, and you must distinguish between a "cut" of the paint and a scratch which reveals the cardboard or ivory.

The Use of a Lens.—Forgers take a photographic process-print copy of an old miniature, and fake it up with colour. But a strong glass will show you the wire-blind-like lines produced on the print by the screen through which the original was photographed.

The Back of the Miniature.—Old miniatures were often wrapped in gold-beater's skin, pasted down at the edges of the picture, to keep out damp and air; look for that; always have the miniature out of the frame before buying. If between the back of the miniature and the frame you find hair, a scrap of writing, or a bit of old newspaper, these will be guides.

The Frames.—Seventeenth-century miniatures were usually framed in gold, with a twisted ornamental top, or in silver, "parcel-gilt" (like the goblet by which Falstaff swore). Eighteenth-century miniatures had gold or gilt frames, often set with brilliants or paste, or in the latter part of that century, as in the beginning of the next, set in oblongs of black *papier-mâché*



AIR-SPIRAL STEMMED DRAWN GLASS.



ENGRAVED DRAWN GLASS, WITH
TEAR IN STEM AND FOLDED FOOT.



PLAIN DRAWN WINE-GLASS.

or ebonised wood, with oval inner rims of ormolu or pinchbeck.

The Art of the Painter.—But frames can be changed, and other *addenda* forged, so that the supreme test is the care, finish, and yet freedom of the painting. The lips are more difficult tests than the eyes; the hands are a good test, also. The use of the Chinese white which imitated lace is, especially, a test of this sort; if it be slovenly dashed in, the miniature is little likely to be old and good. In this, as in all antiques, the final and supreme criterion is the workmanship. It would not pay a forger of anything to work as slowly and conscientiously as the makers of the original treasures gladly did, and the forgers cannot work so well.

The Look.—Instinctively, after a period of experience, you will come to know, by the mere *look*, if a miniature is old.

THE JUDGING OF OLD PICTURES

“How do they know?” the possessor of an old picture grumbles, after sending it with a fee to an expert, and getting it back with the verdict that it is *not* a Hobbema, *not* a Diaz, or *not* a Romney, as the case may be. “How do they know?” he demands indignantly. “Look how they differ about that National Gallery *Venus*! I don’t believe they do know!” But they do.

The case of the Rokeby Venus is notorious, and this is not the only great picture which is still a bone of contention. As a rule, the great pictures of the

world are already judged and classified. But fine old pictures, of less importance than these, still await judgment, by the hundred. I was asked to look at a "Hondecooter" the other day; it was merely a Barlow. Usually a good old picture can be judged, verified, dated, and its painter's name assigned correctly, even when it has no "pedigree" or continuous record of possession after origin. For the verification of pictures by experts has become an exact science, almost.

Morelli Methods.—This exact connoisseurship and the methods which experts now employ are of rather recent growth. They began with Morelli, an Italian art-critic, about a generation ago. Morelli's method was to study so closely all the details of pedigree-authenticated pictures by a given artist of the past as to know every small trick of his painting manner. Then from these mannerisms to recognise as his, or not his, a picture of his date and school.

The droop of the eyelids, the shape of the hands, the outline of the ears, in a portrait or figure-picture—nay, the very cut of the finger-nails, may thus become significant. Look, for instance, at the hands in a print of Botticelli's "Primavera." The other day a pseudo-Botticelli was offered to the nation; it was judged as "pseudo" only because, *inter alia*, it did not answer to the Morelli test, that Botticelli always painted hands as bony, with the nails cut square.

Applying the Method.—For example, upon an easel, in a good light, a "Madonna and Child"—one of

the myriad old pictures of that subject—awaits the judgment of a picture expert. "Lombard School," he says at once. The crisp, fine-curved hair of the Madonna, brown with reddish gleams in it; the slightly bulging forehead; the eyelids, so heavy as to seem a little swollen; the square chin, deep dimpled; the breeding in the long hands; the smile, seeming more in the cheeks than on the lips; the greenish tint of the sky; the mirage-like background, unrealistic, a landscape immense and yet miniature, including rocks, glaciers, streams, and castles—all these convince the judge that he has before him a picture of the Lombard School.

Many such pictures have always remained at Milan. The Lombard type of woman is, or used to be, like that. The same mysterious smile as that used to be seen on the cheeks of the "Monna Lisa" in the Louvre, and also the same straight nose, powerfully set in to face and forehead. But to which well-known artist of the Lombard School can the picture under judgment be assigned? That is the next question. It suggests the style of Luini, as seen in the Brera Gallery at Milan; to some extent it even suggests the work of Leonardo da Vinci; but it may be a Bramantino picture. Probably Luini was Leonardo's studio-pupil; assuredly Bramantino was.

Leonardo Signs.—There is certainly the pale amber-like glow of a Leonardo picture, though that may be in the varnish mainly. But Leonardo was a profound anatomist and a perfectly skilful draughtsman, and in

this picture there is something wrong about the shape of the Madonna's neck. Then the stuff of her robe looks rigid; Leonardo, on the contrary, always gave his painted textures suppleness and "flow." In faint letters the words *Di Lionardo Pitore* are legible, but still the expert doubts. With a strong lens he applies a final test. He knows that Leonardo was left-handed; in Leonardo's drawings the strokes of the crayon or pen go from *left to right*. In places where the impasto, or body of pigment, on the doubtful picture is thin, the lens detects that the brush-strokes went from right to left. Somebody normally-handed painted it. "No," says the judge, "it is not by Leonardo da Vinci."

Luini and Bramantino Signs.—Then he studies it as a possible Luini, but what he finds are Bramantino signs. He has opened those pages of Morelli's book which contain a series of copies of hands and ears taken from authenticated Bramantino pictures and drawings. The hands are invariably long, with meagre, almost fluted fingers, two of them joined, the other two separated. The ears are always long, too, the lobes very developed, almost pointed. The picture on the easel shows all these mannerisms, and "It is a Bramantino," decides the judge.

No Child's Play.—This seems simple enough, but it is not so easy as it seems. It means examining a picture inch by inch, and almost dissecting it by the eye. It means ready recourse to portfolios of large and perfect photographs of all the authenticated good pictures known. It means *expertise* concerning textures

of canvases, material of pigments, woods used for panels, sizes placed on the blank canvas or panel to prepare it for the paint. It means research in libraries and archives for letters or other documents of the period in which a given picture may be mentioned. And it means steady judgment more than enthusiasm (the tempter). "Enthusiasm is not a method of judgment," Morelli said.

And this is how the experts employed by great dealers, and often the great dealers themselves, are able to judge, date, verify, and put a name to an anonymous good old picture, with almost a mathematic skill.

IMPRESSIONIST FRENCH PICTURES

It was a rosewood panel, broadly painted with a picture of a forest glade—a *sous-bois*; two figures, a man and a woman, with something of the French peasant about their costume, were seen in the middle distance; and at the right-hand corner, only just perceptible, a signature, partly obliterated—"N.D . . z," to wit. The picture stood out of doors, leaning against the iron legs of a sewing-machine stand, and I will not say how small was the price the broker asked the collector for it; at any rate, he was paid a good deal more than he asked.

The Barbizon School.—For the picture, as the collector saw at once, was an early Diaz; an early one, and rather a sketch than a finished picture, perhaps, but still a Diaz; and Narcisse Diaz (who was born in 1807 and died in 1876) was one of the glories of the

Barbizon school of painters ; at the sale of the Gabbitas Collection such a panel by Diaz sold for £504. Corot, Millet, Rousseau, Daubigny, Diaz, and others were the founders of the School, settling down at the village of Barbizon in the forest of Fontainebleau, to paint delightfully. Millet and Corot became the most famous members of the " Barbizon School," and counterfeit " Corots " are now painted and sold by the thousand. But Diaz pictures have not been so much counterfeited yet. I mention the Barbizon School, not because the members of it painted " Impressionist " pictures, but because they pointed the way towards the Impressionism which in French art was soon to supervene. The artistic glory of Barbizon has departed ; it is a place for excursionists now. To enjoy it as a place of art memories, you must go there earlier than Easter, as I did this year.

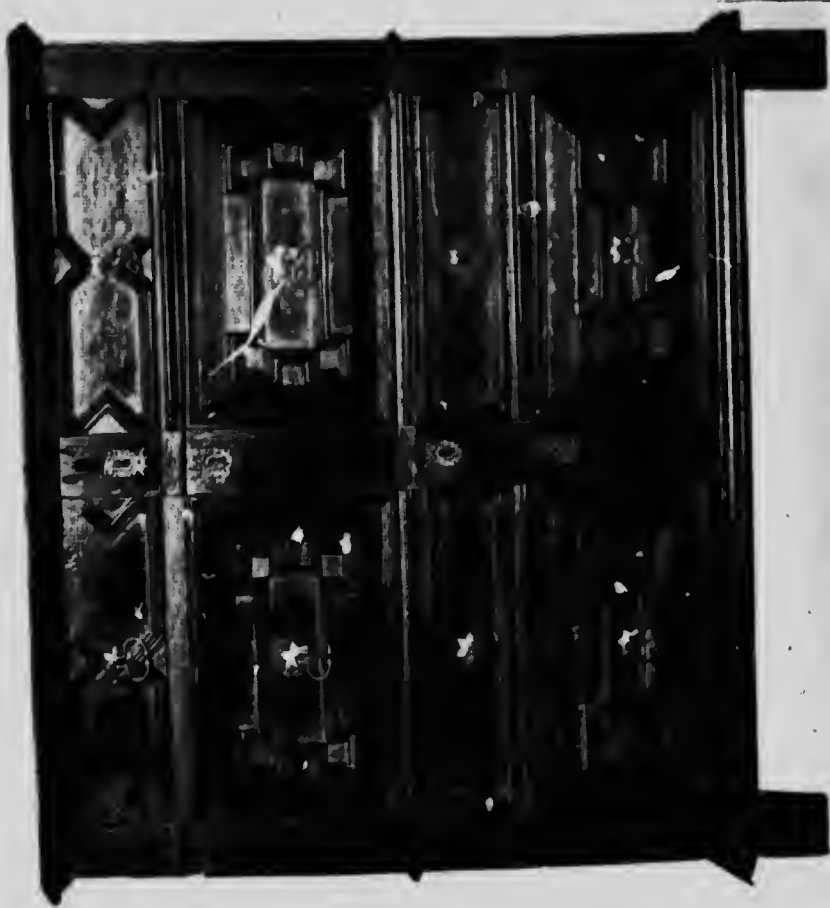
The Sources of Inspiration.—In " The A B C About Collecting " I tell how Claude Monet, being at Zaandam in the sixties of last century, saw a Japanese colour-print for the first time, and how the pictorial art of Japan came thereby to affect the art of modern France. But that was not the only source of inspiration, by any means ; the Barbizon School and the Impressionists learned much from English landscape pictures. Constable was really the art-father of the Barbizon painters, but the water-colours by Varley, Robson, Copley Fielding, and, above all, Bonington, which were shown at the Paris Salons of 1822 and 1824 had also a great influence on the men who were to create

the Barbizon School. So plain was the connection that in the Paris Salon of 1827 the first picture ever there shown by Corot was hung between one by Constable and one by Bonington. And as for Impressionism, a recent writer in the *Gaulois* has put the connection in a nutshell. "Benefiting by the researches of a Turner, a Constable, a Bonington, it completed the earnest and noble work of the landscape painters of 1830 (the Barbizon men) by fixing on canvas the subtle and radiant splendours of the atmosphere." Atmosphere; air surrounding everything; that is the Impressionist note.

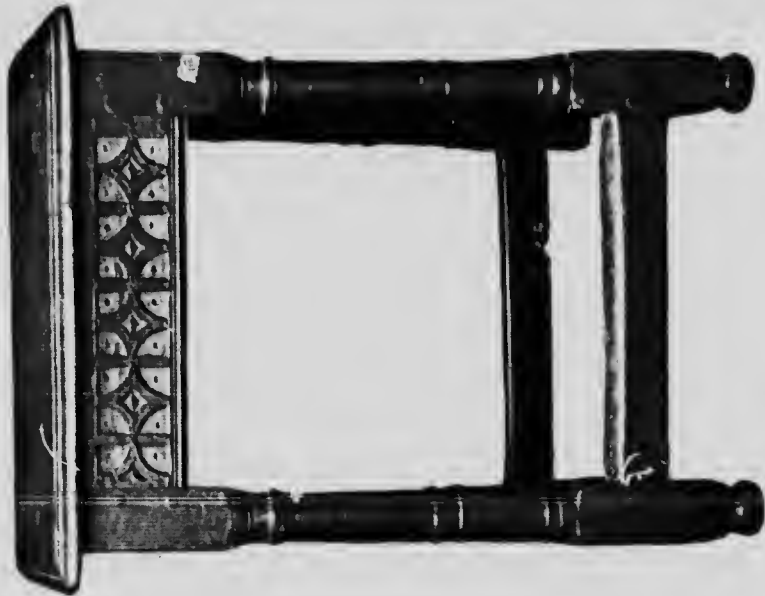
Turner's Influence.—Consider Turner's wonderful picture, "Rain, Steam, and Speed." Almost all of it is atmosphere and motion; the lights and the shadows are imprecise, quivering, often blurred. The rain blurs the foreground, the steam diffuses, the train rushing along the viaduct *seems* moving, the hare in front of it is a brown and white blur. No hard and definite lines, no finished details; it is the arrested view of a moment, it depicts the transient impression of the eye. Two young French painters, Claude Monet and Camille Pissaro, fled from a distracted France in 1870, in London studied the work of Turner, Constable, Crome, and David Cox. Soon after that Pissaro's pictures began to be renowned for their atmosphere and their quivering light. Monet formed the *plein air* school—that is, he insisted on painting out of doors, on the spot, and he tried to give, as Turner had tried to give, the effect of the light and shade and

colour as he saw them about his subject out of doors, not as he remembered them after returning to his studio. "That is why," writes M. Duret, "he was able to fix on the canvas those fleeting appearances which had escaped the older landscape painters who worked indoors. So closely did Monet follow the varying effects and changes which occur in a scene that he could communicate to the picture-gazer's eye the sensation which the scene had evoked at the time. His sunshine seems to warm you, his snow to make you shiver."

Impressionism Born.—Thus was Impressionism in painting born. In 1867 Monet had said that he "only thought of rendering his impression." The word caught on, and "Impressionist" is now "the badge of all their tribe." To get the vague, brief, fleeting effect (as we have seen in Turner's picture), lines, outlines, and details must not be insisted on. Monet went further than that; the technique of his painting consisted in spots of paint, not strokes and lines and curving brushwork. The spots of paint were laid on side by side in what might seem, when close at hand, an arbitrary and erratic manner; it was dabbing instead of daubing. But, seen from the right distance, these dabs of paint conjoin, blend, fit into each other, give light, show shadow, seem to vibrate, sparkle, glow. In this, again, an English painter had been a pioneer. Redgrave says that "Gainsborough got far from his canvas while painting, and used brushes with very long handles; by means of the long-handled tools



JACOREAN CHEST OF DRAWERS.



LATE TUDOR STAND.

he was able to give the general truth of tint and form without descending into minute details."

The Impressionist Artists.—Here are the names of the principal *landscape* artists who formed the Impressionist School—Monet, Pissaro, Sisley, and Cezanne. Following their lead into other domains of art than landscape came Renoir, Degas, and Raffaelli. At the Luxembourg Gallery, Paris, in the Caillebotte Room, famous pictures by these artists can be seen by a visitor.

The hungry collector, always on the prowl for gems going cheaply, should study Impressionist and Barbizon pictures. For Barbizon and Impressionist pictures—the Barbizon pictures especially—are worth enormous sums to-day. I wonder how many thousand pairs of eyes had rested a moment on that panel leaning against the iron leg of the sewing-machine!

THAT MORLAND OF YOURS

A picture of pigs, isn't it? George Morland was *par excellence* the painter of pigs. I hope it is genuine, that "Morland" of yours; but—have you closely compared it with the authentic Morlands in the public galleries at Trafalgar Square, Nottingham, Birmingham, Cambridge, Bath, Glasgow, Leicester, Manchester, or South Kensington? Does it stand the neighbourhood of the authentic? Has it the true Morland touch?

George Morland died in 1804, his forty-second year, of apoplexy, in a sponging-house, a prisoner for debt. Yet to-day the smallest canvas from his easel sells for

much money. That seems to be, pushed to a tragical extreme, the eternal history of great art. To-day the contemporary colour-prints of "Morlands" are hunted for as if they had been printed upon bank-notes. So to-day myriads of forgeries of Morland paintings and colour-prints lie in wait for you in Great Britain, Holland, and France.

At Tonnerre.—I remember dropping off the train at Tonnerre, *en route* from Dijon to Paris; Tonnerre is a small old town, lost in the wide rurality of the Burgundy plain. I studied some fifteenth-century stained glass in two churches there—glass of that period is rarer than twelfth-century windows, by the by—and then, as I made for the railway station, I passed a dirty old shop with books and pictures in the front of it. Or, rather, I did not pass it, I went in; and immediately the old fellow who kept that *omnium gatherum* saw me he tried to sell me a couple of Morlands. This is artists' fame indeed.

The Facility and the Failing.—Morland painted swiftly, in all sorts of unsuitable places. There was a public-house at Freshwater Gate, Isle of Wight, called The Cabin; there was the Mother Blackcap, in Pleasing Passage, Camden Town; there was the White Lion, at Paddington; there was the Black Bull, near Deal—undiscovered Morlands still lurk in those neighbourhoods, perhaps—and there were scores of other taverns where "George" was familiarly known. He had become the prey of picture-dealers; they came to him with a bottle in one hand and a purse in the

other. He was then in the plenitude of his swift, sure, wonderful brushwork, and would paint a canvas almost *every day*! Once he completed a large landscape, with twenty-four figures in it, beginning and finishing it, all within twenty-four hours!

Pictures were his currency; every dun who came to him was paid off by a still-wet canvas. For his brother alone, who had set up as a dealer, he painted 192 canvases between the years 1800 and 1804. He probably painted twice as many again for other dealers during the same period. Dealers used to take it in turn to "farm" him, paying him for what he painted by giving him four guineas a day and his liquor. His brother's day-books showed that for him alone, not to mention others, "George" did 792 canvases and more than a thousand drawings during his last eight years of life. By day he painted in oil, and by candle-light did drawings; he was far more industrious than many a sober man.

The Contemporary Counterfeits.—Morlands are numerous, therefore; but many more "Morlands" are for sale than even he could have painted. His style was the rage in his day, and copyists imitated or counterfeited him while he was alive. A contemporary of his put on record that "I once saw twelve copies from a small picture of Morland's all at one time, in a dealer's shop-window, with the original in the middle." Nowadays these contemporary copies, browned and cracked by effect of time, sell as true "Morlands," and not one purchaser in ten—not even

you, perhaps—discovers that he as well as the picture has been sold. Cleverish counterfeiters are forging small "Morlands" to-day—always beware of a very small "Morland," about nine inches by five—upon old panels, and pieces of old canvas re-stretched.

The True Touch.—But there are tests. Whatever Morland painted, no matter how swiftly he did it, he painted supremely well. He worked rapidly but not scampingly; the genius in him more than supplied the place of careful execution and painful pains. In all his pictures you find the marks of a swift, instinctively accurate brush; if your "Morland" is laboured or finicking anywhere it is certainly a copy. Or if the colour is dirty—I do not mean *dirtied*—not fresh and rich, not contrasted and striking, though in a low key, it is little likely to be Morland's work; he was a colourist in browns. The "Inside of a Stable," at the National Gallery, shows what he, at his zenith, could do; and, like all great artists, he never put second-best into his work. His copyists, contemporary or modern, were fourth-rate men, and could not even put second-best into their work.

If "that Morland of yours" be really a Morland, treasure it; its value will increase. Every year Morland's fame is more wide in Europe. He is recognised as the greatest English *genre* painter in scenes from country life, gipsy subjects, sporting acts, stables, inn-yards, groups of natural-looking men and women, and still more natural-looking horses, asses, poultry, dogs, and pigs—above all, pigs. Morland has been

compared to Jan Steen, but he was greater than Jan Steen or any of the Dutch realists whose paintings incited him so when a lad. His name will always be famous ; it might have ranked with the best. But the curse of the thirsty was on him ; he did not chasten and separate himself, as the great must do to be great. He swilled ; and I sometimes think that he may have felt a cousinly feeling while painting those wonderful hides of pigs at the trough in the sty.

BUYING OLD PAINTINGS

That one can now and then acquire a fine oil-painting cheaply I know quite well. Such real chances occur, but occur much more seldom than most people with a passion for picking up old oil-paintings suppose ; most of the seeming chances which occur are, believe me, not worth the accepting.

The Three Schools.—Broadly speaking, the old oil-pictures which wait for purchasers in the shops of brokers or small dealers or the less exclusive auction-rooms fall into three classes ; they are : 1, pictures of the English School ; 2, Dutch and Flemish pictures ; and 3, Italian pictures. It does not take a zealous amateur long, if he has real taste and eye-intelligence, and has studied the examples in public picture-galleries, to learn to distinguish at sight an old oil-painting as English or Italian or Netherlandish. I will not be so bold as to say which of the three schools is the most desirable to study and to collect, but perhaps I can give some hints which will warn the amateur against

rashness and errors in buying old oil-paintings of any school.

Some "Nevers."—Never buy an old picture on the strength of the name or signature which is painted or affixed—the signature in the corner, or the name on the gilt label which is tacked to the lower front limb of the frame. There are scores of small old oil-paintings about with "J. Crome" lettered on the label that old Crome never saw, and that statement is equally true of pictures labelled "Sidney Cooper." Dealers and collectors have a habit of ascribing any likely daubs to a given artist, without proof.

Never buy an oil-painting as old, on the strength of the frame which surrounds it. A great trade is openly done in old picture-frames among dealers; frames and pictures which never met each other till recently are sold as having been married together fifty, a hundred, a hundred and fifty, or two hundred years ago. Not long since a dealer bought an Italian picture, suitable for an altar, for £15; bought next an Italian carved wood frame for £30; put the two together, and sold them to a lady who wished to present an altar-piece picture to her church, for £150.

Never buy an old picture on the mere strength of its being "on panel"; there are panels and panels, and quite a store of expert knowledge can be accumulated about the different cut of old panels, the different thicknesses, and the different woods, as I will presently show. And never buy an old picture on the strength of the dirtiness, coarseness, or apparent great age of

the back of the canvas ; dirt can be rubbed on and into the canvas, canvas of the ancient degree of coarseness has always continued to be made, and—on the other hand—most old pictures have been re-lined, *i.e.* backed with canvas which at the date of re-lining was new.

Re-lining.—If a real old picture has been re-lined you will find the traces of that at the edges of the front of the canvas in a slight ridge or line along each of the four edges of the oblong or square. From that ridge or line to quite the edge of the front of the canvas and over the edge to the side of the strainer the canvas is new—or was at the date of re-lining ; I mean that part of the canvas which is nailed to the edge of the strainer, because when the picture was re-lined the real old contemporary canvas had become too rotten or too dilapidated to be nailed down securely again. This new part of the front was then coloured to suit the hue of the old painting, and the whole was usually covered with varnish. Re-lining like this is a perfectly legitimate thing. Most re-lined pictures have a "stretcher bar," viz. a wooden bar across the middle of the back, which is usually absent from very old pictures which have never been re-lined.

Panels.—Panels were longer used for painting on in Italy than in the Netherlands. In the seventeenth century canvas became the rule for large pictures by Dutch and Flemish artists, though panels continued in use for pictures of smaller size. Italian panels were made of poplar, fig-wood, chestnut, walnut, fir,

or deal; in the Netherlands the panels were almost invariably of oak. Italian panels, being soft wood, are massive and thick; Netherlandish panels, being oaken, are often thin and light. I notice that fraudulent imitations of "old masters" in a small size are being painted on cardboard, which is backed with thin panels, to deceive; always take a "panel" picture out of the frame before buying it.

THE WHITE SPIRE

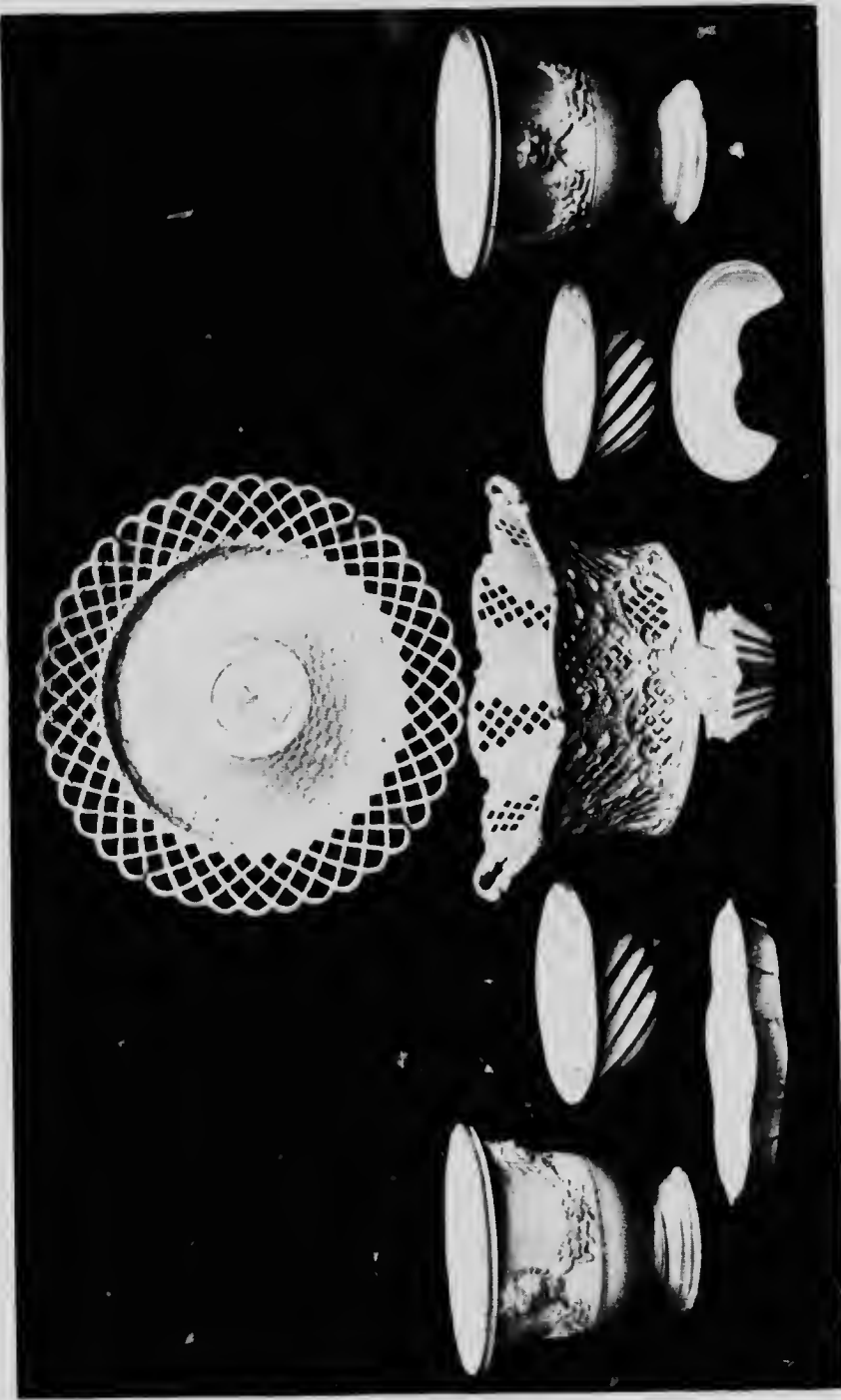
In a whole class of oil-paintings you see it, the white spire so slim and graceful and tall; standing up out of a mass of buildings; standing up out of a mass of trees; or deep in the distance, standing up into the sky. Sometimes it is very tall and very slim indeed; sometimes it is drawn more accurately, and shows less thin and more broad at the tower-base, even when the tower-base is hidden. But it is always the white spire of Norwich Cathedral, and when you see it in an old oil-painting or water-colour drawing, you rightly say, "The Norwich School."

The Norwich School.—"What is meant by the Norwich School?" asks Mr. Laurence Binyon. "The word 'school,'" he goes on to answer, "has been used in several senses. It meant, first of all, the body of painters produced by a certain country, a certain province, or a certain town. In the earliest times of painting there were few migrations, and a painter's work generally savoured of the soil where he

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SALT-GLAZE AND CREAM WARE.

was born and bred. It is in that sense that we talk of the Norwich School. Impute it to what cause we will, there is no doubt that the Eastern counties have been far more prolific of painters than the rest of England. The average excellence and number of their artists remind one of Holland, which in actual physical features they of course so much resemble. The Norwich School had no common bond of theory; it is their Norwich birth and training which constitute them a distinct body. And if we are to group painters into schools at all, this is the most reasonable principle to build on."

The Men of the School.—So much for what is meant by the "Norwich School." The chief members of it were John Crome ("Old Crome"), James Stark, John Sell Cotman, George Vincent, and Henry Bright. In order of fame and present importance the names run, Crome, Cotman, Stark, Vincent, Bright. They were not all quite contemporaneous; here are their dates: Crome, 1769-1821; Cotman, 1782-1830; Stark, 1794-1859; Vincent, 1796-1830; Bright, 1814-1873. Notice how curiously the precedence accords with their dates of birth. The last of them, Bright, is only forty years dead, and his fame has not had time to ripen. But I think his work will one day be hailed as marvellous, though a fine small landscape by him was on sale in King Street, St. James's Square, for only £25 recently. There were minor members of the school, but I have not space enough to deal with them.

The Marks of the School.—The white spire is one of the sign-manuals of the school. Norfolk artists, they loved Norwich and its fine, tall, white-shining spire, seen from every distance in the wide, flat shire. But that is not the only mark of the school. Crome founded the school and the others studied in it, so what was Crome's own style? It is worth while knowing, for Norwich School pictures are very valuable already, and any that a collector can secure will grow in interest and value year by year.

What *was* Crome's style? "Beautiful rural pieces, with trees that might well tempt the little birds to perch upon them," George Borrow, who knew him, wrote, in 1851. Crome was our supremest painter of trees, it is true, but that is not all. Go to the National Gallery and study his "Mousehold Heath." Mr. Martin Hardie has well described it: "A bare, open slope, rising against a range of sunlit clouds, relieved in the foreground only by a single figure and some weeds, yet the whole is full of quiet majesty, the glory of the setting sun, and the solemn hush of eventide. Crome painted it 'for air and space,' he said, and brilliantly was his purpose achieved. Through all his work there is this same harmonious symphony of gold and brown, of rich warm colouring, that makes his pictures an epitome of English autumn." That is it, exactly; Norwich School pictures are usually landscapes or seascapes, and when they are landscapes they are autumnal in colouring. Golden brown is the prevailing tone. And there is "an accent of

strength with simplicity, of richness with restraint," which secures that Norwich School pictures, though again and again representing the white spire or some other well-known feature of the Norfolk landscape, are never monotonous to behold or commonplace in appearance.

Other Features of the School.—Cotman was greatest in seascape, perhaps, and mainly a water-colourist. Stark was a forest painter, fond of wonderful greens—blue-greens—in his shadows and distances. Vincent was a marine-subject painter, in the main. Bright's landscapes have naturally a more modern note than those of his forerunners in the school. But with all of them, Crome's pictures in particular, the sky was a chief feature. Wonderful rolling clouds, light on them here, shadow on them there—the white spire standing up in the shadow and golden (sometimes) with rays of the lower light. The clouds were painted in pigment laid on thickly, as if the palette-knife more than the brush had been used. Crome and Cotman etched, as well as painted; Cotman and Bright did wonderful landscape sketches in pastel.

Collecting the Norwich School Pictures.—For a View of Norwich (the white spire again) a picture by Crome, 13½ inches by 18 inches, 300 guineas were paid at the sale of the Huth collection. At the same sale a large "Crome" fetched 3,000 guineas, a record price. For "The Valley of the Yare," by Stark (17½ × 30½), 120 guineas were paid, in 1905. For "Fruit Boats on the Lagoons, Venice" (9 × 14), by Cotman, 95 guineas

were paid, in 1905. There are still small pictures of the Norwich School to be found and picked up cheaply. I bought a sketch by a minor artist, Williams, for a shilling the other day; it showed the white spire, and, at the back of it, on the same board, was a fine oil-sketch of Norfolk landscape, unfinished. Two clever minor artists of the school, the Pauls, some forty years ago expended their talent in copying and then imitating pictures of the school; these counterfeits have all the characteristics of the school rudely rendered; they were painted quickly, because they were painted by the score. They used to be taken from provincial town to provincial town, and be sold by auction. Do not be taken in by one of these, though some of them are worth acquiring.

OLD WATER-COLOUR WORK

When the little dealer had packed together the fine David Cox sketch, 12 inches by 9, the two large Tudor exteriors by Nash, 16 by 12, and the unfinished bit by Copley Fielding, he handed them to his customer, took the £3 8s. 6d. which he had asked for the four, and said, "Thank you kindly, sir; there's not much demand for water-colours nowadays; it's mostly prints." And the customer said, "Well, here's another sovereign for you, anyhow. You don't know what you've been selling me, my man!"

Nowadays and Then.—I do not wonder if there is little demand for modern water-colours, for I have seldom seen one that I would care to buy to hang

against my study wall. But the *old* English water-colours! I think they are the most delightful things ever done in pictorial art. A few impalpable washes of tinged water, a few deft, swift strokes, and the light of the sky and the colour and shadow of the earth are caught and renewed for ever to the eye, transfixed in beauty and verity upon an oblong paper behind a slip of glass. I go into the Water-Colour Rooms at South Kensington again and again, and again and again I tell myself that the Umbrian School and the Florentine, the Venetian and the Flemish, the Castilian, the French, and all but the unapproachable greatness of Shakespeare Rembrandt himself, must veil the crest before some of the work of the Water-Colour School that rose and flourished and faded within the nineteenth century, here in its island home.

Some Prices among People who Know.—And knowledge about old water-colour work is knowledge worth the having. Let me mention a few recent prices given for old English water-colour drawings at Christie's and elsewhere: David Cox, 38 guineas, 90 guineas, 260 guineas, 510 guineas; Copley Fielding, 52 guineas, 80 guineas, 270 guineas; Nash, 11 guineas, 43 guineas, 70 guineas; Sam Bough, 30 guineas, 83 guineas, 280 guineas; Gilbert, 16 guineas, 60 guineas; Holland, 46 guineas, 48 guineas; Prout, 40 guineas, 200 guineas; de Wint, 42 guineas, 53 guineas, 620 guineas; and so on. So much for filthy lucre—but the artistic pleasure of them! The pride at being

able to pick them out! The joy of owning a score or so of old English water-colour drawings, by renowned hands, that you have come across (at last) in your patient hunt, and have recognised and verified and carried off "for a song"!

Some "Finds."—A friend of mine can look around the walls of three rooms and view scores of water-colour drawings which he himself has picked up and recognised and verified, and now delightedly owns—Cox and Varley, and Nash and Clarkson, Stanfield and Rossetti, and Bonington and Cattermole, and Owen and Hart, and Roberts and de Wint, and Chambers and Prout, and Collins and Payne and Marny; but the list grows too long for my space. And each of those old water-colours of his has been bought "for a song."

To pick up a large Dalmatian landscape by E. Lear, the inventor of limericks, initialled, the author's handwriting on the back in the directions to the titled purchaser, and all enclosed in a fine contemporary carved-wood frame, for 7s. 6d. is a thing worth doing by any reader, collector or not, who wishes to decorate his walls with good old pictures. And that was done, in a principal thoroughfare, too, only the other day.

PART IV

EARTHENWARE AND PORCELAIN

THE BEST OLD "BLUE-AND-WHITE"

YOU may read book after book about Oriental porcelain without gleaning much general conception of what the authors are driving at ; on details, they are excellent, but not on general conceptions ; they, and consequently you, cannot "see wood for trees." And yet a "general conception" is the beginning of all wisdom in collecting—in collecting anything. The collector must know what to look for, and how to know it when he sees it. I suppose not one person in a thousand looks at a great picture with really instructed sight, and that is truer still of looking at the best porcelain. Not until one possesses a general idea of what to look for can one see what ought to be looked for, and what is eminently worth being seen.

Experts who write learned books on "Oriental" seem either unwilling or unable to explain their lore lucidly. I have a shelf which simply groans with books on porcelain, that yet tell the *beginner* next to nothing of what he wants to know and ought to know, and do

little to help him to possess a seeing eye. The fact is, that men of letters—men who know how to write, men who can make words into pictures, and by description conjure up a vision of the thing described—seldom write about the subjects now in question. But when they do——

Let me translate what Edmond de Goncourt, for instance, wrote about Chinese porcelain, in "La Maison d'un Artiste." "Chinese porcelain!" he exclaims, "What is Chinese porcelain, do you ask? Why, it is the finest porcelain in the world, it is the porcelain which, for centuries all over the world, has enlisted more passionate collectors than all the other branches of collecting can do. It is earthy matter, but fashioned into an object full of light and soft colour, which shines like a precious stone." And now let the beginner gaze seeingly into shop-windows and collection-cases until he perceives a piece of "old Oriental" which answers to that; then he will know the old ware and its beauty, from the trashy, commercial new.

Chinese Blue-and-White.—Of all Chinese porcelain, blue-and-white is the most collected, and the most collectable, for it is widely dispersed, and exists in quantities everywhere. But you must distinguish between old blue-and-white and new. Blue-and-white is the chief as well as the best defined class of Chinese porcelain. Even among old Chinese blue-and-white there are variations of quality, but into these it would be confusing now to go. Let us try to get a "general conception" of the very best of the old ware, so as to

be able to pick it out when we see it. *It must be full of light and soft colour, and shimmer like a gem.*

To be of the best quality for collecting, old blue-and-white Chinese china should show the following features, some or all :

1. The white of it must be a pure white, not cloudy, smeary, or tinged. It is rather creamy than milky white ; but it is so individual and unlike other whites that the French call it *blanc de Chine*. A Chinese historian says that there are three porcelain whites—of flour, of snow, and of the moon.

2. The blue must be a pure blue, the product of cobalt, but with often a sapphire tint. Cobalt-blue, or lapis-lazuli blue, or sapphire blue, darker or lighter, it is always pure, not muddy, thick, or opaque. It is a blue which is bright, pleasing to the eye, and even brilliant. It is not a violet or periwinkle blue, or a purplish blue, or a grey blue or indigo blue. It is not like the blue on Dutch delft, or on old Worcester (though that came near it), or on Bow or Lowestoft. In fact, it is a blue like nothing but itself, that one sees with a pleased surprise and admiration. It is not a cold blue, it is a blue that cheers the eye. The secret of that blue has long been lost, no modern kiln can reproduce it.

3. The design and drawing of the ornamentation, painted in blue upon the lovely white, or in white on the beautiful blue, must be clean and clear and fine in outline, and it must leave a fair balance of parts, between the blue and the white. What designers call

"proportion" has been duly observed—there is as much blank or white as ornament or blue.

4. The shape of the jar or vase, or whatever the piece of china may be, must be graceful; it must also be simple. And it must be suited to its purpose.

5. The glaze must be brilliant, shining "like a precious stone." It must be satiny. It must be translucent. It must lie thinly on the surface. It must not have come off in places. The Chinese word for "glaze" means "oil." That suggests the Chinese idea that the glaze should lie like oil or lacquer. The beauty of a porcelain surface comes from the fact that the glaze has been united with the paste under the heat of the kiln. The glaze of a piece of fine old blue-and-white seems like a polish upon the material, rather than a separate layer. It suggests the polish of marble.

The Supreme Example.—All these qualities and characteristics of the best old Chinese blue-and-white were conjoined in the prunus-blossom vase called a ginger-jar, which belonged to Mr. Huth, and was sold at Christie's, when the Huth collection came under the hammer, for no less than £6,195. This oviform (or egg-shaped) vase only measures 10 inches in height. It is decorated with branches of white prunus-blossom, upon a ground of blue which looks as if marbled. It is an instance of the white upon blue, not the blue upon white. The first collector of it bought it for 12s. 6d. So that it is at once the supreme example of beauty in old blue-and-white, and of the profits which collecting may bring.



SALT-GLAZE WARE, PLAIN TINT AND COLOURED.

SALT-GLAZE AND SALT-GLAZE

There is a "glorious uncertainty" about cricket, and so there is about collecting; the puzzles and chances afforded by the study of old English pottery, for instance, are numberless, and salt-glaze ware is responsible for more than a few.

You know, of course, that common salt, being thrown into a kiln containing raw pottery, under a high temperature, gave off a vapour which, uniting with the silicate in the raw clay, formed silicate of soda, and gave the pottery a glass-like coating, distinguishable from all other glazes by tiny pittings in the surface, like those in fine leather or in the skin of an orange. This vapour also hardened the surfaces of the pottery, so that it could be made very thin and light-weight, yet strong. You also understand that lead-glaze, which immediately followed and superseded salt-glaze, was a lead solution *laid on*, not chemically incorporated with, the clay.

Most pottery collectors would resent the suggestion that they do not know "salt-glaze" when they see and touch it; though the chances of touching it are few, because salt-glaze ware is rare and dear. The "glorious" uncertainty in this case arises from the fact that there are pieces of pottery in existence which are salt-glaze without entirely seeming to be salt-glaze. Examples on the border-line, so to speak, between the salt-glazing period and the lead-glazing era, which would puzzle the most expert, can be found.

The Teapot.—An old teapot was shown me in a shop the other day; the dealer was almost offended when I said:

“What do you call it? Leeds?”

He grunted. That was a salt-glaze teapot, that was, if ever there was one, he said, with the emphasis



SALT-GLAZE TEAPOT.

which people lay upon statements about which they themselves feel some doubt.

The teapot was certainly of salt-glaze shape, it was exceedingly light-weight too, and the colouring resembled salt-glaze colouring. But “Leeds” is exceedingly light-weight, too, and Leeds ware was often touched with the same green and pale purple colouring. And this teapot had a quite smooth surface, like

"Leeds," such as one would think only lead-glaze could give.

So, "Where are the pittings?" I asked the dealer, as I more closely examined the teapot. "Where is the characteristic surface? Salt-glaze ware should look a little like leather, or orange-skin, you know."

All that the dealer could answer was that *he* knew salt-glaze when he saw it—he did not know who I was—but evidently I did not! He'd had plenty of pieces through his hands, he had, and if that wasn't a salt-glaze teapot he'd eat it! Why, look at the shape of the handle!

The handle had that upward curl and splay, like a tail out from its lower junction with the body of the teapot, which is characteristic. And, indeed, it was a salt-glaze teapot; in every respect but its surface characteristic.

The Statuette.—Salt-glaze teapots are numerous, but salt-glaze figures are few. As I write, a figure stands—or rather kneels—before me, which is a puzzle. It cost me 3s. 6d. only, at the Caledonian Market; yet, but for the smoothness of the surface, one might swear it to be a salt-glaze figure, made by Littler of Longton Hall.

In no collection have I ever seen the fellow to it; that, I dare say, was why it was sold me so cheap. A priest or presbyter, clad in a white stole and gown over a half-displayed long under-tunic, kneels before a kind of altar upon which a book lies open. Traces of salt-glaze colouring remain on the cross-shaped ornament at

the ends of the altar, and the under-tunic is the right Littler blue—the blue of "Longton Hall." For a solid figure, it is light-weight, also. But over nearly all of it is a lead-glaze, washed on. "Salt-glaze? No!" most collectors would say at once. And yet,



LEEDS FLOWER-HOLDER.

under the lead-glaze, I can detect the salt-glaze pittings, the leather surface, the orange-skin grain.

A Theory.—How explain the discrepancies in the teapot and in the statuette? Well, there is salt-glaze and salt-glaze. Even in pieces of unquestionable salt-glaze ware there are variations of pitting. Sir Arthur Church found that the "grain" varies within wide limits even in the different parts of a single piece. "Moreover, it was the custom of some potters to add a little red-lead to the salt thrown into the kiln, and this made the glaze smoother and thicker." Perhaps the key to the characteristics of what I call "borderland" salt-glaze ware lies in that.

I throw out the suggestion that, just about the time when Wedgwood's smooth lead-glazed Queen's ware was sweeping the market, some Staffordshire potters thought to compete with it by adding more and more lead to the salt thrown into the kiln.

That would suffice to explain the teapot's surface, for instance. As to the figure, it may be that Littler

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lead-glazed the surface of some of his already salt-glazed ware when he was making experiments for his porcelain; or did so to make the salt-glazed ware more acceptable in a market which was turning towards lead-glazed ware only. That would explain the peculiarity of the figure.

It is puzzles of this kind which add a quickening and intellectual value to collecting, don't you think?

BLUE-DASH CHARGERS

Mystery hangs about the blue-dash chargers. Many collectors of pottery have never seen one, few collectors have ever possessed one, I dare say most readers begin in ignorance of what blue-dash chargers actually are. Well, they are large circular dishes, usually about $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, though some are 18 inches in diameter, and some only two-thirds that largest size. Around the rim of most of them are flat dabs or dashes of blue; hence part of their name.

Chargers.—Note that they are called *chargers*, not plates, or platters, or dishes. Remember that John the Baptist's head was brought in on a charger, and think (as Mr. Dick did) of the head of King Charles I. The decollated head of the "Royal Martyr" is indissolubly though invisibly connected with these blue-dash chargers, for they all have reference to the tragical after-history of the Stuarts.

Rare but not Impossible.—Mr. Downman, a great connoisseur in blue-dash chargers, made a list of

seventy-eight in all—ten at the British Museum and South Kensington, twelve in the Teuke collection at Saffron Walden, six in the Boynton collection, eleven in the Downman collection, two in the Daunay collection, six in the Clarke collection, nine at the York Museum, four in the Liverpool Museum, and eleven in small collections and dealers' shops. But I am sure that they are more numerous and less locked up than that. Mr. Downman priced them at from £1 5s. to £8; but ten years ago I bought one at Oxford for 12s. 6d., and during the last three years I have acquired four for 5s., 7s. 6d., 10s., and 17s. respectively. There are others about—I have seen them; but not at prices anything like so small as those.

Described.—You will see them most easily, to know them again, in the museums. They are decorated in broad rough style, and invariably with blue, green, tawny-yellow, and rich purplish-brown. On the front they shine with a thick whitish glaze, often iridescent; at the back the glaze is greenish or yellowy, and does not always cover the whole of the surface. Often there is a hole, for hanging by, in the inner ring-rim on which the charger stands. Sometimes the outline of a cavalier is sketched in blue at the back. There are no makers' marks on them. The subjects of the designs on them are these: Adam and Eve (a satire on William and Mary of Orange, for the fruit which Eve is handing to Adam is an *orange*, not an apple); Charles II, William III, James II, Queen Anne, the old Pretender, Prince Eugene, the Duke of

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ADAM AND EVE BLUE-DASH CHARGER.



JACOBAN BED-HEAD.

Marlborough, the Duke of Ormonde, tulips, lilies, stags. All these are connected with Stuart history, and as the chargers do not ever seem to have been used at table, or for any household purpose, the conjecture is that they were tokens of political significance, that hung in houses occupied by friends to the Stuart cause. The tulips refer to Holland, of course, and the lilies to France; to the particular significance of the horned stags I will not specially advert.

Where Made?—Nobody can be sure where the blue-dash chargers were made. Most people say Staffordshire. In the Hodgkin sale two of them were catalogued as "Bristol delft." They are certainly delftish, and have that slightly flesh-coloured hue in the glaze at the back of them which is characteristic of Bristol delft. On the other hand, most of them were picked up by their earliest collectors on the other side of England, between London and York. But, again, a whole series is thought to have been made at Loughor in Wales. On some of them there is an inscription in Dutch, and the inference is that they were made by a Delft potter from Holland, John van Hamme, who established a pottery in Lambeth during the Jacobite period. Only a few are inscribed, however, and most of the few with initials only, as, for instance, M.W.R., for William, Mary, and Rex or Regina.

Addenda.—Whatever their origin, they make a difficult, and therefore all the more fascinating, "line" for a collector to pursue. Not all of them are blue-

dashed; the smaller sizes are often wholly green or yellow on the rims. The blue dashes seem to have been an easy way of imitating the scollops in the edges of some of the series. There is a good deal of meaning to be discovered in some of the pictures on them. I have one of Charles II making his escape in disguise as a servant; he carries baskets on his arm, on his left is the mansion he quitted, on his right the oak in which he took refuge, but the "acorns" on that tree are oranges instead. On another I see Marlborough, the trimmer, Mr. Facing-both-ways, half painted blue (for the Loyalists), and half yellow (for the Orange party). A French connoisseur who saw my chargers said "Montelupe, très vieux," and no doubt two of them somewhat resemble the coarse majolica kind of dish that used to be made at Montelupe, near Florence. But they are English, quite English, connected with our national history; and redolent of plots and mystery still.

THE KEY TO DELFT

"I am afraid this is modern," the connoisseur said. Asked the owner, "How do you *know* it is modern?"

"It is a copy of a bit of old Dutch delft," the connoisseur said, fingering the blue-and-white platter.

"How do you *know*?" the possessor said testily. So testy are possessors sometimes that you had better keep silence than tell them the truth.

Now what is the chief characteristic of this kind of

old pottery? *Delft* is the Dutch name, and *delf* the English name for it; earthenware was still called *delf* by old people in the Midlands, even less than fifty years ago. *Delft* and *delf* were earthenware, but all earthenware is not *delft* or *delf*. How does one know this old class of pottery from all others, when one sees it? Many a visitor to Holland brings back pieces which he supposes to be "old Dutch *delft*." How shall you know the real old stuff from the pleasant blue-and-white earthenware made at the quaint old city of *Delft* yesterday? And how know, for certain, a bit of old English *delf*, too?

The key to the wards of these questions is simple—old *delft* and old *delf* were surfaced with tin-enamel.

Enamel versus Glaze.—The body or substance of the ware was varnished, so to speak, not glazed; even "varnished" is not the accurate word, for varnish is translucent; a better word would be "japanned" or "lacquered." Tin-enamel gave a white opaque surface to the ware; it is a tinny metallic surface, quite different from the clear glaze seen upon porcelain and modern pottery. It is *opaque*, and that definitely distinguishes it from ware that is glazed; a glaze would show the old brown clay through, because a glaze is *transparent*, and you can see through a glaze to the baked clay underneath.

Now the *delft* being made at *Delft* to-day is glazed; the old Dutch *delft* and English *delf* were not glazed, but tin-enamelled. Its surface, therefore, somewhat resembles the surface of *Bilston* enamel or other coarse

enamels upon metal. But delft and delf consisted of enamel upon clay; and you cannot "see through" its enamel surface down to the substance beneath, as you can with modern delft.

Now this white paint-like metallic surface, not transparent or translucent, is the chief characteristic, and the key of delf and delft.

Exceptions.—It is true that a thin coat of glaze was added, over the enamel, to some of the later Dutch old delft, and that English-made delf was slightly glazed, by a wash above the enamel. But in these cases you "see through" the glaze to the enamel. The "key"—the enamel—is always there.

The Enamel Surface.—In old Dutch delft the enamel lies close to the clay, and is seldom crazed; the enamel entirely covers the ware, lying on the undersides as well as the upper; this had to be so, because the clay was so soft and friable. Flashing a bit of delft in the light, the eye perceives the tinny, metallic-looking sheen of the surface. You can also *feel* the enamel; it may feel smooth, but not with the glassy feel of a glaze. In English delft it is often uneven, creamily uneven. Sometimes the enamel is pitted, sometimes it is blistered, often it has been worn away, usually it has been chipped away at the edges, and then you can see the brown body or substance of the ware.

Under the Enamel.—The body or substance of the very oldest Dutch delft consisted of a red earth; the substance of seventeenth and eighteenth century Dutch delft consisted of a yellowish or pale brown earth. In

both cases the substance is so soft that a knife can cut or triturate it. There is carbonate of lime in it, and under a drop of strong acid it will effervesce.

Now the body of English delf was denser and more glassy than that; it was less porous, and therefore the enamel did not unite with it so well in the kiln. Consequently the enamel does not lie upon it so closely or evenly, and you oftener see the clay showing through or nearly through. The body of Lambeth delf was buff-colour, and when it shows nearly through it gives the enamel a rosy tinge, which is one of the characteristics of Lambeth and Bristol delf. English delf enamel often crazed in the kiln, and that, I think, is why a subsequent thin glaze was washed over it.

On, and then in, the Enamel.—The decoration painted upon old Dutch delft was crude; the well-known hearth-tiles painted blue upon white are typical of the earliest style, for at first blue was the only colour used. Tiles painted in purple came later, when purple, green, yellow, brown, and red were added to the delft-painter's palette.

The decoration of old Dutch delft was done neither *under* the enamel nor *over* it. The tin-enamel was laid on the body, and while the enamel was still wet the decoration was added. For the moment, the decoration was *upon* the enamel, but the heat of the kiln then liquefied both, and then fixed both, so that the decoration then lay *in* among the enamel. This is why old Dutch delft decoration is often seen to have "run."

In English delf, however, though you see "running,"

the colours have run *upon* the enamel, not with it ; because the decoration was done after the enamel had been fired, and before the final glaze was added.

Thus spoke the connoisseur ; but the owner was unconvinced.

UNDERCUT WEDGWOOD

Undercut is a word of several applications, and that is why, for a long time, I did not understand what "undercutting" in "Old Wedgwood" might exactly mean.

There are, for instance, the undercut in boxing, and the undercut in beef ; but these are totally beside the present mark. You get nearer the mark when you consider the wonderful undercutting done in Oriental objects made out of ivory and wood. I have just been examining two tiny Chinese junks made out of small bits of sandal-wood. The knife hollowed away the interior so deftly, and with such infinite pains, that you can see *inside* the junks, and note the little seamen sitting within, behind shutters that open under your finger-tip. That is undercutting, and so is something of the kind which you may see in mediæval European ivories ; but it is not the undercutting to which this chapter on "Old Wedgwood" refers.

If you enter the Chapter House of Southwell Minster, you will be surrounded by beautiful pillars with undercut capitals that are unique and unparalleled in any English cathedral, or in any of the fifty French



TRICOLOUR "OLD WEDGWOOD" JASPER VASE.

cathedrals which I know. The hard stone was so cut into and under by the sculptor that the twigs, leaves, and fruit on these lovely capitals stand out, away, and up from the block of stone, just as if they were not integral parts of it. Even so in Grinling Gibbons' wood-carvings, the undercut details seem as if separ-



"OLD WEDGWOOD" JASPER MEDALLION.

ately carved and then glued on. Now, it was these uses of the word "undercut" which long misled me as to what undercutting in "Old Wedgwood" might exactly mean.

Sir Arthur Church wrote: "The relief had been previously moulded; after its application to the prepared ground it would be, and often was, worked on

by sculptor or modeller, so as to repair defects, and *to do such undercutting as was necessary.*" And Mr. Rathbone had written of the medallions, etc., "all being carefully undercut." It is as essential for a collector of "Wedgwood" to know what that means exactly as it is for a collector of English old china to know "soft" porcelain by the feel.

A Simile.—A homely illustration may help us to understand. Liquid jelly is poured into a tin "shape" or mould; when the jelly hardens it is "turned out" upon a dish. The mould or shape, if ornamental, will "cast" an ornamental-shaped jelly, but the lines of it cannot be anything else than simple, because the lines of the mould must be perpendicular to the dish. Otherwise, the mould will not "draw off" from the jelly without breaking it. The undercut junks, capitals, and wood-carvings could not be imitated by a mould.

Now, the white raised ornament on a piece of "Old Wedgwood" was deposited upon it from a mould. Flaxman or Hackwood modelled a decoration in wax, a mould was cast from that, jellied white jasper was put into the mould, and then the result was "turned out" upon the coloured jasper it was to ornament, just as a jelly is from a tin mould. It was not actually turned out; strictly speaking, the mould was drawn off it, leaving the moist ornament upon the jasper "ground."

Lapidary Work.—Just as a lapidary chisels a cameo in chalcedony, or a sculptor a statue in marble, so an artist with a knife might go to work upon a jelly; and

did go to work upon an Old Wedgwood bas-relief freshly produced by a mould. He *undercut* it—that is, he accentuated the lines, removed superfluities, deepened hollows; for example, consider a medallion of Nelson, the one most frequently seen. The knife cut under the lapel of the coat; the knife cut away between the neck and the collar; the knife accentuated the hollow under the eyebrow; and thus produced the sharp effects of light and shade which the mould alone, because of the necessity to “draw it off,” could not produce. A fine piece of Old Wedgwood thus employed first a potter and then a sculptor. After 1800 or so, the labour of the sculptor was dispensed with, the ornament was left just as it came out of the mould, and inferiority began.

The Old and the New.—“Old Wedgwood” has in every way a finish superior to that which began to come from the same works in the year 1800 or so. The earthenware was finer in grain, and therefore produced a finer surface, more smooth, flat, and glossy; the colours were richer; and careful undercutting was done. This undercutting did not consist in cutting away the base and leaving details almost detached and independent of the whole, as undercutting did in Grinling Gibbons’ work, so do not look for that. But if, a piece of Wedgwood ornament being before you, you perceive details which are *not* “perpendicular to the dish,” and could not have been produced by a drawn-off mould alone, then you may conclude that you have before you a bit of early Wedgwood, undercut.

BLACK BUT COMELY

"No, thank you, I don't like black Wedgwood—too funereal!" collectors say, and dealers put back the ebon vase, bust, tea-cup and saucer, or medallion on the shelves. There it rests a long time, till one of the few who know comes along.

The other day I heard of "a pair of big black Wedgwood vases, shiny, with red lines on them," as being "in a furniture shop." I went to the shop as soon as I could, but the vases had been sold, "to a Wedgwood dealer," the shopkeeper said.

"Do you mind telling me for how much?" I asked. "Three pounds five, sir." They were worth ten times that, I dare say. Yet they had "been in the window for months," the shopkeeper said.

This neglected ware needs a certain setting if its full beauty is to be brought out. Dull gilt wood frames for the medallions, old-gold silk as background in the cabinets, or some other yellow surrounding; I know a great authority on English ceramics who has had his black medallions let into satin-wood furniture, with exquisite effect. Black basalt ware has been despised by the many, but I fancy the number of hunters for it will multiply now.

"Linesman" as Collector.—For at last there is a book about it, and a big, fine, authoritative, and delightfully written book it is. "The Makers of Black Basaltes," has been sent me by Messrs. Blackwood. The author, Captain M. H. Grant, is an ardent collector

who knows how to explain, and also how to write, for his pen-name is *Linesman*, and his book displays to the eye the best that was done in black basalt ware and its different kinds and forms. For the first time, too, we are given a complete list of the makers. Most of us would say that Wedgwood and "Leeds" made this "old black stuff," but *Linesman* supplies the marks of thirty-seven other makers, too.

This is a book of æsthetics and literature, as well as of expertise; the author has made himself the Ruskin of ceramics. He has done justice to what he describes as "a certain grave earthenware, composed of clay fired to the hardness and density of stone, and not only black upon the surface, but permeated by the colour throughout its mass, the stain not merely superficial but homogeneous with the body, so that"—here is a test—"the edges of a broken fragment are as black as the surface. It was unpainted, because even at its birth there were eyes to see the beauty of the play of light upon its uninterrupted surface. It was unglazed; the extreme closeness of texture rendered it impervious to water, and friction alone brought out a bloom and polish of greater refinement than could be imparted" by any glaze.

And this is ware "of the utmost refinement. The play of light upon its surface is delightful to the sensitive eye. Above all things the ancient potters valued *form*, and of all colours black reigns supreme as the exhibitor of form. No hue so well accents and harmonises both outline and bulk. It is sometimes

surprising to see how a woman immediately gains in grace by the assumption of a well-fitting dress of black. What horse so nobly caresses the eye as the coal-black charger of the Lifeguardsman? " *Linesman* was at Spion Kop and the Tugela River, he saw Tommy Atkins and the natives bathing together, and so " Where are the muscular pliancy, the animal beauty of the human body so striking as in the swart form of the naked Zulu? The naked white appeared vapid beside his glistening ally, as vapid as a picture which is all ' high lights ' placed beside a sombre masterpiece by Rembrandt or Ribera."

Warnings.—But one should not rush off straightway to buy a black piece that you remember refusing, or that you may come across at first upon your prow. The beauty lies much in the " glistening "; remember that modern Wedgwood basalt does not glisten—it cannot, it is not old enough, and most of the glistening old pieces have been washed, maddeningly *washed*! Mr. Falcke, who gave his collection to the British Museum, would never let soap and water near his treasures; I think he was wrong in that, with regard to white and coloured jasper wares. But he was right about the basalt; light and air bring a " patina " upon old black basalt which should be jealously conserved; dust it, polish it with silk, or, better, with glazed tissue-paper, but for goodness' sake don't " give it a good wash!" If you *have* done that a spot of oil and then a good deal of elbow grease will restore some of the old glistening; a polished surface upon which the light can play is

the desiderated thing. But unless the texture be fine, the clay so powdered and sieved that it lies as close as possible, there can be no sufficient glistening. And therefore the older the better in this ware too, as a rule.

THE FALCKE "OLD WEDGWOOD"

I have been studying the recent additions to the collection of Old Wedgwood jasper at the British Museum. These came as a rich legacy from Mr. Falcke, a successful and learned dealer. They occupy



THE TRICOLOUR "OLD WEDGWOOD"
COFFEE-CUP.

three large glass cases and two screens in the Ceramic Gallery, and they more than double the Museum's wealth of the kind; in round figures the value is, I should say, five-and-twenty thousand pounds.

Nobody who wishes to understand the supreme achievement in art pottery can do so without spending a half-hour or two upon this collection. And not until one has pored for a good many half-hours over Old Wedgwood jasper will the secrets of *expertise* in this particular branch of collecting be revealed. The dealers and even the amateurs who understand "Old Wedgwood" are few. No book exists which tells the

secrets; no dealer who knows them will consent to reveal them; and the fact that Wedgwood jasper has continued to be made, and is made to-day, both adds to the difficulty and increases the necessity of finding out the secrets and penetrating the mystery. "Old Wedgwood" is "undercut," the books say; but no other book than this tells you what is precisely meant by "undercut" in relation to Wedgwood jasper. This chapter is not long enough to explain the other mysteries, but it will contain one "tip" which is invaluable and has never been published before. No pottery is so delightfully difficult to "know" as



TRICOLOUR "OLD WEDGWOOD" SAUCER.

Wedgwood jasper; there is no royal road to connoisseurship in it. Perhaps that is why a "Wedgwood" collector is the most enthusiastic of all.

"Patina."—Let us understand that there can be no such thing as "patina" on Wedgwood *jasper*. Mr. Falcke would never have his Wedgwood washed—he liked to preserve the "patina," he said. I think he was mistaken in that. So do the Museum authorities, for the Falcke Wedgwood is now resplendently clean. "Patina"—except upon the corroded glaze of some

varieties of antique earthenware—is an oxydisation which only occurs on metal. What gathers upon unwashed Wedgwood (except the basalt) is merely dirt.

Revival of Interest.—Old Wedgwood jasper is on the up-grade again, I am told; large prices will be paid for small pieces of it some day, if that be the case; for old Wedgwood jasper is now excessively rare. So much of it is locked up in permanent public collections, and in private collections which only change owners *en bloc*, that purchasable pieces of it are few. So that to a beginning collector "Old Wedgwood" is a most elusive quarry, and, therefore, most delightful to hunt.

But there was never an excessive amount of the best old Wedgwood jasper collectable at any time the last eighty years. In his catalogue of the Wedgwood Museum at Etruria, Staffordshire, Mr. Frederick Rathbone writes that "plaques of the old period, of good quality, are, and have always been, scarce—they were not produced by the gross like machine-made tiles. Some of the finest have been removed from mantel-pieces and furniture, and framed for due preservation." Now the Falcke collection at Bloomsbury contains the finest plaques I have ever seen.

Rarity Indeed.—Mr. Rathbone adds: "How few of these pieces are intact in our day may be judged from the estimate that all the known examples of the subject-plaques in jasper of the best period—*i.e.*, made between 1773 and 1793—might be easily contained on the walls of an ordinary art gallery, if hung not more than three deep, allowing space between each."



JACOBEOAN COURT CUPBOARD, *circa* 1610.

You cannot pick up "Old Wedgwood" abroad nowadays. I went into shop after shop in the Calverstraat at Amsterdam two years ago, asking "Any old Wedgwood portrait medallions?" in vain. The principal dealer of all said, "Go back to London, sir. All the best of every kind is sent to London. London's the place." Then he told me that thirty years ago he could have procured me a basketful of the things I was hunting for—"Old Wedgwood" was all over Holland. "But now it is all in museums and great private collections," he went on. "I haven't seen a real old portrait medallion on sale for years." The principal English collector of these portrait medallions states that "no single collection contains as many as a hundred of them"; and all this is even more true of the splendid urns and vases. Rarity, that great element in pecuniary value, applies to "Old Wedgwood" of any kind; "Old Wedgwood" means works of art in jasper, remember—not table things in cream-ware. Josiah Wedgwood said that his jasper was "not ware."

Tests of the Old.—A connoisseur knows the poorer Wedgwood jasper made since 1795 or so from that made prior to then by *touch, colour, shape, undercutting, and finish*. Take colour, for instance; nobody since Josiah Wedgwood ceased to supervise the works at Etruria got quite the right dark blue in jasper, and none of his imitators got it while he was alive. Only by study can you know this true blue; no amount of precise descriptive writing can give an idea of it;

and similarly with the green. About *undercutting* I have written already.

But let me give one absolutely invaluable "tip" about *shape*, never before published in any book or article, so far as I know, and I think I know all that has been printed on the subject. Collectors and dealers who already know it will not thank me for making the reader a present of this test; but no matter. The "tip" is as follows:—

In the medallions, portraits, cameos (and, of course, the plaques) made during 1773-1795, the "*blanks*" (or bases upon which the white bas-relief was set), *were always flat*; since then many of them have been convex. Even in those excessively rare cameos which curve like a shirt-cuff when worn, the actual surface is flat, not convex.

But, as this flatness was continued in some pieces made between 1795 and 1825, it is not in itself alone an absolute test of "old" Wedgwood: which technically means Wedgwood dating prior to 1796. Notice this flatness in the Falcke Wedgwood.

THE BROWN BOTTÉL

Contemporary with the brown earthenware ale-jug—"Little brown jug, how I love thee!"—was the brown earthenware bottle, and at least a score of different varieties of brown bottles meant for brown ale are to be found. There are two classes into which we may separate these brown bottles—the "Rockingham" brown and the Lambeth brown.

The "Rockingham" Brown.—Everybody knows the Rockingham Toby, the rich chocolate brown of him under the fine and pellucid but streaky lead-glaze. You must not suppose, however, when you come across a beer-bottle of that particular colour, that you have certainly come across one of Rockingham make. Half the old articles sold as Rockingham Tobies were really made in Staffordshire. There *are* distinctions between the Rockingham brown and the Staffordshire brown, which the expert can detect, but, generally speaking, the chief distinction lies in this, that the true Rockingham shapes were so good, and the ware was so finely modelled, while the Staffordshire ware, which imitated it, missed excellence in shape, and was coarsely and even clumsily moulded. For the purpose of the present classification, however, we will not trouble to inquire whether Rockingham or Staffordshire produced the bottles now in question. I will describe a few of them, so that you may know them when you find them. I think all these bottles were made to be carried in baskets or pockets. They run from six to ten inches high.

"Rockingham" Bottles.—One of the rarest is the *Mermaid*. She is *décolletée* to an outrageous degree; the rest of her is a scaly tail, which so curves round and upward that you cannot stand her upright; she was intended to lie in a fisherman's luncheon-basket, no doubt. I bought her for 5s. One of the bottles most often seen (though none of them are common) is the *Toper*. He is a clean-shaven bibulous-looking

old fellow, who sits on a barrel, his bandy legs embracing the barrel-end, on which appears a large figure 2. Feet he has none to speak of; each hand—he sits with his elbows squared—holds a small mug; his knee-breeches, coat-lappels, and collar date him at about the year 1790; his top-hat forms the receptacle for the cork. A dealer may ask you as much as a guinea for one; I bought one for a florin.

The *Toby bottle* is a version of the Toby jug; a pot-bellied old gentleman in a wig sits in an armchair, holding tightly on to a bottle and a glass.

The *Boot* is not an ale-bottle. You will find several sizes of the Boot. It was a hot-water bottle. Filled and corked, it was put into boots, to dry or warm them, a method much less destructive of the leather than exposure to the heat of a fire. I bought a good Boot for 4s.

The *Circular bottle* has two forms: one like an Italian wine-flask, but with a short neck; the other a hollow ring, with a neck at the top of it.

There are at least half a dozen varieties of the *ordinarily shaped bottle* in brown, the differences consisting partly in size and partly in the moulded decoration.

Bottles of this type are being forged, but you can detect the forgeries easily. In the true old ware the lead-glaze has become discoloured; it is iridescent in places; in other places it is veined with a network of dark surface-cracks. The old glaze was put on lavishly, it ran down and made the whole surface look streaky, it lay in the niches and depressions of the moulding,

filling them up and blurring the edges of the design. The forgeries have been more sparingly glazed, the colour is not the right chocolate brown, and there is (as yet) no iridescence. Iridescence is the result of the chemical action of light and air on the lead in the glaze, and only comes with the lapse of time.

Lambeth Brown.—The colour of the stone-ware bottles made at Lambeth, Fulham, and Denby, differs essentially from the "Rockingham" hue. It is a drain-pipe brown; the ware is salt-glazed, not lead-glazed, and the design comes out in sharper relief. The brown varies from something much lighter than chocolate to something almost yellow; indeed, yellow ochre is about the tint of the main part of the Lambeth brown.

The quaintest bottle of this class is the *Caudle* bottle. Douglas Jerrold's "Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures" made a great furore in *Punch* in the year 1844. That dates the Caudle bottle. Upon one flank of it you see Mr. Caudle in his night-cap trying to get to sleep; on the pillow next to him reposes the curl-papered head of Mrs. Caudle, in a mob-cap. Their names are written along the turnover of the bedclothes, and on an oval a little lower down appear the words, "'No, Mr. Caudle, I shall not go to sleep like a good soul!' See *Punch*." This popular bottle is marked "Doulton and Watts, Lambeth Pottery, London" (indented in the base). On the other side of it appears "Miss Prettyman," with her shawl, her Victorian bonnet, and her parasol. This cost me 3s.

The Young Queen is another bottle of this class ; it dates from 1837. I own two, of different makes. Queen Victoria (sadly caricatured) stands before you, wearing her crown and an ordinary evening dress. She holds a scroll, which says " My Hope is in my people." On the base are indented the words, " Lambeth pottery, Doulton and Watts, High Street, Lambeth." This cost me 4s.

The *Fish* is another bottle of this class. Many ordinary-shaped bottles in this ware were made for the bottle department of public-houses. Often they bear the publican's name. The *Topper* is another example of Lambeth brown.

" RED THEA-POTS "

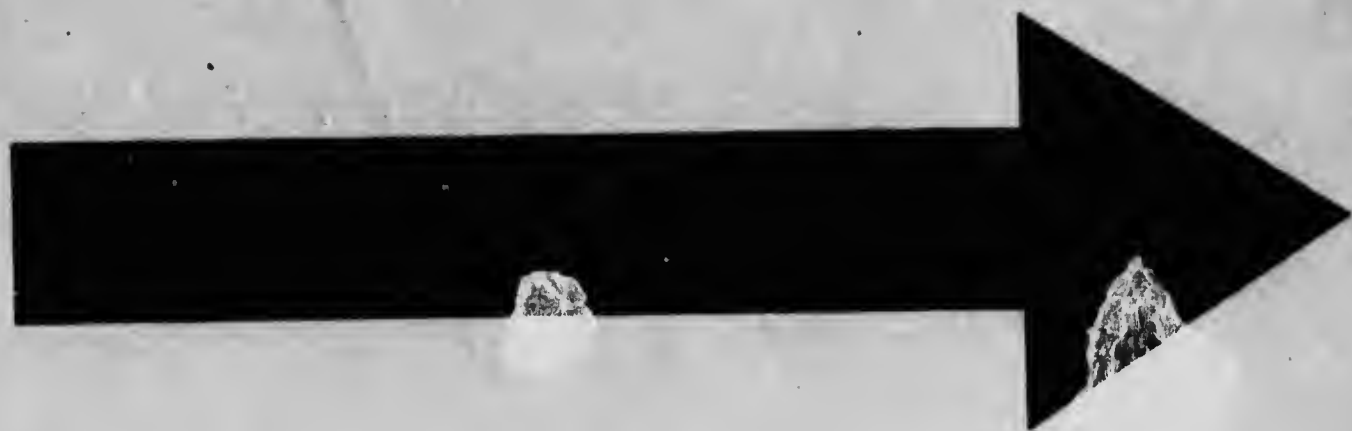
I suppose you know the romantic tale of how two Staffordshire artisans in the butter-pot and tile-making industry discovered the trade secrets of John Philip and David Elers, mysterious brothers from abroad, who had settled at Bradwell and Dimsdale Hall, near Burslem, and were making wonderful " red thea-pots " there ? It is part of that never-ending, entrancing serial story, " The Romance of Trade," which somebody will write some day, I suppose, when people tire of novels all about love-making. The brothers would employ no " hands " but those who seemed to be small-witted ; Astbury and Twyford pretended to be semi-imbeciles, and so gained entrance into the guarded works.



RED WARE, ETERS STYLE.

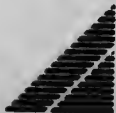
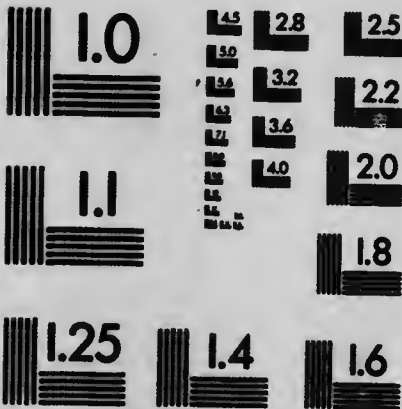


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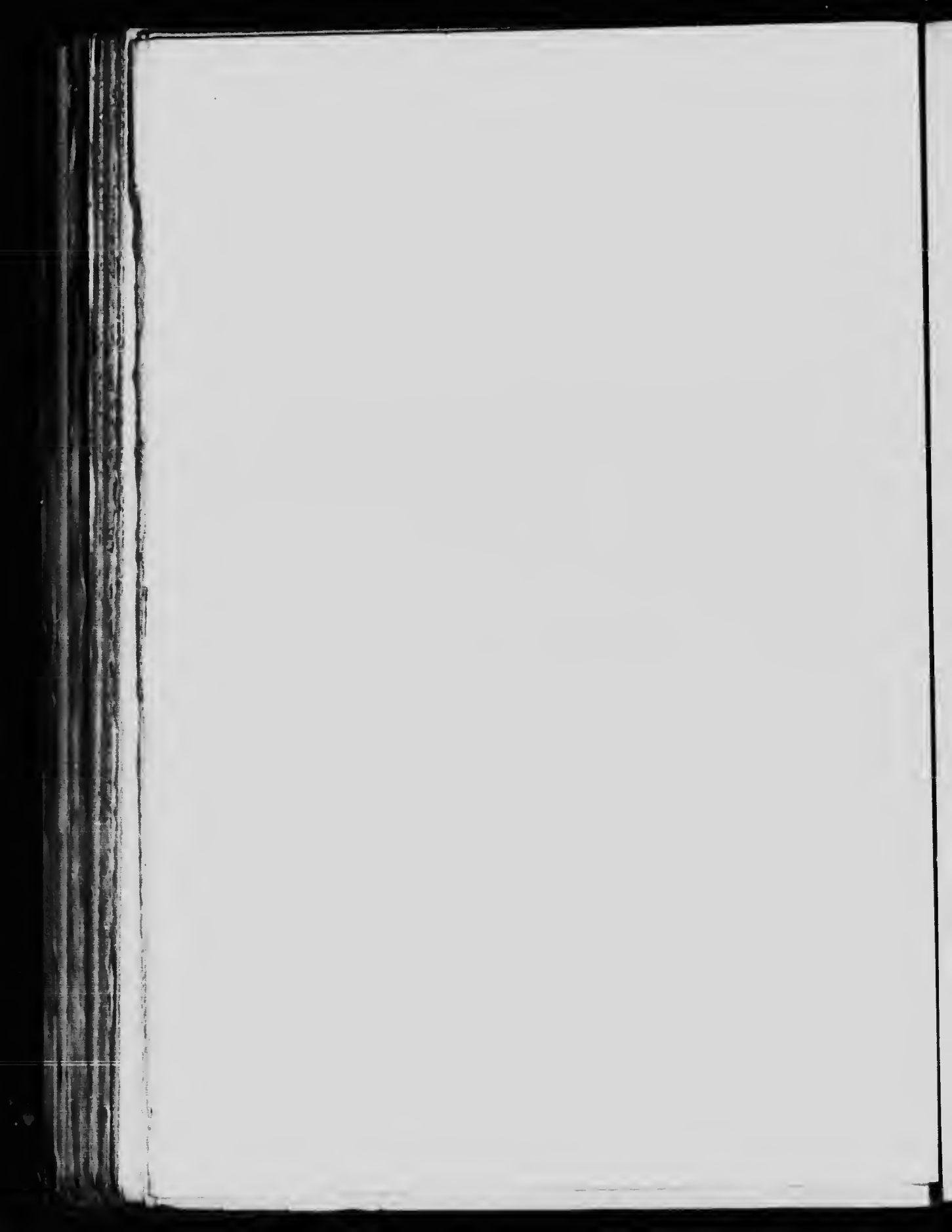
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"Thea" had begun to be drunk in England in the year 1657. In the year 1693 John Dwight, the first great English potter, cited the Elers brothers before the Court of Chancery, alleging that they had infringed his patents for "the mystery of opacous red and dark coloured porcelaine or china." In response, David Elers allowed that about the year 1690 he and his brothers had begun to make "broune muggs and red thea-pots." The first red-ware tea utensils made at Meissen, near Dresden, date back only to the year 1706. So that Elers-ware is earlier than Meissen-ware. But red Dwight-ware must be earlier than both. The earliest red ware of all was, of course, Oriental in origin, and brought to England by the Honourable East India Company for sale in connection with tea. Coffee began to be drunk in London about the year 1652. What is called "Elers-ware" was all intended for use with coffee or tea.

Elers-Ware Described.—What is generally known as Elers-ware is rare, and will become increasingly valuable. It is beautiful in colour, shape, and ornament. One finds it difficult to believe that the coffee-pot standing before me, as I write, was made in England so long as 210 years ago. This coffee-pot—I got it for half-a-guinea—is ten inches high to the top of the knob on the lid. All but the spout is perfectly simple in shape, but the decoration is richly tasteful. A classic *mascaron*, or moulded face and hair, lies under the spout, and suggests a modification of the head under the neck of the Bellarmine. Raised upon the surface

of the pot and lid are wreaths of delicate ornament, small conventional flowers, curves, and scroll-work, which suggest a Renaissance influence, and, but for colour and material, might well be *repoussé* silver. And I remember that, in Dwight's citation of the brothers Elers, he called them "silversmiths" by trade. A "Greek key" ornament runs round the base. The surface is perfectly smooth, and has an ivory-like gloss, which is not the result of a glaze, however. None of Wedgwood's *rosso antico* ware, even, can compare in thin solidity, rich colour, and fine surface with this. It also surpasses the "red thea-pots" from China and Japan, in every technical quality. I consider it a very lucky half-guinea's worth indeed.

Which is Elers, and which Dwight, or Astbury?—

The puzzle is to distinguish between what the Elers brothers made in this ware, and what was made by Dwight, and by Astbury? I fancy the style of ornament must be the best guide. In the British Museum there are two pieces which have—lately only—been assigned to Dwight; the red of them is yellower than in others, the gloss on them is more shiny, and the ornament is Oriental, sprigs of the prunus-blossom being the style. As Dwight was earliest in the field he would probably copy the Oriental ornament, and confine himself to that.

On some pieces you see figures of men, birds, dogs, and so forth, in a style which seems to me particularly English; in fact, I own certain small brass chimney-

piece ornaments of old-English origin which resemble these figures very closely indeed. These pieces, if one goes by the style of the ornament, must be, I think, assigned to Astbury, who set up for himself in this style of ware, after he had robbed the brothers Elers of the secrets which they practised unlawfully, infringing a patent as they did themselves.

But when you come to pieces which were ornamented in silversmith style, by the use of finely cut dies which stamped a decoration resembling German, Flemish, or French Renaissance ornaments in silver, it will not be a wild guess to ascribe them to the Elers brothers themselves. It is stated—I do not know upon what authority—that true Elers pieces are all very small in size. Mr. Solon said so, and he also thought that the colour of the body is of a lighter tint than that of the red ware made by other makers; but, again, I do not know other authority for that; the "Dwight" pieces in the British Museum are lighter in colour.

Here, then, is a pleasant mystery for somebody to unravel. Marks tell us nothing about it, comparison and philosophical deduction are the only modes of research in this. At any rate, "Elers-ware" is a delectable and appreciative kind of thing to collect.

THE BLUE RAPIERS OF DRESDEN

Law Courts in England and France have heard a good deal about Dresden porcelain lately, but I think the most rascally and *piquant* stories have yet to be told. Here is one of them:

The Matchless Pair.—A collector of old Dresden groups collected a fine old figure, which he knew to be one of a pair; let us call it figure A. He hungered to possess the other, which we will call figure B. "I'll pay any price you like for the other," he said to a dealer; "match the figure, and I don't mind what I pay." It would be a long and difficult job, the dealer said—he didn't at all feel sure of doing it. But he'd do his best. He was off by train and boat the next day to a place where such figures can still be made.

That place is Meissen, twelve miles from Dresden. At Meissen the historic Dresden china-making is still carried on, openly and honestly, in the ordinary way of trade. At Meissen the dealer turned over old pattern-books till he came to the pictures of figures A and B. "That's the pair!" he said. "Make me a pair like that, best quality"—the qualities are *Gut*, *Mittel*, and *Ausschuss* (good, medium, and wasters)—"and I'll give you a cheque now." The price he paid was about £70 of our money, some fourteen hundred marks. Then he returned to his shop.

The Old Moulds.—At Meissen many of the hundred-and-seventy-year-old moulds are still in existence, so that old figures and groups can be exactly reproduced in proportions and shape. In paste they cannot, for the clay-beds which used to be quarried have long been exhausted, and even a slight difference in material makes a palpable variation in porcelain pastes. The colouring differs, also; new pigments, fresh from the oven, cannot resemble exactly the look produced in the

old colouring by more than a century and a half of exposure to handling and the chemical effects of light-rays. No china-painter to-day, moreover, possesses exactly the same idiosyncrasy as his forerunner at Meissen did all those years ago, and, consequently, there is difference in the very way the colours are laid on. It is at points like these that the knowing eye and tactile fingers of the connoisseur exercise the *expertise* which seems so incomprehensible to beginners.

An Audacious Rascal.—Well, in due course the pair of brand-new figures travelled from Meissen to the dealer who had ordered and paid for them. He immediately wrote to his gull the collector to say, in effect: "I believe I have come across figure B! But I am not quite sure, and I must examine the two side by side. The people who own figure B won't let it out of their house till it is paid for, so will you let me have your figure A to take to their house and compare?" "Certainly," the collector answered; and so the real old figure A passed into the dealer's hands. Clever, but rascally work was then performed upon the brand-new figure A, to imitate the abrasions which appeared in the real old figure A.

Figure B was similarly scraped, filed, chipped, cracked, and stained, to look the match to the other figure. Then the real old figure A was locked in the safe in the shop, and the dealer wrote to the collector: "Yes, it really is the thing you want, the other figure of the pair! I am bringing it down to you, with the one which is your own already, to-morrow."

But what he carried to the collector was the brand-new figure A, as well as the brand-new figure B. I understand that the collector paid him something like £2,000, and was delighted to do it. Soon afterwards the dealer took the real old figure A out of his safe, sold it for some £3,000, and pocketed that money also. And the collector was never the wiser. Which shows the need for collectors to study, acquire what the French call *flair*, and be able to rely on their own connoisseurship and judgment.

"Dresden" Romance.—I fancy one could write a book, "as interesting as a novel," about the romantic picturesque Dresden china. It is the best known of all Europe-made porcelains. For nearly 200 years it has been in demand. Everybody has heard of the "crossed swords" of its mark. Most people suppose that any piece of china bearing the blue rapiers must be valuable, though tons of new Meissen china bearing the blue rapiers are shipped abroad every year. The very mark itself seems romantic, particularly when, as was for a time the case, the cross swords were sabres, not rapiers. But really collectable and profitable "Dresden" was the product of the palmy period at Meissen, when a royal purse gave such subsidies that fine work could be done without consideration of cost. That palmy period came to an end with the Seven Years' War; it extended from about 1720 to 1760. The "Marcolini" Dresden, indicated by a star between the hilts, dates from 1774 only, and is not very valuable.

The Cherished Kinds.—The pieces most sought after, and bought for thousands of pounds, are the harlequin figures, the tailor and his wife on goats, the sets of musicians, the carnival folk, and the farthingale or crinoline groups (a lady in hooped dress, with a pug-dog, a lover, and a negro page), or ladies in costumes edged with "real lace," and playing cards or musical instruments. Very pleasant and dainty ornaments they are. You can buy the modern versions of them cheaply, the blue rapiers and all. The early Dresden tea-things, too, and the *cabarets* or coffee-sets and picnic sets, are hunted for. But the hunter must own a long purse. It is useless to warn anybody who is already bitten by the passion for old Dresden; but other readers perhaps permit me to recommend some less costly and less swindled pursuit. Let us leave "Dresden" alone; already the prices are irrationally and exorbitantly inflated. And one cannot "pick up" old Dresden for a song in odd corners; at any rate, I have never been able to do it.

THE DOUBLE-LOUIS MARK

It will come as a surprise to readers who have casually visited the great ceramic collection near St. Cloud to learn that there is next to no old Sèvres porcelain in the *Musée de Sèvres*. In one respect that museum is another *Hôtel des Invalides*, for even the few pieces of old Sèvres which it does contain have all of them "been in the wars," and not one of them but has been mended. You can

better study "old Sèvres" at the Wallace Collection, or the Jones Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum, than you can in France.

The *Musée de Sèvres* did not begin to exist at all until the year 1805, and the making of soft Sèvres porcelain at all ceased in the year 1804. Practically the making of soft-paste Sèvres porcelain ceased in 1795, indeed; and the old Sèvres mark—the double-Louis, as I have called it, the two script letters L, interlacing and facing each other (the L standing for "Louis")—died out of use soon after the sixteenth Louis died on the scaffold of the guillotine in the Place de la Concorde, near the spot where the sister obelisk to Cleopatra's Needle now stands.

The Fatal "Improvement."—There comes a moment in the history of every applied art when somebody, thinking to amend, does in effect spoil and even destroy for the future the beautiful product which he thought to improve. That moment came in the history of English porcelain, when Spode, taking his cue from the efforts at Plymouth, Bristol, and New Hall, mixed felspar into his china-paste and thereby destroyed the production of the beautiful, frail, "soft" porcelain manufactured in England until then.

A similarly fatal moment came at the Gobelins Tapestry Works, when M. Chevreul, the director, exulted in having discovered how to increase the number of tints which could be dyed into the yarn. The three main colours which till then had served to make Gobelins tapestry beautiful—the green, the blue,

and the amber-brown—gave place to all the tints of the rainbow, and the simplicity, the severe beauty, and the noble austerity of “old Gobelins” became for ever lost.

And so in the year 1804, when Brongniart, the director at Sèvres, finally adopted hard paste for Sèvres porcelain wholly, he was so certain that he had made a grand improvement, that he burned the formulæ by which the soft paste used to be mixed, and buried in the park of Versailles all the material for soft-paste porcelain that was left in stock. He rejoiced; but what he had done was to kill for ever the production of Sèvres porcelain at its best.

I do not know that we lecturers and students of the old arts need lament over these fatal improvements, perhaps. Those unhappy moments of change may be considered by us as appointed to make the old productions treasures, by preventing their continuance afterwards. But it shows how blind the most enlightened art directors can be.

“Vieux Sèvres” and the Marks.—“What is vieux Sèvres, pâte tendre?” It is the old Sèvres, made of soft paste. What is the Sèvres porcelain which is priceless? It is the old soft-paste Sèvres. What is the Sèvres porcelain marked by the “double-Louis”? It is old soft-paste Sèvres. And that was just the kind of soft porcelain which the Revolution and Brongniart brought to an end in France.

Under the term *vieux Sèvres*, connoisseurs comprehend all soft-paste porcelain made at the French Royal

manufactory—the *Manufacture Royale de Porcelaine de France*—from the day of its foundation up to about the year 1804. The use of the double-Louis mark ended somewhat earlier. The “double-Louis” began in 1745; in 1753 it had the date-marking letter added to it. In the year 1753 a letter A was placed within the space enclosed by the double L; in the year 1754 a letter B, and so on, down the alphabet (omitting W) till the year 1776, marked by the inner letter Z. Then the double Louis began to contain double letters; the year 1777 was marked by AA; the year 1778 by BB, and so on, down the alphabet again, till RR marked the year 1794.

But in every collection of *vieux Sèvres* it will be found that the finest pieces have date-letters ranging within a few years of the date 1760—a few years earlier, and a few years later than that, so that the most desirable old Sèvres of all bears the double-Louis mark, enclosing letters D to N.

After the first fall of Napoleon the double-Louis mark was renewed, during the reign of Louis XVIII; it did not enclose a date-letter, but a *fleur-de-lis* instead.

From the year 1745 to the year 1753, the Royal china-works were at Vincennes, and the mark was a double-Louis without any date-letter, a full-stop being placed within the space where the date-letters later appeared.

The double-Louis mark is in blue.

Other L Marks.—Colourable imitations of the Sèvres



CUT-GLASS, EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY.



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mark were used many years ago. A double LL was used at Lille. An early Minton mark closely suggested the double-Louis. The honest modern "Derby" mark is rather like the Royal monogram used at Sèvres. Angoulême porcelain bore a deceptive mark of the kind. And there have been endless fraudulent productions of what purports to be *vieux Sèvres*.

It is hazardous to venture on Sèvres, therefore. I own one little bit of it only, bought for 4s. 6d. in Hammersmith Broadway, years ago, but the daintiest pin-tray that ever a Marquise used.

MUGS AND PORCELAIN

No, I am not using the word "mugs" derisively—far be it from me to ridicule a collector's mistakes. We have all been outwitted by a seller some time or other, or misled by our own imperfect knowledge, or carried away by a sudden fancy into a foolish purchase now and again. There is a certain Sheffield-plate wine-cooler—but that is another story. Mugs are now the theme, and I mean the mugs made in England a hundred years or more ago, of porcelain.

Has cider any affinity for china not possessed by beer? Beer-mugs were usually earthenware; the porcelain mugs seem to have been made only for the orchard drink. The cider-apple flourished near the potteries at Worcester, Caughley, and Plymouth, of course; and in Norfolk, not far away from Lowestoft, as well.

But the "Davenport," "Bow," "Longton Hall," and Staffordshire china mugs generally, were they for cider-drinkers only, or were they sometimes used with beer? There are many varieties of old earthenware beer-mugs extant, but upon them I must write some other time.

Lettered and Dated.—A most interesting small



JACKFIELD WARE.

collection of old English porcelain mugs might be made. A white china mug stands before me at this moment—empty, let me add. By the ring-rim under it, the feel of the paste, the look of the glaze, and the outward curving lip or brim, I know that it must have been made at

Worcester, though it bears no mark. All that is painted on it is a big gilt "L."

I wish it bore the inscription, "Eleanor Smith, 1769," say, or "Walter Williams, 1770," for that would add to its pecuniary value nowadays; dated pieces are always especially worth acquiring, and so are those painted with an owner's name. We may safely conclude that Worcester cider-mugs, bearing an owner's name and a date, were made to order as presents, or for use by some Worcestershire squire or Herefordshire yeoman who must have a dignified utensil at table for his daily beverage. Not until Staffordshire had cheapened china-making did the smaller mugs, lettered

"For a good boy" or, for instance, "Thomas Baddeley his cup," come into vogue; these date from the twenties to the seventies of the nineteenth century, and will never be so valuable as the mugs of which I now write.

A Mug of Renown.—The most famous of all "Worcester" mugs has passed into literature; the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the date took notice of it, and so did, later on, Carlyle in his "Life of Frederick the Great." "There stands on the mantel-piece," he wrote, in a long passage which can be abridged severely without injuring the purport of his extraordinary



JACKFIELD WARE.

literary style, "a small china mug, declaring itself, in one obscure corner, to be made at Worcester, R-H, Worcester 1757." That statement about the mark needs verification; no existing case of it is known, I believe. Exceedingly rare is "R-H, Worcester," with an anchor—the rebus of Richard Holdship; it is found on a plate now at the South Kensington Museum, but without any date.

"Front side offers a poor, well-meant portrait labelled 'King of Prussia,'" Carlyle goes on, about the

mug; "upon whom there descends a small genius, to drop a wreath far too small for ever getting on." There is also "an enormous image of Fame," and "a circular trophy of drums, pikes, muskets, cannon, field flags, and the like . . . a diligent potter's apotheosis of Frederick." It was "made of tolerable china," Carlyle added (though he knew no more of porcelain than does a bull in a china shop), and "holds a good pint." But these mugs were made in three sizes; the designs described were transfer-printed in black. There are still some of them to be bought.

Other China Mugs.—The most valuable cider-mugs are Worcester scale-blue; there are two shapes, the bell and the cylinder, and they are painted with flowers and Oriental birds. "Caughley" produced blue-transfer printed mugs, the ordinary flower and butterfly pattern. "Bristol" sent out cider-mugs painted with birds and fruit, in blue on white. "Plymouth" cider-mugs were decorated with Oriental birds and rocks, or trees and Chinese pattern-ornaments. "Lowestoft" produced mugs ornamented with ribbons, with the "Long Eliza" designs, and with blue ships. "Longton Hall" adorned cider-mugs with roses, or the "Lowestoft" pink, or with puce flowers and scrolls, or with exotic birds on panels amidst a cobalt blue ground; some Longton Hall mugs are embossed. "Oriental Lowestoft" mugs show Chinese and heraldic decorations. "Bow," too, produced mugs, decked with coloured flowers. On a "Davenport" mug I should expect to find a painted landscape and much

gilding. Ordinary later Staffordshire china mugs were painted with coarse blossoms.

What the old potters called coffee-cans are mug-shaped but small, and cannot be reckoned in this category. Does anybody possess a Derby cider-mug? Church Gresley and Musselburgh produced a few, I know. Did Chelsea? And—I return to my first query—were they all cider-mugs by intention, or were some of them expressly made for home-brewed ale?

"APPLE-GREEN"

Apple-green! It sounds like the name of a village, a Worcestershire hamlet where elm-shadowed cottages outline a triangle of ancient turf, or a Home County village where the green is a part of a common. Ham Green and Rowney Green in Worcestershire I know, and Kew Green and Paddington Green in Metropolitan latitudes—but what of apple-green?

"Apple-green" is the name of a colour, a colour used in soft English china. Sèvres had its *pomme verte*, but that was not the true apple-green. Vainly you will look for apple-green on Oriental porcelain; the Ming, celadon, and *famille verte* greens are metallic, peacocky, and chilly greens. As Miss Deane well wrote, "it is when we come to the more homely English wares that we get the underlying warm yellow suggestion, that recalls the greenness of an English landscape when the trees unfold."

Much Sought For.—Now it is just that delicate warm, comfortable eye-resting, clear tint of green in

English china that is so sought after by many collectors of English porcelain nowadays. Apple-green they *will* have, and up go the prices for apple-green. In step the counterfeiters—a tea-service in sham “Coalport” apple-green nearly took me in the other day. But the time when you could buy it in sets at the price of new crockery is past. In her “Recollections of a Scottish Novelist,” Mrs. L. B. Walford tells how, somewhere about the year 1840, her parents purchased a mansion in Scotland, and “bought it as it stood, furnished, and stocked with glass and china.” The china “proved to be Crown Derby of the best period”—“Derby,” I think, is the best “apple-green”—“and Worcester with a glaze that made collectors stare”—“Worcester” is often good “apple-green”—“and Lowestoft. And these were the ordinary breakfast, tea, and dinner sets put down in the house-agent’s list as table china!” Mrs. Walford exclaims. Her mother never dreamed of such china being “too good for human nature’s daily food,” and only when Mrs. Walford came to be “much in contact with people who pursued the supremely fascinating study of the moment” did she discover “the real status of the cups and platters so lightly esteemed. Now they are in a glass case.” She adds, “I like the old way best.”

A Fascinating Line.—The study of the moment? The cult of old English china is not for the moment, but will come to be “for all time.” Soft English china, as a whole, is steadily appreciating in the market, because the number of collectors of it increases every month. I

can well understand a collector confining his or her acquisitions to "apple-green," though I have never limited myself to one line. And because apple-green is so much sought for now, and its price has so much increased, I look with a double complacency upon some apple-green bordered bread-and-butter plates, which I bought for five shillings each seven years ago. They are marked Bloor Derby, gadroon-edged, and "painted with Billingsley's flowers," as it says in the old pattern-books of the old Derby China works.

"Worcester" apple-green is slightly darker than "Derby" apple-green; it resembles the hue of a ripening apple—I mean the green part of it—and it is a very translucent green. The "Davenport" apple-green resembles the hue of the "Worcester" apple-green very nearly, but is not so fine, smooth, and translucent under the glaze. "Coalport" apple-green is rather pea-green in tint—I do not mean pea-soup colour, but peascod colour, not unlike the green of "Chelsea." "Swansea" produced a darker apple-green, but the whiteness and transparency of the paste and glaze at Swansea and Nantgarw caused the Swansea and Nantgarw apple-greens to be very vivid. "Rockingham" green is not quite an apple-green, it is more like the green of some "Chamberlain Worcester," and it is often spoiled by being flecked with gilt. And only minor examples of "Longton Hall" porcelain can be considered apple-green at all.

Earthenware Apple-Green.—The bases of Walton figures in Staffordshire earthenware are often the true

apple-green ; Whieldon ware and Ralph Wood figures are tinted a paler, cooler hue than that. Wedgwood and other Staffordshire dessert-services, leaf or fruit-shaped, are a darker green than the true apple-colour, which one has to know very well, by visual memory, when hunting for the real, the exquisite, the inimitable rare old thing.

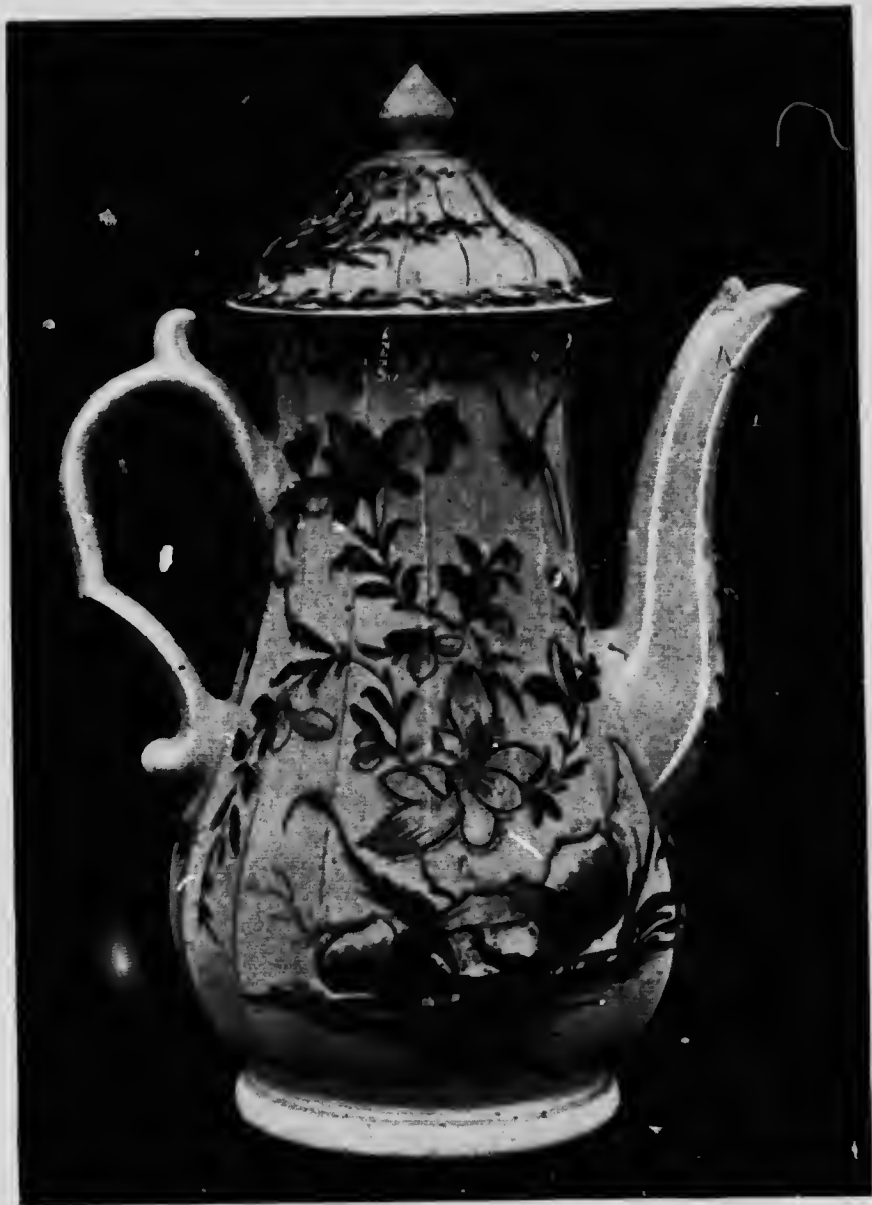
OLD ENGLISH TEA-WARE

Originality in collecting is not so difficult as it is desirable ; I fancy I could suggest a dozen new and special " lines " ; and we all of us know at least one untried kind of collection we would make, if beginning again. Old English tea-things, for example, in porcelain and earthenware ; nothing could be more decorative, typical, patriotic, and comparatively inexpensive to collect.

Typical and patriotic, I say. Not vases and statuettes of china, but tea cups and saucers, tea-pots, milk-jugs, sugar and slop basins, are the characteristic pieces of old English porcelain.

Western Chinese.—*Thea bohea*, the tea-plant, is the true family-tree of porcelain ; but for the tea-plant there would have been no call for pleasant, clean, washable vessels that could give the beverage no tang. Because of tea-infusions the Orientals drank out of china while Europeans still swigged at the leather bottel.

" I did send for a *cup* of tea, a Chinese drink, of which I had never drunk before," Pepys wrote, in 1660 ; the



COFFEE-POT, PROBABLY "PLYMOUTH."



Honourable East India Company, which had brought the new drink to London, had brought Chinese tea-cups too. We soon acclimatised them; eleven years later than that, John Dwight took out a patent "for the mysterie of transparent earthenware," and made what he called "red thea-pots."

From the first, tea felt at home in England; in that we are the Western Chinese. Our coffee is—well, nearly always bad or so-so; but here we get the best tea-drinking in the Western world. Dresden and Sèvres made tea-things, I know; but what had France, or even Ger-



WHIELDON CAULIFLOWER STYLE.

many, to do with tea? Coffee is their beverage; what palate had the Gaul for tea? To this day you shall see a Frenchman who feels unwell sit down in a *café* and degust with nausea the awful brew he calls "*thé*"; just as our great-grandams with the megrims used to drink camomile-tea, as they called it. It was over here, not there, that tea and tea-cups took out letters of naturalisation, and they are English, quite English, by now. Even in the year 1750 "You must understand that there is no good tea to be had anywhere but in England," a Frenchwoman wrote home to Rouen.

Splendid Cabinets.—What better decoration for a drawing-room than a cabinet sparsely filled with old

English tea-things? The Chelsea claret hue, which even Sèvres was fain to copy; the Worcester lapis-lazuli, salmon-pink, and powder-blue; the Derby apple-green, royal blue, and yellow; the Longton Hall cobalt and madder-rose, the Coalport crimson lake and the Davenport purple. In among them, for cool contrast, a few of Leeds and Wedgwood cream-ware cups and saucers, daintily edged with woodbine pattern, or



WHIELDON CAULIFLOWER STYLE,
TEAPOY.

transfer printed in red. To the eye and colour sense a cabinet of these old wares gives the delight of a riot of Turner-esque hues, for Time has brushed in the half-tones, the chemistry of light and air has chastened the primary colours, and the play of shine and shadow on the brilliant glazes gives the rest.

You still can pick up single pieces of tea-ware, to make up a "hanlequin set," for prices less than once given for them when new, a hundred and twenty to a hundred and sixty years ago.

When ladies had to pay several crowns a pound for tea they were content to pay several pounds for a Crown Derby tea-set: the fine dear drink and the fine dear ware went fitly together. Dr. Johnson goes to "drink tay" with Mrs. Thrale, you remember, and

over his eleventh cup he berates the foolish costliness of "chaney." He smacks the table: "Ma'am, I visited the Derby pottery, and I protest I could have vessels of silver as cheap as what are made of porcelain there!"

Delighting in her Worcester tea-set—blue, with glints of red and gold—Mrs. Thrale sits smiling at the rusty old economist; as in "The Wander Years" I have told.

The pride of those old-time hostesses over their "equipages," as they called their tea-sets! Their personal care of each cup, their washing and drying it with their own hands! Though they could not know what value the things were in the end to acquire. A Worcester tea and coffee "equipage," scale-blue with panels of exotic birds, and the square mark at the base, has sold for seven hundred guineas; a cup and saucer of the kind, sold singly, may bring twenty pounds. The rarest in this kind are decorated with figures of men and women, the next most rare with birds, the least rare with flowers: but all of them are rare.

If "Worcester" and "Chelsea" and "Bristol" tea-things are out of your reach, as they well may be, and small blame to you, collect Derby, Rockingham, Coalport, Davenport, early Minton, Spode—technically the most perfect ever made—Newhall, and cream-ware tea-things. And you need not house them in cabinets; they suit the corner cupboard and the chimney-breast. There is something hearth-like and dog-like about their homely friendliness and readiness for use. They are

so human and Adamic, framed of such dust as we ourselves inhabit awhile, and sharing our mortality though exceeding our span.

LONGTON HALL PORCELAIN

"Pair of sauce-boats, in puce, £6 6s. Leaf dish, in cobalt blue, £5. Marked plate, £5 15s. 6d. Pair of ewers, £22. Large mug, enamelled with Chinese figures, £6 16s. 6d. Group of birds on a tree attacked by a dog, £12 12s. Statuette of a shepherd, £52 12s. Statuette of a girl, £28." I am quoting from a report of the prices obtained at a great auction of Longton Hall porcelain, and I could fill this chapter with such prices alone.

Before me lies the catalogue of that sale. It is the "Catalogue of the William Bemrose Collection," sold at Derby during the first week in March, 1909. At hand lies the sumptuous volume on "Longton Hall Porcelain" which Mr. Bemrose produced in 1906. Let us chat about Longton Hall porcelain for a while.

Becoming the Rage.—Longton Hall porcelain *may* become more costly than "Chelsea" or "Bow." One reason for that is its apparent rarity, but there is more of it about than most collectors suppose. A good deal of it masquerades as "Bow" and some of it as "Chelsea." In days when little was known of Longton Hall porcelain, anythi. that looked like "Bow" was christened "Bow" in the auction-room. A good many collectors of "Chelsea" and "Bow" possess Longton Hall china without knowing it. But because it has

been thought so rare it may become the new porcelain rage.

The Supposed Type.—"Longton Hall? Oh, you mean, stumpy, clumsy old vases, with bouquets of flowers *growing out of the top of the vases,*" is what the ordinary collector of English old china would say. But that is only one type of "Longton Hall." And as to the mark: "Oh, two capital letters L reversed and crossed, with one, two, or three dots under them, vertically." But Longton Hall china is so seldom marked. It is this tradition, of the mark and the type of vase, which prevented Longton Hall from becoming studied and detected so long.

A Find.—The other day a collector bought a vase which the owner had labelled "Bow" and priced at £8. He took off the name and the price; wrote "Longton Hall" and "£28" upon it, and left it to be sold anew. Such is the profit upon knowledge. But in other ways also it is worth the readers' while to see if they do not possess, without knowing it, a piece or two of Longton Hall.

Examples of "Longton Hall."—I look at the illustrations in the Bemrose Sale Catalogue, and I find pictured the group of two children with a goat, which sold for £24 3s. Anybody who saw it in a dealer's window might have sworn that it was "Bow." And "Bow," most people would say at sight of the statuette of the shepherd which realised £52 12s. the other day. When I look at the picture of it, in the sumptuous book, I see that its colours are blue, green, and rose-red;

it has the rococo base (with the curves and floral scrolls). The shepherd's knee-breeches are dark blue and gold; the gold rings on them partly conceal the "Littler" blue, that blue which is distinctive of "Longton Hall," and they make the effect gorgeous enough to suggest "Chelsea." There, too, are the "Chelsea" flowers and leaves, in a hollow of the base.

I examine another picture; it is thus described in the book: "Tureen, cobalt-blue ground-lay, reserves enamelled with exotic birds and flowers, richly gilt." Worcester square-mark ware it might pass for if the blue ground-lay were scaled. "Chelsea" of the best period it might pass for without question. At Derby the other day it would have been sold as "Longton Hall," if it had been sold at all. But I do not find it catalogued; it was probably withheld, to be kept as a heirloom. I look at the picture of a plate, leaf-shaped border, painted the Littler blue, gilt outer edge, gilt inner edge, and the centre filled with exotic birds; it fetched £42 1s. at the sale. A vase, blue ground, gold marbling, white reserves with flowers in them, five and a half inches high, *marked gold Chelsea anchor*, sold for £12 1s. 6d. You see how far the imitation of "Chelsea" was carried at Longton Hall.

The *gold anchor* has always been a rather mysterious mark. The usual statement is that only the finest "Chelsea" was marked in gold.

A mug, "mark incised X," was sold for £4; it was painted with birds and flowers. The X suggests "Bristol" of course. I suppose the X threw doubt

on the mug in the minds of the dealers present. But "Bristol" is hard and "Longton Hall" is soft.

I have written enough to show that it is worth while to search for this particular kind of porcelain, and to search for it among pieces which have hitherto borne another label. In a subsequent chapter I will try to expound the peculiarities and the tests of "Longton Hall."

A "LONGTON HALL" CATALOGUE

In the last chapter I showed how Longton Hall china has grown in value, and also expressed the view that much Longton Hall china exists in collections under the name of "Chelsea, Worcester, or Bow." Because it is rare, and supposed to be rarer than it really is, a comparatively unimportant bit of it is more valuable under its own name than under the name of "Bow" or "Chelsea"; for to be very valuable a piece of real "Chelsea," or "Bow," or "Worcester" must be a fine piece indeed. That is not so with "Longton Hall" so much, and it is worth the while of every collector to see if he does not possess, already and unknowingly, a piece of "Longton Hall," or if he cannot acquire one. And to be valuable it need not be a very important piece.

A Catalogue of "Longton Hall."—I fear I cannot nearly compress into one chapter only the hints and indications that can be given about "Longton Hall," but for the present let us consider the chronicles of the factory, as patient investigators have made them

out. If we can obtain a list of the kind of pieces made there we may the more readily recognise some of them when seen. I am leaving out of the question the well-known salt-glaze earthenware made at Longton Hall; that is already so valuable on the market as to be prohibitive in price.

William Littler was born in 1724, a year before the birth of Duesbury, with whom he was to have more business relations than most students of English china-making suspect. They both came from the same village.

In July 1752 *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* announced that "there is now made by Littler and Company at Longton Hall, near Newcastle, Staffordshire, a large quantity and great variety of very good and fine ornamental porcelain or china ware, in the most fashionable and genteel taste." Note the words which I have italicised, and consider how they fit in with the theory that more "Longton Hall" exists than we suppose, and that it is mistaken for "Bow" and "Chelsea."

In 1752 Duesbury enamelled for "Littler and Company," as he entered in his books, "6 pair of double branches, 6 pair of dubble birds, 12 pair of silvard nosells, 6 pair ditto lackered," and he also refers to these others as "Staffordshire" (which most likely meant no other than "Longton Hall"): "12 small figures, 1 group of birds, 2 pair of birds, 6 pair of pheasants, 1 dozen large flowers, 1 pair large dogs, 1 swan, 3 small birds, 2 pair of shepardises, 4 birds, 1 pair of goldfinches, 1 pair of stooping birds, 4 pair

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of large goldfinches, 4 pair of smaller, 1 pair of large dogs." At this period, so far as we yet know, no porcelain was being made in Staffordshire except that made at Longton Hall.

In 1757 a London sale catalogue indicated that Longton Hall china included tureens, covers, and dishes, large cups and covers, jars, beakers, "with beautiful sprigs of flowers," open-work fruit baskets and plates, a variety of services for dessert, tea, and coffee equipages, sauce-boats, leaf basins and plates, melons, cauliflowers, "elegant epargnes," and "other ornamental and useful porcelain, both white and enamelled."

In the same year *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* advertised as on sale at Longton Hall "all sorts of china, both useful and ornamental, as well as plain blue and white tea-china of all sorts, coffee-cans, chocolate cups and saucers, punch-bowls and mugs, finely enamelled and curiously modelled fruit dishes, leaf plates, sauce-boats, variety of curious useful ornaments for desserts, with figures and flowers of all sorts, made exactly to nature" and "allowed by the best judges to be the finest in England."

In 1758 another advertisement announced the production at Longton Hall "beautiful essence pots, images, flowers, vases, with the blue and white ribbed, fluted, and octagon chocolate cups and saucers, tea-sets, etc."

The late Mr. William Bemrose was the most learned and indefatigable collector of "Longton Hall," and one knows no reason to suppose that enthusiasm deceived

his judgment or led his skill astray. In his book on "Longton Hall Porcelain" he gives illustrations of vase and cover, essence pots, jug, melon, leaf-shaped dish with handle, tulip-leaf teapot and stand, teapoy, vase, vase, candlestick, plate, plate, statuette "the shepherd," pair of ewers, statuette "David slaying the lion," butter-boat and cover, large white teapot (overlapping leaves), group of two boys feeding a goat, set of three vases, statuette "an actor," tall cylindrical vase, vase encrusted with enamelled flowers, pair of pug-dogs, birds on branches, pair of leopards, statuette "a market-woman," covered tureen, basket of flowers, coffee-pot, teapot, plate, cream-jug with snake handle, vase, vase, statuettes of "singers," group "the lovers," set of three vases, candlestick, milk-jug, plate, vase, bowl, cover and stand, butter-dish, set of three tall vases, etui-case, tea-caddy, mug, tea-caddy, sugar-caster, plate, butter-boat, three mugs, set of three vases, cream-jug, tea-pot, cream-jug, statuette "girl seated," statuette "boy seated," five vases, statuette "boy with flowers," statuette "an actor," statuette "a farmer," statuette "girl with grapes," statuette "boy seated on a barrel," square vase, bowl, cream-jug, vase, statuette "flower-girl," pair of statuettes "woman singing" and "man with guitar," two small sauce-boats, two leaf-basins, bowl, plate, plate, large leaf-dish, five tea-set pieces, overlapping leaf-dish, two sauce-boats, tea-cup and saucer, cup and saucer, teapot, six plates, three cups and saucers, six sauce-boats, "Long Eliza" tea-things and sauce-boats, bowl, bowl,

and perforated cover, vase, beaker, and tea-caddy. All these are *different* specimens of "Longton Hall."

It is a long catalogue, and the thing to do now is to search. In another chapter I show how to detect.

DETECTING "LONGTON HALL"

Littler began to make porcelain about the year 1745. Bow and Chelsea were at work then, Derby a little later, and Worcester in 1751. How shall we know "Longton Hall" from the others?

Mr. Bemrose's Hints, in "Longton Hall Porcelain," Bemrose & Sons.—"A piece of white and blue 'Longton Hall' porcelain, when placed in a glass-case amongst examples from various factories, appears still more brilliant in its lapis-lazuli effect. There is a charm in its simple shape and lack of finish in other respects.

"The cobalt-blue has been laid unevenly on the biscuit body, with a tendency to run when acted on by the glaze and the heat of the oven. The streaky effect of this, and its innumerable degrees of light and shade, give it colour value.

"In some instances, especially on the large plates and dishes with overlapping leaves, Littler was too lavish in the use of the 'Longton blue.' At the same time, it must be remembered that their former gold decoration is missing.

"The earlier pieces have been profusely gilded; to-day there are only indications of gold on some of the pieces. The gold decoration was applied by means

of a varnish not burnt in ; consequently, to-day, the gold is worn off. But in a short time Littler learnt how to apply the gold by a method which would last.

"In dark blue a larger salmon-scale was painted than was in general use at Worcester.

"There are examples which would do credit to Chelsea in paste, glaze, and enamelling." It is a mistake to think that Littler's productions "never really reached the conditions of a perfected manufacture.

"Littler made quantities of porcelain of the Chelsea type in a translucent white body.

"The later output from this factory must be looked for, not amongst the heavy, indifferently potted and enamelled specimens of the earlier periods, but amongst examples more akin to Chelsea.

"This factory but sparingly used any marks. The one which most frequently appears is two capital letters L reversed and crossed, and sometimes under the letters one or more dots placed vertically. This mark occurs in gold, blue, and red. Another mark is a script L in black.

"The handles are different to the work of all other factories of the period, and of intricate rustic design, a common one being the stalk of the rose ending in several buds gracefully resting on the edge of the piece."

Another characteristic was the liability to fire-crack.

"Some examples, when held up to a strong light, show a greenish tinge in the body, similar to some Worcester ; in other cases a dirty yellow tinge.

"It is often very heavy, partly because of the heavy rococo bases; the centre of the base is often clumsily fitted." This fact will often decide the origin of a (doubtful) piece. The bottom is seldom glazed.

"In some specimens there are moons" (as in "Chelsea" porcelain).

"The glaze is often of a bluish tinge, giving a blue-grey look to the porcelain when placed among different china."

In figures "there is a carelessness in the finish of the bases, these being sometimes almost solid. A round hole at the back is sometimes found.

"On the cheeks, arms, etc., a peculiar deep red is freely used, quite unlike that used in other factories."

Professor Church's Hints.—"A very rich blue, streaked or flooded or run, is the prevalent and characteristic colour. A delicate scroll-work in opaque white enamel occurs on some pieces, in places where gold would have been expected.

"Characteristics of this fabric, the rich streaky blue, the flowers, and stalks in the round, the translucent paste, and the minute signs of a not quite perfect manufacture."

Chaffers' Hints (the earlier ware).—"The paste has some affinity with that of Bow and Chelsea, but the pieces are clumsily potted and very inferior in general appearance. There is a rough and premature potting, as of a factory in the earlier and progressive stages. Figures on scroll bases, with a pinkish-red colour in lines on the edge of the scrolls, and en-

crusted flowers, rather larger than those of Chelsea. Sometimes this red colour is used on the scroll handles."

Mr. Hobson's Hints.—"It is often of uneven, almost undulating, surface, with a peculiar lumpiness under the base, especially noticeable in the figures. Gilding insecurely fixed, and occasionally replaced by arabesques in white tin-enamel."

Mr. Blacker's Hints.—"The flowers are not in groups or wreaths above the neck or foot, but simply stuck singly upon the rim. Other vases of a much higher type, with most elaborate raised flower and raised band decoration, are ascribed to this factory. The commonest forms of it recognised are plates and dishes decorated on the edges with embossed vine-leaves, often coloured with streaky blue."

It will be seen that only Mr. Bemrose went deeply into the matter.

L'envoi.—I have now copied down enough hints to send the collector off to his cabinets, to detect any "Longton Hall" which may be there masquerading as Chelsea or Worcester or Bow.

BRISTOL CHINA CHARACTERISTICS

How know a piece of Bristol-made old porcelain? It is "true" porcelain, it is "hard"; and it was made between the years 1769 and 1782. It was "always a true, felspathic porcelain, made from the china-clay and china-stone of Cornwall. It is therefore harder and whiter than any other English porcelains." There

is "a pronounced imitation of the Meissen styles, both in form and decoration. Like the Plymouth porcelain, the pieces are frequently marked with spiral ridges or unevennesses, due to the thrower's imperfect skill; and the cold, harsh, glittering glaze frequently exhibits inequalities of surface and minute pittings." So says Mr. William Burton, F.C.S.

Further Hints.—"The fractured surface may be described as subconchoidal and somewhat flaky, with a greasy to vitreous lustre. Especially on the larger vases may often be seen, when viewed in a favourable light, certain spiral ridges, the result of the unequal pressure of the 'thrower's' hand." So says Mr. E. Dillon, M.A. "The old-fashioned red Turk's-cap lily is one of the distinguishing features" (of the painting), says Mr. F. R. Ellis, M.A., and refers to "another style of decoration much employed at Bristol, wreaths of green leaves entwined with festoons in gold. Bristol porcelain may be known by several characteristic marks; one is that the glaze is often pinholed or bubbled, expressions used to signify the tiny holes as if made by the prick of a pin in the surface." It is "often out of the proper shape, and disfigured by fire-flaws, and other imperfections."

"The Bristol ware is exceedingly hard and durable; it is milk-white, with a cold, glittering glaze, and is frequently marked with the wreathing"—the spiral ridges. "It would seem that transfer-printing was tried, but the rarity of examples and the poor quality of such as exist are proof that it was not a success in

the true porcelain." So says the Guide to the English pottery and porcelain at the British Museum.

From Professor Church.—Let us listen to the *doyen* of writers on porcelain, from whom so many writers copy without acknowledging the debt. "Not only do many specimens follow the forms and decorations of Dresden porcelain, but they frequently bear the characteristic Dresden mark, the crossed swords, in under-glaze. . . . The colour of the glaze is very faint on the finest specimens, but on the commoner pieces it has a pale bluish tint. It is thin, slightly vesicular or 'bubbled,' and while smooth it is not very shiny, having, indeed, a rich 'creamy' surface. . . . It must not be assumed that all Bristol porcelain was identical in composition."

Again, and further.

"Bristol china is particularly scarce, especially the marked specimens of the finest quality," says Mr. J. F. Blacker. "On comparing a specimen of 'Dresden' or 'Oriental' with 'Bristol,' it will be observed that whilst in the two former the body and the glaze are distinct creations, the Bristol glaze has so close an affinity for the porcelain body that it entered into combination with it, and did not cover it with an independent glassy surface. This was due, no doubt, to raw glazing; that is, the raw ware was dipped into the glaze, and then fixed at one operation. . . . First note the decoration. The favourite form was green festoons of leaves, sometimes surrounding classical heads, or medallions in which a vase is often minutely



SIAM "BRISTOL." THE FLOWERS, FESTOONS, NAME, DATE, ETC., "FAKED" UPON COMMON GREY CHINESE WARE OF MODERN MAKE.

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painted. Another form was the group of flowers. Next note the gold on the rims ; this was nearly always scalloped. The paste has a series of spiral ridges, wreathings or whorls which can be detected when wheel-turned pieces are held up sideways to the light. Instead of the paste lying quite flat, these twisting whorls stand out so clearly as to be easily seen. The very high temperature necessary to fire this hard paste made sundry defects—twists, bends, fire-flaws—in the early pieces especially, and also produced occasional accidental additions to the glaze, owing to bits of the seggar"—the surrounding shield—"breaking off during the burning process. The glaze of Bristol china is full of minute holes visible under a magnifying glass ; the glaze combined with the paste, and numberless bubbles formed and burst, leaving tiny marks."

Examining Two Pieces.—I take down from my wall a frame which encloses a Bristol biscuit flower-plaque. I look at the back of it, there are two large fire-cracks. Now from a cabinet I take a Bristol basin and two tea-cups. They are edged with chocolate colour, in the Dresden style, but the mark is *Br*, *not* the Dresden cross-swords, nor the *X*. The green festoons hang by loops, apparently, from the chocolate-hued rim. The festoons are entirely green, even the rose in them. It is not a Billingsley rose—it is a bulbous rose, of the Lowestoft type. There are other (green) flowers, the passion-flower, the bindweed, and the fruit of the deadly nightshade. The shape of the porcelain is much out of the true. The inside of the

basin is brown-spotted, with specks and fragments of fire-clay fallen on the glaze. Holding it *between my eye and the light*, I perceive the wreathings; they are lines or ridges which begin at the bottom of the basin and go diagonally round and round it to its brim, at an angle of about thirty-five degrees. I can *feel* them. The shape of the ring-rim at the base resembles "Worcester." The handles of the tea-cups are not at all simple in shape, but Dresden-like. The glaze is a cold, bluish white; there are pits, specks, and lumps (all very small, of course) almost all over it. By all these traces may Bristol porcelain be known.

THAT BIT OF OLD PORCELAIN: A STUDY

It was a bit of heavy, bluish-white, black-specked china which stood in a corner of the window of the little curiosity shop. I took it up, and the first thing that struck me about it was its weightiness, considering its size; the next thing I noticed was that it was hardly translucent. The heaviness and the lack of translucency were evidently due to the thickness of the material; the paste was thick, almost clumsily thick, and the glaze had been thickly applied. The result was, so far as translucency is concerned, that even when I held the article up close to the bulb of an electric lamp I could see only a dim, brownish-yellow light faintly penetrating that part of the base which neighbored the rim of it, so that the porcelain was practically not translucent at all; a novice might

well have thought it a bit of earthenware, for earthenware is, of course, opaque.

The Feel of the Glaze.—But it *felt* like porcelain. The “feel” of porcelain is unmistakable, particularly when it is eighteenth-century English and “soft.” Blindfold I should have known it as being china; being “soft” paste with a “soft” glaze over it, the glazed surface of it had an exquisite, velvety feel, yet without the slight roughness of velvet, of course; I cannot call it a silky feeling, neither might one call it satiny; velvety is the best word to use. The glazed surface had almost the soft and resilient feel of velvet when you press it with the ball of your thumb; the ball of the thumb, by the way, is the best part of the hand to use when judging china by the feel.

Understand that up to now I am speaking of the glazed parts of the surface only; the next thing was to test any unglazed part of the surface by the feel. I turned the article over. It was a butter-dish, I ought to have mentioned: a lidless butter-dish, that never had a lid; oval in shape, with sides the containing vertical lines of which make right angles with the base at any point of the oval. I turned it over, I say, and looked at the base.

The Feel of the Paste.—When I looked at the base I noticed the absence of any trade-mark; except for two or three little specks of blue pigment under the glaze of the base, marks of any kind or size were entirely missing; marks were not going to help me to determine to which of the old English makes of china

the butter-dish belonged. Most of the "base" was sunk, being surrounded by a ring-rim, or *real* base, upon which the butter-dish stood. This rim was a quarter of an inch wide, and the twelfth of an inch higher (lower when standing) than the sunken portion of the whole base. This rim had been ground fairly flat, to enable the butter-dish to rest on a table level; and as the grinding had removed the glaze from the rim, by feeling the rim I could get at the feel of the paste, for the baked paste was exposed there. I noticed, however, that at the edge of this ground rim the edge of the glaze felt lumpy, as though while still liquid it had dripped down in gummy tears, so to speak. And that suggested to me that I was holding a bit of "Bow."

The feel of the paste of the rim, to the ball of the thumb, was rather soapy, something like the feel of the surface of a bit of toilet soap, the toilet soap being not wet, nor yet cracking with dryness. So that to the ball of the thumb the rim-paste had all the feel of true "soft" English china, and might be "Worcester," or "Derby," or "Lowestoft," so far as that is concerned. Indeed, the problem was to discover to which of the three makes, Bow, Worcester, or Lowestoft, the butter-dish belonged; for it was blue-and-white, very early, hand-painted, and embossed. Now Worcester paste was soaplike but very soft; so was Lowestoft paste. I knew that Bow paste was usually harder than either. So I scratched the edge of my thumb-nail along the rim, the nail being vertical to the rim as I did so. "Bow!" I said to

myself, for this scratching told me that the paste was rather hard—not hard in the sense and degree that Dresden or Bristol or New Hall or modern chinæ are hard; but harder than the soft paste of “Lowestoft” or “Worcester.”

The Look of the Glaze.—By the look of the glaze I could tell that it was “soft,” because (1) I could see the under-glaze decoration *through* it, as one sees a miniature through its glass, and because (2) when I “flashed” it, or let light shine across it, the decorated parts were as shiny as the rest. In one or two places the glaze had become discoloured to a pale brown, but did not show the fine streaky veining in brown which is characteristic of some old “Derby”; besides, the piece, as a whole, was too heavy and clumsy and ill-painted to be “Derby,” for the Derby china works began operations when porcelain-making in England had quite become an advanced art. I noticed that the blue of the decoration had “run” a little under the glaze, and that tiny black specks, due (as Mr. Blacker writes) “to smoke or the incomplete combustion of the wood which was used for firing,” were everywhere visible under a lens, and I knew that this “running” and spottiness were signs of “Bow.” A certain pitting in the glaze of the sunk base suggested “Worcester,” but the glaze there came quite up to the ring-rim, which the glaze on “Worcester” seldom does.

The Decoration.—The piece was painted by hand, not *printed* in blue; ergo, it is an early piece; the blue

was deep and rich, but not blackish like the Worcester blue. The painting of the little vignettes in the Chinese style was too poor to be "Worcester," and so poor that it might well have been done at Lowestoft. The embossing also, in a floral pattern, might either be "Lowestoft" or "Worcester." The blue flower on a leafy sprig, inside the butter-dish, might either be "Worcester" or "Bow." But one of the vignettes had been strengthened in colour by strokes of blue being applied *over* the glaze, after the second firing, and the pigment of these strokes had not sunk in, as in "Worcester" or "Lowestoft" it would do; in fact, it stood out in slight relief, as decoration on "hard" porcelain does, and that, together with the feel of the paste, told me that the stuff was harder than "Lowestoft" or "Worcester."

The Decision.—All this examination had taken up a tithe of the time it has taken you to read this analysis. I turned to the dealer, to whom I had not spoken so far.

"What do *you* call this?" I asked.

"It's 'Old Worcester,' sir," said he. "Doctor Wall period Worcester, unmarked."

"No," said I. "I don't think so. I'm pretty sure it is 'Bow.'"

"GILTY WARE"

Too little is written about metallic lustre-ware, a kind of pottery typically English, and hardly attempted abroad; the only foreign make of the kind I know con-

sists of putty-coloured paste, ornamented with platinum-lustred designs in relief and is French, I understand, though you seldom see it even in France. "Gilty ware" is the Irish name for lustred pottery, but I do not know that any was ever made in Ireland. I fancy that the affiliation usually assumed between lustreware and Gubbio majolica is historically incorrect, though perhaps at Brislington they copied some of the designs on Hispano-Moresque lustrous pottery; the probability is that "silver lustre" came into being here spontaneously, as a showy, cheap substitute for Georgian silver and Sheffield plate.

There could hardly be a more interesting ceramic subject for research, and yet no book has ever been written on it. Sir Arthur Church, Mr. Sachs, Mr. Lawlor, the brothers Rhead, and Mr. Blacker have written instructive chapters or articles on the topic, but what is needed is a book by a lustre-collector who has specialised.

Nomenclature.—Even the names for the different varieties of lustre-colour are not standardised yet. I own six dinner-plates—the only examples of the size and colour I have ever seen—which would receive different names from different collectors. They are mottled over by a lustrous colour, which a milliner would call "crushed strawberry," a very good description; but while one collector would call it "purple lustre," another would call it "gold," and another "pink." How many of us, I wonder, can distinguish between "steel" and "silver" lustre. Or between

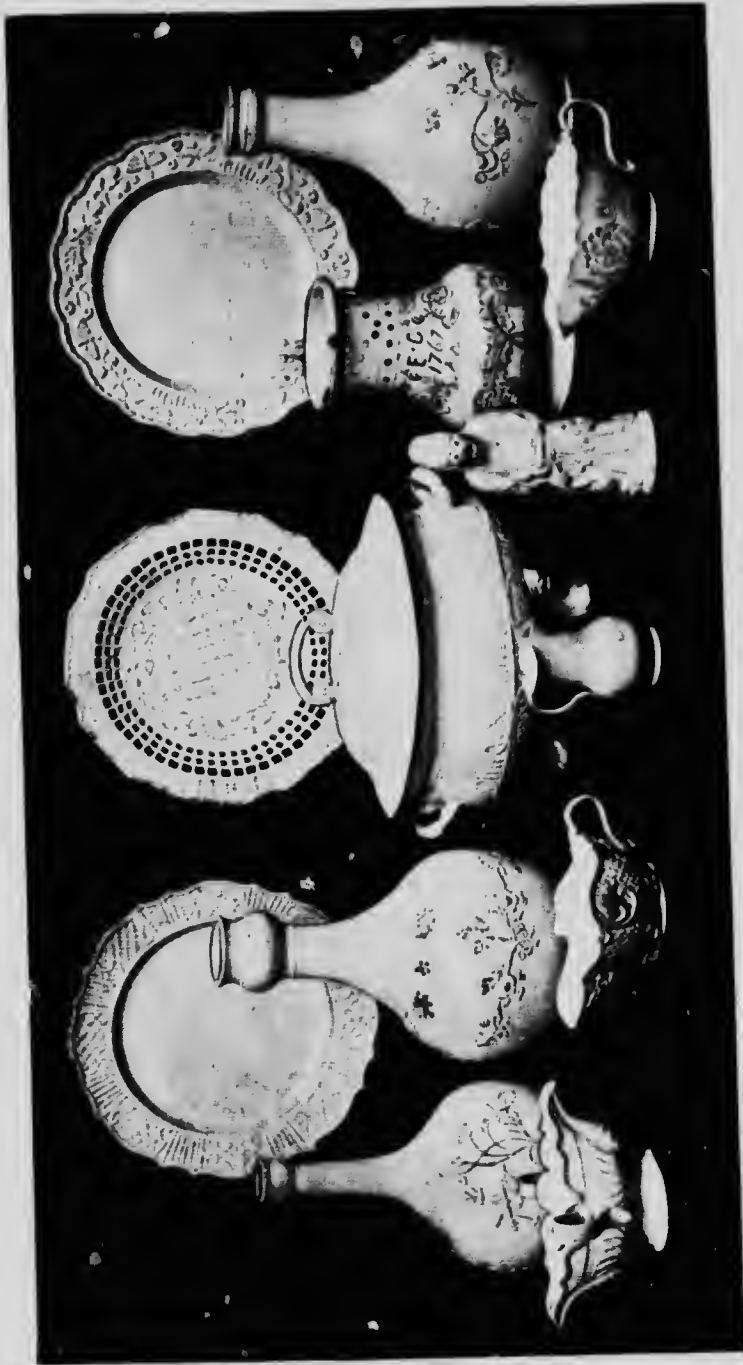
"copper" and "bronze"? Some authoritative classification of terms needs to be made.

The Connections.—Or who has studied the connections between the porcelain or earthenware produced at Swansea, say, and the lustre-ware made at the same place? What connection had Bristol porcelain with Bristol (Brislington) lustre-ware? The fine Parian figures made at Temple Backs, Bristol, about 1830, by an artist-workman called Raby, what effect did they have upon local lustre-ware? Raby removed to Staffordshire, and may have influenced lustre-ware there. Lustre ware with white reliefs on it is often seen. A valued correspondent tells me that in Bristol not long ago "in a filthy shop" he pounced upon a particularly fine, thin, small, well-modelled jug, early Bristol-Pountney copper-lustre, and chalkwreath under the lustre. This chalkwreath reminds one of the wonderful Bristol biscuit work, and unquestionably emanated from the same school, by a pupil or otherwise. The modelling, lightness, and small size of the jug also make it interesting. It carries the usual Bristol rose and rosebud in flat colours on the full lustre glaze, a "charming bit of good colour."

"Only connect" is the motto of a brilliant novel recently published. To seek out connections is a collector's most refined delight—the intellectual delight of research. If you know these wonderful Bristol porcelain flower-plaques—I found one very cheaply a few years ago—on which the most exquisite stamens, petals, and leaves stand up, tiny, distinct, and finished,

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PLAIN TINT SALT-GLAZE WARE.

and all baked by great heat out of china-clay and china-stone, you can understand my correspondent's connecting these with the "chalkwreath" under lustre that came from Pountney's Bristol pottery; and his "query, by Raby?" But if Raby worked in Staffordshire, the jug may be Staffordshire, perhaps? What collector of lustre-ware will seek these connections out?

Lustre on Porcelain.—Lustre-ware proper is pottery—earthenware—but at Swansea and in Staffordshire they used crushed-strawberry lustre to decorate porcelain. At Belleek, too, that interesting Irish pottery which is always being said to have come to an end, they used on their delicate china a most beautiful mother-of-pearl lustre. Sir Arthur Church wrote that "except by Mr. William de Morgan at Chelsea in the last quarter of the nineteenth century we do not know of any attempt having been made with success in England to obtain the *madre-perla* lustre by the use of silver," but that is in Professor Church's book on "English Earthenware," and "Belleek" is Irish and porcelain. The magnificent ware made by Mr. de Morgan—famous now as the author of "Somehow Good" and "It Never Can Happen Again"—is no longer produced; the pottery is closed, the tiles and vases, all richly lustrous, have been sold off, except for a small supply on sale in the Brompton Road; so that this kind of English lustre-ware "never can happen again."

Lustred Chalices.—In chapels, chapels-of-ease, and new poor churches, it used to be customary to have the

Communion vessels made of lustre-ware, *faute de mieux*; of silver or gold they had none. Sometimes you see examples, the double-handled wine-cups, for instance, on sale in dealers' shops. When gold or silver vessels were purchased by a richer offertory, the lustre chalices were displaced.

Chalice is not the word for a beer-mug, but even the lustred beer-mug with a handle has become rare. Yet forty years ago it could be seen on the boards outside nearly every inn in the Midlands. So quickly do customs change, and perishable vessels die.

NOTES ON CERTAIN LUSTRE-WARE

Collectors know a certain mark, which is roughly like the letter V, but more resembles the tick or v-shaped dash which accountants use. Before me are a pair of figures, of boys seated on tree-stumps. On the base of one of them the "tick," check-mark, or "V" (whatever one may call it) occurs in silver-lustre; on the base of the other appears the letter "W." The "W" was guessed to identify the ware with Wedgwood; though I hardly know why, for marked old "Wedgwood" is always marked as such. We may at any rate assume that a pair of figures, one marked with the "tick" and one with "W," came from the same pottery; and if we can come across other figures, from the same mould and in the same clay and lustre, that bear the maker's full name, we may claim to have identified the potter.



FOB SEALS.



LUSTRED STAFFORDSHIRE STATUETTES AND COPY OF CHINESE ALTAR-VASE.



The Discovery.—Of the pair of figures depicted here, one is marked with the "V," I say, the other with a "W." And the "W" stands for "Wood and Caldwell." We now know that it does, because in the famous collection of lustre-ware belonging to Mr. Honey, of Cork, there were a pair of figures identical with these in all but one respect. The mark in the case at Cork is "Wood and Caldwell."

Now the "Wood" in "Wood and Caldwell" was Enoch Wood; he took Caldwell into partnership in the year 1790. Figures of this kind and origin are rarely met with; in the Honey collection, however, there were a pair of Grecian women, seated and reading. Figures of this class are so solid and weighty as to resemble bronze in more ways than one when, as is usually now the case, the coating of silver-lustre has evaporated from the surface of them. Under that lustre lay, at first—it is now evident nearly all over the figure—a fine dark red-brown glaze, more coppery than bronze-like in appearance; and such of the silver-lustre as is left on the surface anywhere has become dark and dull.

The Identification.—But the special point I wish to make, and to bring to the notice of collectors, is this. The "W" of lustre-ware does *not* mean Wedgwood, but "Wood," and the "V" or tick or check-mark also means "Wood." The figures that bear the mark "Wood and Caldwell," and are identical with my pair in other respects, were made after Wood took Caldwell into partnership; *my* pair were made, and the moulds

for them, by Enoch Wood; either during the period 1784 to 1790, when he was in business without a partner, or after 1818, when he bought his partner Caldwell out.

The Date Question.—Among the writers on silver lustre-ware there are two of eminent authority, Mr.



EARLY VICTORIAN COPPER COFFEE-POT.

E. T. Sachs and Mr. H. C. Lawlor, and on the question of the date at which lustre-ware began to be made in England these two authorities do not agree. Mr. Sachs considered that "there is plenty of inferential reasoning to support the theory that the ware (silver-lustre) was being made between 1780 and 1790." Mr.

Lawlor says that "to Mr. Sachs must be given the credit of being among the first, if not the first, of modern collectors to publish a descriptive and historical account of this ware," but adds that "he attributes the manufacture of the ware to an earlier period than is consistent with the unimpeachable evidence now forthcoming." Mr. Lawlor believes that "success first crowned the efforts of John Handcock, a practical

chemist employed at the works of Josiah Spode. But it was not until after this date that the ware was manufactured to any real extent," and Mr. Lawlor gives 1800 as the year in which the manufacture of silver lustre-ware began, at Spode's.

Now if the "V" and "W" on my figures *do* refer to "Wood," as I think we may decide they do, it follows that those figures were coated with silver-lustre prior to 1790, when the style of the firm became not "Wood," but "Wood and Caldwell." It is possible, of course, that the "V" and "W" refer to a date subsequent to 1818, when the style of the firm became "E. Wood and Sons." But I think the fair inference is that the "V" and the "W" refer to the period prior to 1790 rather than to such a time as 1818 to 1846, when the firm of E. Wood and Sons existed, in days when trade-marks had become valuable, were more elaborate, and were more carefully and regularly stamped or printed on wares than was formerly the practice. On the whole, therefore, it would seem that my pair of figures not only identifies the "V" mark with Wood, but supports Mr. Sachs' contention as to 1780-1790 being the earliest silver-lustre date.

WORCESTER AGAIN

My old schoolfellow's car had carried me over our native shire, which everywhere waves with the most beautiful of English trees, the elm. And on a vernal September afternoon I came into the "faithful city"

again, Worcester, the stately pilgrim-place of my boyish years. In a booth near the timbered house where Charles II slept the night before the battle, I picked up a "Toby" of rare mould and uncommon size for a pound. But that is a mere by the by.

In a collector's mind, Worcester equals porcelain; but it was Saturday afternoon, and a policeman in the Foregate was quite sure the Royal Porcelain Works would be closed. Yet I went to the works, to be quite sure of it myself.

The Showroom.—The showroom was not closed—not yet quite four o'clock—and there I could admire the most modern results of the long and persistent effort made, successfully, to keep the quality and name of Worcester porcelain to the front. When one remembers that no Royal subsidies ever aided "Worcester," as they did "Berlin" and "Dresden" and "Sèvres," the history of the works becomes one long triumph of art and business capacity such as only this country can show.

No earthenware at Worcester; always china. It is a thundering shame, therefore, that certain blue and white crockery, closely resembling blue and white old Worcester, is on the market. But you *need* not be deceived; hold the stuff up to a light, and its opacity will betray it, if nothing else.

No earthenware made at Worcester, I say; no ugliness, either; no cheap-and-nastiness in Worcester ware to this day. A steady, honourable adherence to art and quality, mere profit coming second. Zest in

the work, and craftsmanship always, and finish, delicate strength, beauty, taste, the art of true artists, and the skill of hereditary potters "to the manner born."

The Museum.—"Is it *quite* impossible to see the museum?" The immediate attendant regretted that it was. Saturday afternoon, you see—the museum had been closed at two; the curator would be gone home.

But these poor screeds of mine form a passport for me often. So that when my visiting-card passed in to superior authority, out came a daughter and grand-daughter of Worcester craftsmen, who, enthusiastic for the works, declared that *I* should see the museum, anyhow, Saturday afternoon or no.

So that presently I was studying and admiring the finest public collection of "Old Worcester" extant. The museum was begun some fifty years ago, by an enthusiast and writer on old porcelain, the late Mr. R. W. Binns. The old pattern pieces and remainders have been added to, by purchase in the curio-markets.

You will understand that it is the "Dr. Wall" pieces which most attract the eye. "Dr. Wall Worcester" was the best simulacrum of blue and white "Oriental" ever produced. I can conceive the periwigged old gentleman patriotically determining to compete with Nankin, and seeing good money in it, too. What he and his potters made is, I think, the most delightful of all old artificial porcelains. And Time has waved his wand of magic over it, so that it is better than when new. Touch it, eye it, enjoy the

finely pitted glaze of it, never quite covering the paste ; enjoy the tender paste, the creamy whiteness, the beautiful cobalt, the quaintness of the semi-Oriental designs, and the fineness of the transfer-printing, that purely English art. A china-lover's tactile and visual pleasure are at their highest with a bit of " Wall Worcester " in hand. But the museum contains the later triumphs of the works, down to this very day.

The Pedigree.—Collectors have told me that the many sorts and periods of the ware rather puzzled them ; let me try to make these clear. Dr. Wall's own period was from 1751 to 1756. His influence lasted till 1783, when Mr. Flight, the London agent, became sole proprietor. In 1793 the firm of Flight & Barr began. In 1807 it was Barr, Flight & Barr. From 1813 to 1840 it was Flight, Barr & Barr.

But what about " Chamberlain Worcester " ? Well, Robert Chamberlain set up for himself in 1786, and this rival firm lasted till 1840 separately. In that year they took over the old firm and works as well. In 1850 a Kerr came into the business. In 1852 the style of the firm became " Kerr & Binns." In 1862 the Royal Worcester Porcelain Company took over the concern.

But what about " Grainger Worcester " ? Less important ; but Thomas Grainger left Chamberlain's employ and set up for himself in 1801. In 1889 the Grainger concern was acquired by the present company.

" Worcester," for collecting purposes, embraces porcelain made under Wall, the Flights, the Barrs, the Chamberlains, the Graingers, and the Kerrs.



OLD BLUE AND WHITE "WORCESTER."



LUSTRE-WARE.



ELABORATE BROWN WARE.



UNMARKED "OLD WORCESTER" CHINA

To be able to recognise unmarked "Old Worcester" china is essential, if one is to pick up "Old Worcester" china cheaply nowadays. The "Dr. Wall period" extended from 1751 to 1783, though Dr. Wall himself died in 1776; the letter W, the open or filled-in crescent, and the "square mark" or imitation Chinese seal-mark, are the principal marks of the "Dr. Wall period." But how shall one know Worcester porcelain made at that period when it is markless?

Prices of Finds.—If a collector *does* know unmarked "Old Worcester" when he sees and touches it, he can buy it wonderfully cheaply now and again. The largest article in the page illustration is a Worcester cider-mug or a christening-mug, decorated with gold lines and a fine cursive letter L in gold; it was picked up for two shillings. To the left of it is a dainty blue-and-white cream-jug that was picked up for sixpence. At the extreme right is a cup which, with its saucer (both in perfect condition), was bought for half-a-crown. The other piece is a blue-printed cream-jug, which cost five shillings. Had these pieces been marked, the small dealers and little brokers from whom they were bought would have put high prices on them, for no marks are so well known among small dealers and little brokers as the Worcester W and the crescent. The collector, however, knows, and the principal dealers and connoisseurs at the auction of his collection will know, that unmarked "Worcester" is "Worcester" all the same.

And the appreciating value of any "Old Worcester" is now so evident that to purchase it cheaply is a capital investment indeed.

The Signs of Unmarked "Worcester."—You may know this fine old ware as it waits for the knowing eye, anonymous on a dark shelf or amidst a heterogeneous heap of old crockery, by the look and the feel of it, the bases of it, the handles of it, the upper rim of it, the glaze of the base inside the rim, the pitting under the glaze, and the blue of the enamel painting or printing. Let us consider these indices one by one.

The Look and Feel of It.—It *looks* handy and workmanlike; it looks milk-white, most of it, though some of it is rather creamily white; it often looks discoloured—brown-spotted, brown-smeared—inside the ring at the base, or upon the rim of the base, where no glaze was brushed on, or where the base (and consequently the glaze) was ground away to make the article stand quite flatly. It *feels* rich and opulent, a little fulsome and fleshy, so to speak; it feels soft, as if you could squeeze it almost; it does not feel very cold; it feels smooth everywhere; it feels pretty thick, but it does not feel very heavy. And it feels soapy, it feels like soap-stone, it feels like wax-candle a little.

The Bases of It.—Look at the three bases shown in the illustration. "Old Worcester" never had a quite flat base—a plane base, so to speak. Always there is an outer rim, always there is a rim-ring, broad or narrow, in which the article stands; always there

is a sunk inner space, usually circular of course, inside the ring-rim—a space of the base which is *not* base, because it does not touch the table on which the article stands. The rim-rings are cardinal points to study. The mug has a broad, flat rim-ring, you notice; so had the sauce-boats, mustard-pots, butter-dishes, and other pieces of which the containing lines formed something like a right angle at the base; the older the piece of this particular kind the broader the rim; in some pieces the rim is over half-an-inch wide. Under tea-pots, basins, cups, saucers, and the smaller pieces generally, the rim-ring, if cut in section, would show the shape of a blunt-edged wedge—a wedge of which the edge had been ground flat enough for standing purposes; you see two examples of that in the right-hand bases in the picture.

The Handles of It.—You see two handles in the picture, at the extreme left and at the extreme right. The handles are slim, rounded *inside* and flattish *outside*, and the outer surface is double; a depression runs right along it, like a vale between two hillocks—“fluted” is another term for it. The handles are simple in shape, and little ornamented, as a rule. Often, however, the handle is quite round and plain, not showing any depression at all. Occasionally the sunken or “fluted” part is at each *edge* of the handle, not in its outer curve. Bold projection and a certain sweep of the curve are also characteristic.

The Upper Rim of It.—In most “Old Worcester” cups and mugs an outward curving upper rim or edge

is manifest. Run the ball of the thumb upward from the base outside, and you will detect this feature; draw the finger up *inside*, and you will feel the corresponding curve. This feature was part of that exquisite adaptation to its uses which was the rule in "Old Worcester"; the outer and inner curves at the upper rim fit the under and upper lips of the drinking mouth.

The Glaze on the Base inside the Rim.—"Old Worcester" china was not dipped into glaze; the glaze was put on with a brush. Either the amount put on the base was insufficient, or the firing affected it, for hardly ever does the glaze at the base come quite up to the inner edge of the basal ring-rim.

The Pitting under the Glaze.—If you "flash" "Old Worcester," so that light will shine on its glaze, you can see a certain minute pitting—almost a diapering—which the firing caused in the paste; it somewhat resembles the pin-holes in Oriental china.

The Blue of It.—The blue pigment used for painting or printing at the old Worcester china works differed from all others in being slightly a blackish blue, not black enough to destroy the cobalt tint, but black enough to tinge it a little, causing it somewhat to remind one of the water-colour pigment called Prussian blue.

Means of Detection.—Note that these indices also serve to detect imitation blue and white "Worcester." Collectors should beware of a certain fine blue and white ware which has recently been put on the market.

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In form, colour, and blue decoration it closely resembles "Doctor Wall" blue and white, and not all of it is marked with a big B and G monogram underneath. It is very misleading to a beginner. But, held up to the light, it is seen to be not translucent—it is earthenware, not china. "Old Worcester" was porcelain always. "Old Caughley" was sometimes earthenware, and there is need to warn the reader on that score, too.

OLD CUPIDS

Here are two groups of rare old boys, chosen out of a collection of forty. To talk of old Cupids seems a contradiction in terms, for Cupid, surely, is always a boy, eternally young. Yet not one in these pictures is less than eighty years old, and some of them are more than a hundred and fifty.

Cupids from Chelsea and Bow.—I rather think this kind of boy originated at Chelsea; you hardly find him indigenous at Dresden or Sèvres. "Cupids for desarts" they were called in the catalogues of early Chelsea auction sales, and also "large boys" and "small boys." "Desarts" meant *dessert-services*, and when the cloth was drawn these dainty little lads were marshalled in fours upon the gleaming mahogany, Joseph and Tummas setting them gently down to guard the Chelsea fruit baskets in the centre. You note that most of them hold baskets themselves, though the centre Cupid, pure Chelsea and finest of them all, holds a nest of birds instead, and the Bow

boy at one end holds a dog in his arms. Flowers blossom between their feet, and spring up behind their heels in miniature *bocages*. The Cupid costume consists of a wreath of blossoms and a sash, but the two "small boys," you notice, do not wear even that. Yet they all have idyllic garlands on their heads.

You may know a Bow Cupid when you meet him by his angularity, in addition to the well-known usual signs of "Bow." The modelling at Bow was defective; the limbs are ungainly, the funny-bones are too much in evidence, the arms are awkward and too long. Notice also that the Bow boys hold their baskets at the sides; the Chelsea boys put one hand under the basket. You can tell the Chelsea boys also by the translucency and brilliancy of their glaze, the roseate tint of the flesh colour, and their dove-coloured hair. The Bow boys are dark-haired, or red-haired, some of them. Very seldom do you find a Chelsea Cupid marked, and only one of the Bow boys shows the red anchor and dagger. But they are all "soft" china, of course, and the green of the leaves and the red-pink of the blossoms are characteristic of "Chelsea" and "Bow."

Derby and Chelsea-Derby.—The second and fifth boys, counting from the left, in picture number one, are Chelsea-Derby; the third and fourth are Derby. With Derby and Chelsea-Derby Cupids you expect to find a numeral incised in the base, at the bottom of the pedestal (on the rim of the pedestal, I mean), just where the pedestal touches what it stands on; the



CUPIDS IN PORCELAIN.



numeral, a "5" or a "27" or so, is in clumsy figures, hand-scratched. (Cupid the wig-maker (the first in this picture) and Cupid the barrister (the last) are old "Berlin," finely modelled and coloured; in the latter the W for "Wegeley" shows in blue just above the edge of the base. The remaining Cupid, all milk-white, is "Bow.") The central boy has a necklace of gilding, and his complexion shows the veiny brown discoloration so characteristic of "Derby." The white boy with the dog at the foot of the tree is "Derby biscuit"; to feel the base of that figure is to know the perfection of "soft" porcelain, exquisitely smooth, saponaceous, gentle, and yet firm; this particular example of the figure is quite perfect, and makes his owner proud; because Sir A. W. Franks thought an imperfect one, with the dog all broken away, quite good enough to rank in the central showcase of the English china room at the British Museum. He cost two pounds, however; he bears a workman's mark incised, that is like an X inside a square. Chelsea-Derby Cupids are usually high-coloured, the hair of Venetian red, and the greenery and flowers correspondingly brilliant. (The red of Cupid the barrister's muff is deeply crimson.)

Earthenware Cupids.—Whatever Chelsea, Bow, or Derby sent forth in porcelain, Staffordshire, or other parts of England where there were humbler potteries, imitated in earthenware. If you look at the other picture you will see at its extremities two Cupids of potware that are imitative of Chelsea. I have seen Cupids like them which are marked "Cambrian

Pottery," but I am not at all sure that some of their species are not "Leeds," for they show the blue glaze of the Leeds white-ware. Similarly, the very elaborate young person on a square pedestal may be "Leeds"; the characteristic chocolate-coloured band is seen across the pedestal, and he evidently belongs to the family of the two I have just mentioned; moreover, I bought him in Belgium, where so much "Leeds" was sent. How absurdly and delightfully these figures caricature the china Cupids—unintentionally caricature them, while aiming to copy them—must be seen in the real and the large to be fully understood.

The second from the left Cupid is Japanese, and earthenware. The Cupid on the dolphin's back is a flagrant imitation of a Crown Derby one, to be seen in the Derby Art Gallery. It was probably made by Ralph Wood, for the shell it holds consists of Wood's porphyritic paste, and the base in shape and colour resembles Wood's work. The dressed Cupid with the shepherd's crook and the dog is one of Walton's, for "Walton" is embossed at the back, and Walton's peculiar worm-like, or caterpillar-like, frontal ornament can be seen on the pedestal, which is of the true Walton green.

Prices and Counterfeits.—In the average dealer's shop they will ask you thirty shillings for a smallish Bow, Chelsea, Chelsea-Derby, or Derby Cupid, and for the earthenware copies of them thirty shillings a pair. The earthenware pair here pictured cost seven shillings only, however; the Walton shepherd

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CUPIDS IN EARTHENWARE.



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cost only half-a-crown ; several of the Chelsea and Derby Cupids cost 3s. 6d., 5s., 6s., or 7s. each only. For the Chelsea "large boy" fifteen shillings were given. The marked Bow Cupid cost a guinea. At *any* price you can hardly expect to buy an old Cupid that is perfect, for the flowers and leaves of the *bocages* and baskets are usually chipped away in parts. The Bow boy with the dog in number one, and two Chelsea-Derby Cupids cost twenty-seven shillings in one lot, by auction at Sotheby's. But I saw a friend of mine pick up two Chelsea-Derby Cupids for five shillings the pair, and there are still a few such bargains to be had now and then.

Chelsea Cupids are much counterfeited ; you will hardly look in a pawnbroker's shop-window without perceiving a brace of such forgeries, offered at ten to fifteen shillings the pair. But they are "hard," the colour lies on the outside and does not sink in, the green is dull and brownish, the flowers are not lustrous, and the modelling is too Frenchy and not sufficiently simple.

THE DRESDEN CHINA STYLE

"Dresden will probably long retain the designation of the cradle of Rococo Art," the guidebook informs the visitor to Dresden. "Rococo" means "the style of decoration into which that of the Louis Quinze period culminated, distinguished for a superfluity of confused and discordant detail," says a "Dictionary of Words used in Art and Archæology," and then refers the

reader to what it has to say about the Louis Quinze style, viz., "rejecting all symmetry, and introducing the elongation of the foliations of the scroll, mixed up with a species of crimped conventional coquillage or shell-work, in bizarre absurdities." I am afraid that is not too plain, but the fault is more in the books I quote than in myself; in point of fact the Rococo style is more easily seen and felt than described. Let me try to explain, by a modern comparison, the opposition of "rococo" to "classical"; the straight lines of a simple door, window, or ceiling-moulding are classical; the twisted and exaggerated lines of what is called "*l'art nouveau*" are rococo. Exaggeration and over-loading characterise the latter; simplicity, reticence, and neat adaptation to use distinguished the first.

Rococitis.—"The leading object of rococo art appears to have been to invest even the domestic life of monarchs with pomp and splendour, and to unveil to the eyes of the public the privacy of the princely boudoir and cabinet. Porcelain manufacture was particularly well adapted for giving expression to the spirit of this style, as the material was equally suitable for being moulded into elegant doll-like figures, or into flourishing and fantastic decorations." By nature the French are an artistic people; by nature the Germans are not. "Louis Quinze" was fairly good; German "rococo" was utterly unredeemed, artistically. Every kind of bad art is flourishing in Germany to-day, and compared with true art the German rococo, eighteenth

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century or modern, is what cinematographs are to pictures and what roarophones are to music. Quite naturally, therefore, when the Electors of Saxony went in for art at Dresden, the palaces and the porcelain constructed for them became "rococo," displaying a characteristic mixture of "pomposity and childishness, and absence of all feeling for purity of line." If you examine the base—I cannot call it the plinth, for "plinthos" was a Greek word which suggested simple and classical straight lines—if you look at the base or pediment of a Dresden china figure or group of figures, I say, you will find not a straight line anywhere, the curves and scrolls all ornamented, gilded or coloured, or splotched with dots and pimples, in the very type and characteristic symptoms of the rococo style.

Dresdenitis.—The Dresden china style affected all the china-making in Europe, though it influenced English china less than any other, perhaps. Now the Chinese and Japanese styles were (though conventionally, it is true) naturalistic; to recognise that well you should examine a Ming vase, and then the decorations of a piece of "armorial Lowestoft," made in the East to European orders and design; you will be able to make this comparison excellently in the Oriental China Room at the British Museum. Augustus the Strong of Saxony (A.D. 1694-1733)—the father of 352 children, by the by—had set his heart on gathering within his new Schloss at Dresden all the fine Oriental china which came to Europe: he spent £150,000 on that; in the Johanneum Museum at Dresden you

can still see the five celebrated "Dragon Vases," as they are called. These are under-glaze blue and white, decorated with dragons. "Dragoons for your dragons," said Augustus the Strong to Frederick of Prussia, and gave a regiment of dragoons in exchange for the five tall vases, in the year 1717. When, about the year 1710, Bottger at Meissen was making porcelain at the expense of Augustus, it was quite natural that he should imitate the Oriental style to some extent; I wish to make it plain that the distinctive Dresden china style did not begin to exist in china until Augustus the Strong was near the close of his reign. Bottger was a man of science, and in liking Oriental china Augustus the Strong showed a true feeling for art; upon Kandler the modeller and Augustus III (A.D. 1733-63) the blame for the Dresden china style must lie, if blame there be.

Kandleritis.—In 1731 Johann Joachim Kandler became chief modeller at Dresden, and soon after that Augustus III. began to collect pictures by Watteau and Lancret. The so-called "crinoline pieces" made at Meissen date from this time. Kandler's idea was to mould, in porcelain, figures taken from the Watteau and Lancret pictures which were so popular in that day. Kandler had begun by moulding figures of the Twelve Apostles, an equestrian statue of Augustus the Strong, boars, elephants, and other animals in a kind of cream-ware paste, and several feet high; you find plenty of this kind of production in the Johanneum at Dresden, and what it was like, on a smaller scale, you

may see at South Kensington in a set of figures intended to decorate a fountain. But Kandler soon went in for very small figures indeed, and the *figurines de Saxe*, "those little statuettes and groups of figures which we have since that time come to associate above all else with the European porcelain of the eighteenth century, and especially with that of Germany," came into existence and vogue. In lineal descent from these are the Chelsea, Bow, Bristol, and Derby figures, and also the earthenware cottage-ornament figures which Staffordshire and Leeds turned out by the hundred thousand. Nothing is more interesting, or perhaps more useful for a porcelain collector, than to understand the genealogy of the things he collects.

I do not say that all these figures in themselves were rococo, though most of their bases were. It was Kandler who imitated in porcelain the rococo scroll and shell work of the period, that already existed so lavishly in wood and silver and iron and stone. Kandler also used these flourishy and extravagantly curving lines to enclose these miniature-like paintings of exotic birds, "crinoline pieces," ruins (which Worcester imitated so well), and landscapes. He also modelled candelabra, clocks, mirror-frames, and vases, tortured into convoluted shapes; in short, under Kandler, the rococo style in porcelain achieved its uttermost. And this is the Dresden china style par excellence, it is Dresden china of this style and of this period which sells for large sums of money. It was this style and this period of "Dresden" which I most of all studied

and thought about in the Johanneum Museum of Porcelain at Dresden.

ERRORS ABOUT OLD PORCELAIN

Though the study of porcelain is quite a science, it can never become an exact science in the sense that mathematics and botany and anatomy are exact sciences; the early records are too scanty for that. Books on the subject published even twenty years ago are full of errors due to incomplete knowledge, and each china-collector will in his own "line" find some of these mistakes out for himself. Every now and then, however, an important discovery is made, which corrects a whole class of blunders. Here is one:

Celadon China.—The oldest and rarest kinds of Chinese porcelain are those which go by the generic name of celadon. The first translators from the Chinese records on porcelain quoted the name celadon as meaning "blue as the sky after rain." Yet the most usual celadon colour does not answer that description at all, and the term has puzzled English collectors, who have been fain to suppose that either they or the early Chinese were in this matter rather colour-blind. But now it appears that the first translators of Chinese records about porcelain made a textual mistake. The translation should have been "green as the sky after rain"; and certainly the most usual celadon tint much more nearly resembles the faint green of a clearing sky than a blue.

That was why the earliest piece of Chinese porcelain known in Europe was called "grene pursselyne." This is a "bowl of pale sea-green celadon, mounted in silver-gilt, preserved at New College, Oxford." It is "known as the cup of Archbishop Warham (1504-32); it is said to have been presented to the college by that prelate, and the early date is confirmed by the style of the mounting."

But the term "celadon" has been applied in error, which has gone too far to be set right again, not only to green ware, but to ware of all colorations which reside in the glaze.

These coloured "celadon" glazes, yellow, pink, claret, and many other tints never procured by European potters, are lovely in themselves. But the lover of "Oriental" goes into raptures over the modelling, and the expression, and the mythology also. Old Oriental figures, Old Buddhist gods and goddesses, mandarins, priests, and peasants, and above all the fabulous monsters called "kylins" are real treasures, seldom to be bought.

The Crusader's Plate.—Until lately, all the books on Oriental porcelain used to tell us that the earliest piece of porcelain to come to Europe was preserved in the Green Vaults at Dresden. It is a little plate "inlaid with garnets cut into facettes," and "was brought back from the East by a Crusader" (so the legend went). But "I am afraid that this must go the way of so many similar stories," writes Mr. Edward Dillon. He goes on: "I have had an opportunity of

examining this often-quoted example of early Chinese porcelain, as well as a cup similarly inlaid in the same collection, and I quite agree with Dr. Zimmerman, the curator of the museum, that the setting can hardly be earlier than the sixteenth century."

"Armorial" and "Lowestoft" China.—Far-spreading error has arisen in connection with what the dealers call "armorial Lowestoft" and "Lowestoft"; and Mr. Dillon takes "a rapid glance at a large and complicated group, decorated wholly or in part in European style." He says that "quite early, perhaps before 1700, figures and groups in plain white ware, for the most part attired in the European costume of the day, were exported from China" (some of these today, by the by, masquerade as "Plymouth" or "hard Bow"). "Later on," says Mr. Dillon, "it became the fashion for the European merchants at Canton to supply the native enamellers of that city with engravings, to be copied by them in colours on the white ware. . . . But the most frequent task given to these Canton enamellers was the reproduction of elaborate coats-of-arms upon the centre of a plate or dish, or sometimes upon a whole dinner-service. . . . This armorial china has nothing to do with Lowestoft," and "whether any hard porcelain from other sources was ever painted at Lowestoft is very doubtful."

As to the so-called Lowestoft mandarin and Long Eliza porcelain, "the 'Lowestoft porcelain' of the dealers is now known to have been painted by Chinese artists at Canton." Let me go on to say that the so-

called "Lowestoft" ribbon and flower pattern, when it occurs on hard china, is almost certainly "New Hall." The porcelain made at Lowestoft was always "soft." It was badly made, and rude as a rule.

ON AN EARTHENWARE PLATE

Its diameter is $6\frac{1}{4}$ in., its rim is fluted into twenty rhomboidal divisions, ten of which are (alternately) adorned with figures of women, bat-printed in blue. Of the decoration of the centre of the plate I will speak presently. The material is earthenware. The glaze is bluish, like that of Leeds white ware. The glaze is worn at the edge of the flutings, and shows (as does the rim of the base) the brown of the clay underneath it. It is in itself quite an unimportant bread-and-butter plate, but at the back appears, impressed and glazed, the inscription "W. S. & Co.'s WEDGEWOOD." Two collectors have owned this plate before I did; they were evidently scholarly and systematic persons, for each put a label of information concerning the plate on to the back of it; one of the collectors marked it 10s. 6d., which was either what he gave for it or what he thought it worth. As for me, I bought it for 4s., and the following screed may stand for *my* label upon the plate.

The Ink Label.—One of the labels is written on in ink; the information is as follows: "Newcastle. Stockton Pottery. Made by W. Smith and Co. See 'Chaffers' Marks,' etc., p. 789. A fine specimen."

Adams. 10s. 6d." The reference to "Chaffers" is to some not very recent edition, probably, but it holds good for the edition published last but two. What the word "Adams" means in this connection I cannot tell. Does any reader know? The collector who wrote that label was more interested to own a specimen of a

particular minor pottery than in the fraud which the specimen represents.



JACKFIELD WARE TEAPOT.

The Lead - pencil Label.—The other collector wrote his remarks in lead-pencil, and they are not quite decipherable. But I make them out as follows: "Stockton Pottery. W. Smith & Co. About 1848 Messrs. Wedgwood procured an injunction against

Messrs. W. S. and others of Stockton for using this mark on pottery made to imitate their productions." This collector was more interested in the plate as a counterfeit than as anything else.

W. S. & Co.—For counterfeiters the firm of W. S. & Co. undoubtedly were. Though this particular plate was no imitation of Wedgwood ware, their other productions often were. At Ghent, upon asking for

"Wedgwood," I was offered a fine old cream-ware basket, printed with the willow-pattern in black, and marked "W. S. & Co.'s Wedgewood"; the voluble dealer was terribly indignant with me (in Flemish-French) when I told him it was a sham. There are pieces of this firm's counterfeiting, marked "Queen's, Ware" and "Queen's ware," a flat forgery of old Josiah Wedgwood's copyright in that term. No doubt the counterfeiters thought that by putting an "e" into "Wedgwood" they might escape the arm of the law, but they didn't; I fancy the action taken against them in 1848 brought their misdoings to an end.

Early in the nineteenth century a certain John Whalley, a practical potter from Staffordshire, went into partnership with William Smith, William Skinner, and George Skinner, at Stockton. In 1833 the style of the firm was "Messrs. J. Smith & Co., Stockton Pottery." A certain Henry Cowap is said to have belonged to the firm.

The Glaze.—I rather imagine that this firm counterfeited Leeds white ware also. For I find on this plate almost the identical "Leeds" blue glaze. The distinction in Leeds glazes is that the cream ware was covered with a green glaze, and the white ware with a blue glaze, though the tint of either glaze only shows when it has run into a rim or interstice very thickly. This glaze reminds me that early Wedgwood cream ware shows a Leeds-like green glaze. If W. S. & Co. *did* imitate Leeds white ware, their counterfeits can be tested in another way—by weight. The plate now

before me is heavier than any "Leeds" of the same size and substance would be.

The Centre of the Plate.—Now I come to the decoration of the centre of this remarkable little plate. It is printed in stipple and colours, with a couple of touches of blue and red added by hand. The centre of this plate might pass for a pot-lid in execution and colouring; it is "the very moral" of a pot-lid, in fact. Nobody knows what Staffordshire firms in particular made those decorated receptacles for potted meat, potted fish, and pomade which are collected to-day. There is quite a field of discovery for some collector who will take it up in pot-lids. Where were they made? Was it in Staffordshire? I do not think it was in Staffordshire only, because here is my Stockton plate with "the very moral" of a pot-lid picture on it, to indicate that probably "W. S. & Co." made pot-lids—and the pots also, of course.

Landseer and Nash.—A boyish memory of mine is two pomatum-pots with bat-printed copies in colour of Landseer's pictures of "Peace" and "War." And here, in the centre of this plate, I recognise a copy of one of Nash's Tudor exteriors; here are the towered mansion, trees, a park, and two Tudor-costumed huntsmen with dogs, copied from Nash's "Mansions of England in the Olden Times," I do not doubt, about the year 1842.

PART V

OLD ENGLISH AND IRISH GLASS-WARE

BLOWN, CUT, AND COLOURED

THE glass-ware made at Bristol, Belfast, Cork, Dublin, Londonderry, Lynn, Nailsea, Newcastle, Norwich, Waterford, and elsewhere is exceedingly interesting to collect. Roughly classified, it consists of bottles, mugs, tumblers, wine-glasses, beer-glasses, cordial-glasses, sweetmeat-holders, jugs, teapots, bowls, and epergnes, either blown or cut, or both. Ware made subsequent to the accession of Queen Victoria does not interest collectors: ware as early as Queen Anne's reign is exceedingly scarce. The range of collecting lies between the two.

Cut or Blown.—There are collectors of cut glass only, and of blown glass only. Cut glass is the less difficult to counterfeit. It is also more easily confounded with moulded glass. Blown glass is counterfeited, but not with much success.

The Test of Colour.—The collector's eye, after a little education, begins to discriminate between old and fairly modern glass by mere sight, and by colour more than by shape. Oxides and other impurities

tinged the old glass metal, sometimes with a blackish hue, sometimes (as in Waterford and other Irish glass)



CUT-GLASS EWER.

with a blue, sometimes with a milkiness, and sometimes with a pale cobalt tint. You detect this coloration best by contrast with a white tablecloth. Modern glass is whitish—not a paper or cotton-white, but a white which is the result of perfect translucency and the absence of impurities in the metal. Place an eighteenth-century wine-glass beside one made recently, against a white cloth, and your eye will perceive

the difference of colour. Once that is recognised, you will be in little future doubt as to whether a glass is old or not. In fraudulent cut glass, however, they have begun to imitate the old dark colour a little. So that colour is not the only or an infallible test.

The Test of the Scratches.

—If the piece of glass-ware you are examining was intended for use upon a table—e.g., as a tumbler, or wine-glass, decanter, or jug—and if it be old, the base



CUT-GLASS TAZZA.

of it will show marks of scratches made by moving it along the table-top, in days when tablecloths were not in common use, or when, as the dessert came in, the table-linen was removed, and the decanter began to circulate, or the wine-glass to be shifted, upon the hard mahogany. Under a lens these scratch-marks are visible in all old glasses but a few, and those are glasses that were made long ago but kept in a cupboard or butler's pantry unused, until the fashion had changed. Counterfeiters imitate the scratches, but do so carelessly, grinding the glass in such a way that all the marks run in the same direction: the genuine scratch-marks go right, left, and zig-zag. If the glass has a "folded foot," that is, the metal of the foot seems to be hemmed, so to speak, with a fold over from the circumference inward an eighth of an inch or so, the scratch-marks are very small, because the whole of the foot did not rest on the table when in use, or touch it when moving.

The Colour of the Scratches and Engraving.—Counterfeit glass scratched, and plain old glass recently decorated by engraving to increase its apparent value, afford a test in the *colour* of the marks. Wash the old scratches or engraving never so carefully (a thing which ought not to be done, by the by), they remain *dust-coloured*; but the "faked" scratches and the modern engraving-up show *grey*.

The Test of the Flaws.—Bubbles, little lumps or pimples, striations, twists, deviations from the upright, and other defects in the material or the handling may

often be found in old glass : not all of these together, but one or two of them in each piece. The older the glass the more likely to have these flaws. The translucency is not perfect, therefore, and the colour is affected.

The Test of the Feel.—In fine old cut glass the surface is satin-like. The cutting is shallow : the cuts are a little uneven, because done by hand : the edges of the cuts are palpable (as they are *not* when the glass is a moulded one), and the whole surface has a smooth, slipping, silky feel. It is a *cold* feel, too, compared to that of modern glass. The edges of the ornamentation in modern moulded glass feel dull and rounded, compared to the old edges that were cut. A good deal of old Bristol blown glass was moulded in part of the surface : it has then a rounded, wavy feel.

The Test of the Pontil-End.—At the base of a piece of old glass-ware which was blown you will find either a lump or a depression, in the centre of the base. This is where the glass stem was broken away from the pontil. If the wine-glass was afterwards "cut," the lump may have been removed by the cutter, so that a piece of cut glass may be old even if it does not show the pontil-end. In the next chapter a fuller account of the pontil-end is given.

Bristol and Nailsea Coloured Glass.—Jugs, bottles, flasks, rolling-pins, large tobacco-pipes, paper-weights, walking-sticks, rapiers, toys, and many ornamental objects were made in parti-coloured glass at Nailsea and Bristol. They may still be acquired cheaply.



FINELY CUT, DEEPLY ENGRAVED OLD
GLASS-WARE.



INTERIOR OF WINE-GLASS FOOT, SHOWING THE PONTIL-END AT THE
CENTRE, AND THE FOLDED FOOT AT THE RIM.



OLD ENGLISH AND IRISH GLASS-WARE 225

They have begun to be forged. Beware of the smaller articles, toy services, dogs, birds, and so on in coloured glass, and of bottles in black and white (agate-like) sold as "Nailsea."

THE PONTIL-END

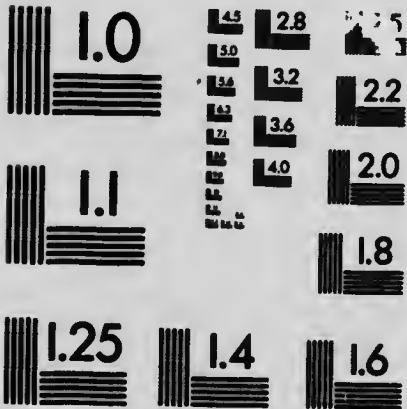
In 1833 Dr. Lardner's account of the manufacture of glass contained the following description of how the blow-pipe and pontil were used: to study it will aid a collector to apply the test of the "pontil-end." Having described how the blow-pipe ("a hollow iron rod or tube, about five feet long") is dipped into melted glass, gathers a quantity of it up, and is then blown into, and the glass heated again and thus blown into again, until the proper size and thickness for the object are given to it, the account proceeds as follows:

"At this stage another implement, called a *punt*, or *pontil*, is brought into use. This is a solid iron rod of a cylindrical form smaller and lighter than the tube used for blowing, and consequently more within the power and management of the workman. Upon one end of this rod a small portion of melted glass is collected, and in this state is applied to the end of the wine-glass. The blow-pipe is then detached by touching it, near the point of contact, with a small piece of iron wetted with cold water. This occasions the glass to crack, so that by giving a smart stroke to the hollow rod it is immediately and safely separated, leaving a small hole at the point of rupture." That is



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also the way in which the pontil itself is detached. But before that happens, the pontil is used as follows :

“ The workman now receives from his attendant ”— the bricklayer’s labourer, so to speak—“ the pontil and the glass vessel attached, and after reheating it at the furnace mouth, seats himself on a sort of stool provided with arms sloping forward whereon the pontil is supported before him in a horizontal position, the glass being at the man’s right hand. Thus placed, he governs with his left hand the movements of the pontil by twirling it to and fro along the arms of the stool : and taking in his right hand an iron instrument called a procello, the blades of which are connected together by an elastic bow, in the manner of a pair of sugar-tongs, he enlarges or contracts the vessel in different places until it assumes the requisite form.”

The book gives a wood-cut of this part of the proceedings, which shows the workman using the “ sugar-tongs ” to shape out the bowl of the glass : and the pontil attached to the under-side of the foot of the glass. It also shows a big pair of shears : and the account explains that “ any superabundance of material is cut away by the scissors while the glass is red-hot.” So that in the manufacture of a blown wine-glass these were the stages :

1. Blowing a hollow oval of glass.
2. Drawing one end of this oval into the stem.
3. Welding on the foot.
4. Attaching the pontil to the stem through the foot.

5. Cutting the upper end of the oval off to make the rough shape of the bowl.

6. Finishing the shape of the bowl by use of the procello or "shears."

7. Breaking away the pontil.

The "pontil-end" which collectors look for is not always "a small hole at the point of rupture," as the account quoted from describes it. More often it is a nodule, or convex lump. But in either case it shows the abruptness of the rupture. In the oldest glasses the "small hole" is seen, and often around its edges are flakes of something which rather resembles mica. But the usual pontil-end is a lump, standing out from the end of the stem in the middle of the foot; it has fractured edges. The rougher the pontil-end the older the glass, as a rule.

OLD DRINKING-GLASSES ON STEMS

Glasses made in the reigns of William and Mary were heavy and rather clumsy, and the stems were "baluster" shape; that is, they had lumps or knobs in them, like the shape of old-fashioned balusters in terrace-railings of stone, or in stair-case balustrades.

The Lumpy Stem.—In five and six-bottle days this lumpy stem was a convenience to the trembling hand of the drunken or half-drunken guest at table, or visitor at an inn. The glass did not slip out of his hand so easily.

The Broad Foot.—For a similar reason, the old drinking-glasses on feet and stems were always made

with a foot that was larger in circumference than the circumference of the mouth of the glass: an unsteady hand, setting the glass down on the table, was not so likely to cause it to rock over.

The Stem and Foot Test.—Not till the reign of Victoria approached, when even three-bottle men were



CUT-GLASS, *circa* 1830.

becoming scarce, did the stems and feet become reduced. After about the year 1820 the stems grew thinner, and without lumps in them, and the feet smaller. A small foot and a thin stem are therefore signs of relative modernity. Counterfeit "old" glasses usually err in these two particulars, and may thus be detected. Imitated pontil-ends look too fresh and white-coloured.

The Plain Round Stem.—Drinking-glasses of this sort—they were used for wine, beer, strong ale, or cordial waters—next after the baluster-stem developed the plain round stem. They are called "drawn glasses" because the bowl and the stem were all in one, drawn out of the same lump of molten metal.

The Outside Spiral.—The earliest effort to decorate these plain round stems seems to have resulted in the outside spiral: the stem is rough with ridges. Glasses like these are exceedingly rare, but I own a couple that cost me only half a crown each. The bowls of such glasses are usually bell-shaped, and the metal is full

of flaws: the spiral is badly done, too. Perhaps these are as early as the baluster stems.

The "Tear" in the Stem.—The plain round stems, and the baluster stems also, sometimes contain a blob or "tear," which is quite visible. When fractured, this blob or tear is hollow: it came originally from a flaw, air remaining inside the metal. This accident, however, was developed into an ornament: the "tears" became long, varied with the shape and size of the baluster, and ran down all the interior of the stem. As a rule, the shape of them is the opposite to the shape of a tear proper: that is, the "tear" is bigger at the top than at the bottom of it. It has been written by authors of books on old glass that this is invariably so. But I possess one baluster-stemmed glass in which the tear is smaller above than below.

The Inside Spiral.—The ingenuity of the English and Irish glass-makers—the best in quality and workmanship—developed several tears or blobs of air inside a baluster or round stem, or at the bottom of the bowl. The next development was to twist these into threads and into what are called "air spirals"—woven most elaborately and beautifully one within another *inside* the stem. In some cases the makers almost seem to have mixed quicksilver with the glass metal, and then they produced inside spirals so beautifully bright that they are called "silver spirals."

The Opaque or Coloured Spiral.—The glass-makers next developed the opaque or cotton-white spiral inside the stem. Bristol had learned how to make white and

coloured glass by now, and pipes of white glass were placed inside the stem cylinder of plain glass, in a certain order. Then the whole being heated, and a twist given to the whole, the beautiful stems which contain elaborate spiral upon spiral of white cotton-like threads and Greek-key tapes could be made. Sometimes red and white spirals were intertwined: sometimes blue and white.

The Test of the White.—Glasses like these were made in Holland at the same period, and old Dutch glasses are often sold as English. But they are inferior in workmanship and colour: the white in the English glasses is a pure, bright, cotton-white: in the Dutch glasses it is a greyish, dull hue.

"Faked" Spiral Glasses.—Modern imitations of these spiral stems, whether air twists or white ones, fail to reproduce the full and elaborate twists of the old ones. The counterfeits show thin, badly twisted, fragmentary spirals—poor, feeble, cheap-looking things which ought not to deceive anybody. If the forged twist is good, it is contained in a too thick stem. Unfortunately, neither at South Kensington nor Bloomsbury do our national museums contain large, good permanent collections of these glasses to study.

THE DRINKING-GLASS FOOT

The Domed Foot.—The oldest glasses stand upon feet which rise dome-like from the table level, and contain quite a hollow, inside which a big pontil-end can protrude without touching the table. Obviously,

this was a device adopted to overcome the early difficulty of a big pontil-end. These domed feet are seldom symmetrical: there is more of the foot on one side of the stem than on another.

The Raised Foot.—Then came the foot which has a high instep, so to speak: it is flat upon the table, but it rises up, like a low round hill, to meet the stem. Modern fr. eds often fail to imitate this feature: a perfectly flat foot, flat at the top of it as well as at the bottom, is suspicious.

The Folded Foot.—To turn the glass of the foot over, inside, like a hem in needlework, was often done: this avoided risks of fracture by a heavy or trembling hand putting the glass down upon the table.

Glasses with folded feet are seldom chipped at the edge of the foot: the other kind of foot often shows a chip. If you examine an old folded foot glass, you will find that the "hem" is irregular, being "turned over" more in some parts than in others. Irregularities of this kind are signs of age.

The Forged Foot.—Counterfeit glasses err by having a foot too small as well as too flat. The real old foot was always larger than the circumference of the mouth of the bowl of the glass.

Firing-glass Feet.—There is, I believe, a Masonic practice of hammering on the table with the foot of a glass in rhythm after a "toast," somewhat in the style



GLASS WITH BIG FOOT.

of the form of applause called "Kentish fire." Cordial-glasses were made with very thick flat feet for this purpose. Cordial-glasses—the former equivalent of our liqueur-glasses—are low and small compared to the wine-glasses.

ENGRAVED DRINKING-GLASSFS

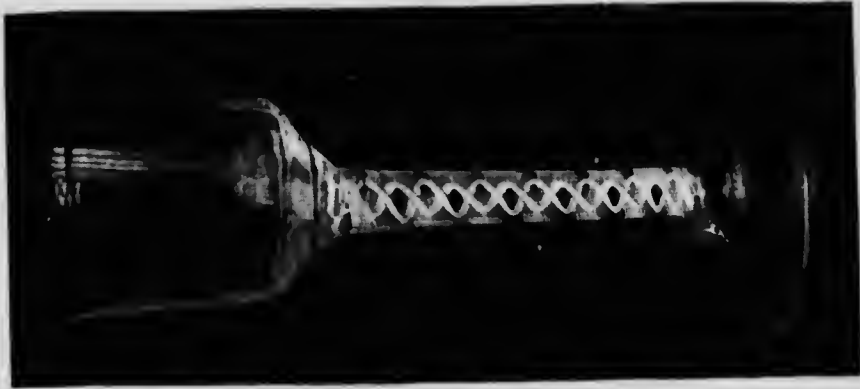
Blown glasses, when they began to be ornamented by engraving, sometimes had their pontil-ends cut away, but not often; it was when the stems began to be cut into thistle-shape ornament that this was done most.



CUT-GLASS TAZZA, LATE.

For engraved glasses you may see barley-ears (for beer glasses), sometimes apples (for cider-glasses), often grapes (for wine-glasses), sometimes a bird with an olive-branch in its beak (to signify a Peace), sometimes a butterfly, and sometimes a rose.

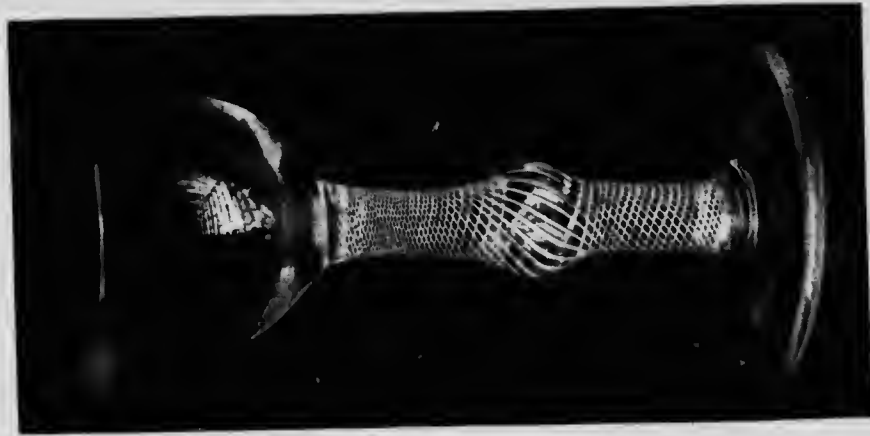
The Jacobite Rose, etc.—If the rose is heraldic, with six petals (one for each King or Queen of Stuart blood who actually reigned in England), and if you also find two buds, one large and heraldic, the other smaller, and a butterfly between them, or a bird, you possess a Jacobite glass, used for drinking the health of "The King over the Water": and it is worth some pounds. If the engraving also includes a rising star, or an oak-leaf (for Boscobel), a thistle, or the word



OPAQUE OR COTTON-WHITE SPIRAL
STEM STRAIGHT-SIDED GLASS.



JACOBITE WINE-GLASS, AIR-SPIRAL,
STEM.



OPAQUE OR COTTON-WHITE SPIRAL
BALUSTER-STEM GLASS.



"Fiat," or "Redeat," your Jacobite glass is worth many pounds. If it has the portrait of the Old or Young Pretender on it, it may be worth £100.

The Williamite Glasses, etc.—Only less valuable are the "Orange" glasses, celebrating the virtues of King William III. "Nelson" tumblers and Election glasses, engraved with mottoes and so on, are interesting to collect.

PART VI

BOOKS, PRINTS, AND AUTOGRAPHS

REPAIRING BOOKS AND PRINTS

HERE comes to me as a gift a thin book of no apparent importance whatever, yet there are forty-three pages of secrets in it which ought to be known to every collector of books or old prints. Its title bespeaks it : "The Book of Trade Secrets, Recipes, and Instructions for Renovating, Repairing, Improving, and Preserving Old Books and Prints." London : J. Haslam & Co., Ltd., 15 Broad Street Place, Liverpool Street, E.C. Price one shilling net.

That admirable type of collector who loves to potter and pore over his treasures, mending and restoring them with his own affectionate hands, will find this little book a treasure. It is unmistakably well written, everything stated in concise and lucid style. And I have obtained permission to quote.

Cleaning Prints.—"Unless a print is very dirty or laid down on paper or card, it is better let alone. Prints are discoloured by damp or iron-mould or grease or ordinary surface dirt or stains.

"A cleaning process that suits one kind of dirt will

not do for all. It is therefore necessary to examine the print carefully by holding it up in a strong light before commencing operations.

"First, rub lightly with a silk handkerchief to remove dust. Don't use breadcrumbs or indiarubber on the surface of the print, as it will roughen the surface.

"GREASE-SPOTS.—These must be removed first. Lay the print face downwards on a hard, smooth surface, such as a sheet of plate-glass. Make a smooth pad of cotton-wool or clean white blotting-paper. Dip this in benzine, and gently pat the grease-spots on the back of the print, commencing on the outside edges of the spots. Don't rub. The benzine will evaporate, carrying off the grease with it. Don't use a hot iron over prints to take out grease-spots.

"Sulphuric ether, turpentine, ammonia, or naphtha may be used instead of benzine by applying to the *back* of the print only.

"FOX-MARKS OR BROWN SPOTS are caused by damp, which is one of the greatest enemies of prints. It rots the paper and practically destroys it. If the foxing is but slight, touch the spots with spirits-of-wine. When dry, touch them again with a weak solution of oxalic acid.

"SPOTS ON ENGRAVINGS may also be removed by the application of a few drops of ammonia in a cupful of warm rain-water. Dab carefully with a sponge, and don't rub.

"SURFACE DIRT.—After removing grease, stains, etc., the general cleaning must be done, otherwise your print

will have a patchy appearance, and some portions will rot away, owing to the action of the various acids used.

“The best and safest method for ordinary dirt is to lay the print, face upwards, in a leaden trough or other dish absolutely free of grease, and just cover it with clean cold water. If stood in the sun for a couple of days, all dirt, except dyes and fast stains, will disappear. The front may now be turned over, and the back exposed to the sun rays; always remembering to keep the print just under water the whole time. Dry carefully in the shade, but not before a fire, and don't forget that clumsy handling will ruin your print.”

Bindings Preserved.—“Leather bindings soon perish and crack at the hinges if kept in a hot, dry room, especially when gas is used for lighting. A little vaseline applied with a soft cloth is an excellent remedy. Olive-oil is also used sparingly along the hinges in some libraries. Little and often should be the rule, as these lubricants or feeders would discolour fine bindings if used in larger quantities than a few drops. An oiled feather is a good tool.”

Restoring Leather Bindings.—“Antique bindings should never be destroyed unless restoration is impossible. Old leather bindings are frequently dilapidated. A few minutes spent on the necessary repairs will convert an apparently valueless volume into a respectable addition to your shelves. Grease or wax spots are removed by holding a hot iron close to the injury, or wash with benzine or ether.

“If the corners or edges of the bands are broken or

frayed, a little glue well brushed in and allowed to *almost set* before shaping will work wonders. Hammer the corners or edges into shape, and fasten the ragged leather securely into its place. Fill up all cracks and holes with glue, and wipe clean. When quite hard and dry, brush the book thoroughly all over to remove dust.

“Brown boot-polish is excellent for cleansing and restoring the gloss on old or rubbed leather bindings. Apply with a soft woollen pad and rub well in; then brush thoroughly, and finish with a dry, soft duster or a velvet pad. In a few hours no smell can be detected. Book-worms and other insects do not like boot polish.”

THE VISIONS OF MÉRYON

Within one week, to acquire Rembrandt's *Prodigal Son* and Méryon's *Morgue*, for no more than fifteen shillings each, is no slight triumph of hunting. The joy of the find, the skill of verifying, to a man of slender purse the *wealth* of possession, the delight of mounting and framing the etchings, the beauty of them on the wall—upon my word, I pity non-collectors, for what they totally miss.

The fame of Rembrandt etchings stands unequalled and secure; in the “A B C About Collecting” I have written upon the spirit and style of them. Now Méryon's etchings are coming into their glory, though it is little more than half a century since Charles Méryon did his great work. Born at Paris he was, but the son of an Englishman. He entered the Navy first, but late in life essayed art; he failed as a painter, as an etcher

he supremely succeeded ; but he lived in misery, and died insane. His most famous etching is the *Abside* ; he was glad to sell a print from that plate for a franc and a half. The other day, one of these fifteenpenny prints was sold for £600—*six hundred pounds*—the price of a Rembrandt etching of first rank.

A Hint to Book-Hunters.—Often I balance between a collector's secrecy and a writer's duty to tell what he knows. I do so a moment now. But—well, here is the hint ; look out for the second volume of the *Fine Arts Quarterly Review*, published London, 1864. I bought three volumes of that review, bound in red morocco tooled, for three half-crowns, and in the second volume I found a Méryon etching. It was the *Rue des Toiles*, the best of the series on Bourges, that delightful old city in the centre of France ; and this etching, inserted, on proper paper, was to illustrate an article by Hamerton, himself an etcher, and one of the few Englishmen who knew interior France well. In a footnote, Hamerton said : " Even if there had been much choice I should have selected this, as being the only one of an important series which escaped destruction. Before Méryon destroyed his plates he had given this one to a friend of his, from whom I procured it. This etching is, therefore, interesting, as the one thing saved from a sacrifice which lovers of art will ever lament."

It is the fact that in a fit of dejection Méryon destroyed his etched plates. That, of course, prevented additional prints being taken from them to meet the demand which has grown and grown. Méryon etchings

are therefore rare birds, and costly. The *Rue des Toiles* will cost you several guineas unless you can buy it in the book named above.

The Paris Series.—But it is the twelve “Eaux Fortes sur Paris” which made the artist’s fame. They are views *sur* Paris, not “of” Paris, you will observe, and they represent Méryon’s visions of the city and its interfusion of tragic life. No moderate sum can now buy a first or even a second “state” of one of this series. A first “state” is a print of the first edition; a second “state” is a print of the second edition after some alteration had been made in the plate; the later the “state” the less vivid and rich the print, as a rule, because the plate has “worn.” Before the twelve views of Paris were printed off in their third state, Méryon numbered them, on the plates, at the top right-hand corner, in the following order: The *Stryge*, the *Petit Pont*, the *Arche du Pont*, the *Galerie*, the *Tour*, the *Tourelle*, the *St. Etienne*, the *Pompe*, the *Pont Neuf*, the *Pont au Change*, the *Morgue*, and last, but perhaps best, the *Abside de Notre-Dame*.

Then there were also eleven minor views—among them the tragic *Rue des Mauvais Garçons* (Baudelaire’s favourite), showing the dark alley leading to a house of ill-fame.

The *Abside* has gone to £600, I have said. A fine second state *Morgue* has sold for £86; a less fine impression is on sale for £35. A third state *Morgue* may, perhaps, be got for £10, but not for long. Every “state” and every impression of Méryon’s great etchings

will rise in the market. Victor Hugo said—how well Méryon could have illustrated Hugo's "Hunchback"!—Victor Hugo said of these etchings: "They are visions!" That is the point; Méryon did not see the Paris of 1850-1854 in the light of common day. The tragic melancholy of his own life passed into his seeing. Hamerton wrote: "He is gifted with the two grand gifts—eyes keen to see and imagination mighty to transform," and, writing in 1864, while Méryon still lived, and his best work was but ten years old, Hamerton said: "I confidently predict that his name will live and endure as one of the immortal aquafortists." That prophecy has come true already.

Shams.—Small and irresponsible print-dealers will offer you "Méryons" at thirty or thirty-five shillings, but these are shams, except for the minor works. Somebody has etched new plates, in attempted facsimile; but they could not facsimile the touch of genius, and the real plates were melted up long ago.

BEARDSLEY PRINTS

I had almost written "Prints of the Perverse" as title for this chapter. "Le Pervers" is the epithet used by a French art critic, M. de Montesquiou, for the work done in art by an English boy who, born at Brighton in 1872, was to become the least English of artists, and in his six-and-twentieth year to die a famous man.

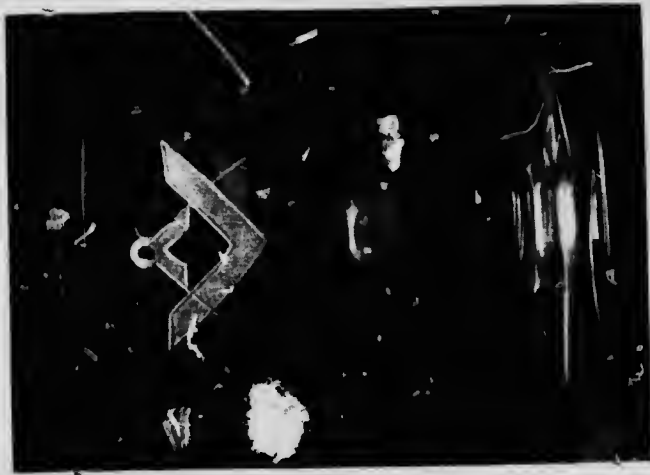
Certainly the black-and-white drawings done by Aubrey Vincent Beardsley were non-English. They

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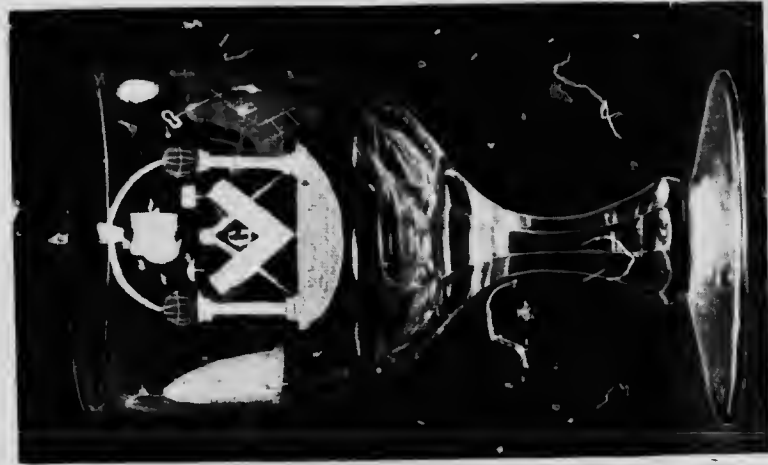
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" FIRING GLASS."

MASONIC DRINKING GLASSES.



BOOKS, PRINTS, AND AUTOGRAPHS 241

were all perverse, most of them were morbid, and some of them were prurient ; but they will long be regarded as rare and unique pages in the great portfolio of the world's art.

At Paris in 1909 an exhibition of Beardsley drawings and prints was held in the Galerie Shirley, and the same year an exhibition took place at the Baillie Gallery, Bruton Street, W.

There are many Beardsley collectors in France. "Beardsleys" are collectable for their rarity and attraction, and they will everywhere appreciate in value. So let me indicate some of the publications in which Beardsley prints may be found.

The "Savoy" and the "Yellow Book."—With some complacency I turn to my ninepenny copy of the *Savoy*, first number, published January 1896, at half a crown net. *The Savoy, an Illustrated Quarterly*, was a short-lived periodical, for illness cut Beardsley's art-editorship of it short.

I bought this first number of it for ninepence years ago. In the original boards, it contains no less than eleven Beardsley prints, and I have been careful *not* to detach and frame them ; first numbers are always worth collecting and keeping intact.



SHOE-SHAPED BOX.

Beardsley put his whole heart and art into the first number of the *Savoy*. It gave him his best opportunity as art-editor, and his interest in it was proprietary too. So he wrote and illustrated a poem in it, began a novel in it, and drew three fine page pictures; and the full-page design for the cover is one of the few landscapes which ever came from his pen. Please understand that all, or nearly all, his work was pen-work—black on white. In the contents page you see a John Bull garlanded, wings to his top-hat, wings to his top-boots, and clasped in his arms those unfamiliar tools, for John, the black-lead pencil and the quill-pen.

Beardsley had been art-editor of the *Yellow Book*, a quarterly publication, which began in 1894. Sets of the *Yellow Book* are advertised by several of the numberless second-hand booksellers who send me their catalogues; but I fancy that these are reprints. Beardsley's drawings were reproduced by the process block, I know, and "process" does not wear and blur as wood-blocks used to do; nevertheless, if I bought *Yellow Books* it must be the original issues. In the *Idler* for 1897 and 1898 there are Beardsley prints.

Other Work, and a Warning.—That bit of advice applies also to copies of "Salome" and other books by the same author, which Beardsley illustrated. I hope I am wrong in thinking that the recent reprints of Wilde's books took place without due regard to indicating the date. But I am almost certain that portfolios of the *Maupin* and *Harlot* series have been

re-issued undated. The time will come when dates of issue will be important in "Beardsleys."

Beardsley's earliest work of all appeared in the *Pall Mall Magazine* and the *Pall Mall Budget*, attracting attention about the year 1892. In 1893 Messrs. Dent chose him as illustrator of their edition of "La Morte d'Arthur," and this was the book which first brought him fame. "Salome," and the "Rape of the Lock," "Mademoiselle de Maupin," and the "Pierrot of the Minute," widened his reputation; he had just begun his work on "Volpone," when at Mentone, in 1898, he died; consumption had long marked him for her own.

I possess a copy of "Earl Lavender," a novel by that ill-fated poet, John Davidson; it was published in 1895, by Messrs. Ward and Downey, and contains a frontispiece which is a bit of Beardsley's best pure outline work. This, too, cost me ninepence. I bought it as a "remainder." For sevenpence less than that sum I bought a fine copy of a separately issued print, the portrait of a well-known actress as *Yseult*, black, white, and red.



JAPANNED SNUFF-BOX.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of Beardsley successes, and there is no scale of prices for Beardsley collectors to go by as yet. One of them will some day give us a complete catalogue, I hope. Single prints can be bought to-day at from 1s. to 5s. apiece.

Beardsley Drawings.—The desire of every collector of "Beardsleys" is to find a Beardsley drawing, the work of the hand itself; but Beardsley drawings are all but unfindable now, and they have been forged. The true drawings are larger and better than the prints. One of them, a portrait of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, hangs in a place of honour at the Berlin Museum. That, I think, is the only permanent exhibition of Beardsley's work which has so far taken place. You will search in vain for equal honour done to the artist in London. Yet he was a prodigy, a genius, a fated soul. He had studied Botticelli and Durer, Whistler and Burne-Jones; he had turned to Japanese colour-prints for suggestions, and to Greek vases for line. Out of these diverse contemplations he formed an original style, and his work is a wild and solemn phantasmagory, charming and yet alarming, a pageant of noble and graceful figures, dwarfs, monsters, and ornament, in formal Dutch gardens—all under a light that never was on sea or land.

THE LIGHT ACROSS THE CARPET

Yonder hangs—it cost half a crown at Poole ten years ago—an early water-colour drawing by Francis Nicholson of Yorkshire (1753 to 1844). His drawings

have had their day, maybe, but none the less he was the first to bring the true sunlight effect into his water-colour work, in a way which, till then, it had been thought only painting in oils could do.

Perhaps Claude and Cuyp had best painted the look of sunlight diffused, until Turner took to oils and seemed to paint *with* sunlight. De Hooze was the best at light indoors, and Rembrandt was incomparable at sunshine striking into brown gloom. Yet there was to be a certain artist, *circa* the fifties of last century, who *printing* in colour, could, for brilliant and faithful representation of sun-shafts in among diffused daylight, equal them all. I mean George Baxter (1804 to 1867), and I am bold to champion what he did against superfine or supercilious persons who say "Mid-Victorian!" or "Mechanical!" or 'Merely pretty!' or jeer, or sneer, or disdainfully pass on.

The Lit-up Carpet.—Consider one of his prints which is by no means the most renowned, I mean No. 2 in the "Gems of the Great Exhibition" series. You perceive a portion of the Belgian Exhibit; three pieces of sculpture occupy the foreground—the marble is almost as good as Tadema's—and a large Brussels carpet, gorgeous in colour, hangs at the back. An average painter—certainly an average colour-painter—would have been content to reproduce these rich bits of red and green and marble-white without much relief of light and shade. But across the undulation of that hanging carpet George Baxter made a mimic sun-shaft strike with the most dazzling and, so to speak, "life-

like" effect. I make bold to say that nowhere, in no oil-painting, water-colour, or pastel, shall you find an effect of brilliant light so vividly imitated as in this.

It is a witness to Baxter's taste, and a proof of the artist in him, that always he must let light, shafts of light, sun-bursts, vivid illuminations into the pictures he produced; unless the subject or season represented precluded. I might go on to say that nobody has so well represented the pale, almost pale Wedgwood, blue of an autumnal sky, with its feathery white clouds, as Baxter has done in a score of prints at least; but this is an article on Baxter sun-shafts. And if in many respects he shows the artistic limitations of his particular period, this at least can be said, undisputed by any who, by knowledge of Baxter prints and comparison with others, are qualified to give a verdict, that George Baxter was the most successful *printer* of light in pictures that has yet been known.

Other Effects of Light.—"Queen Victoria arriving at the House of Lords to open her first Parliament" is a fine, lit print; down from the left falls a shaft of sunshine which is magically vivid in effect. But a collector is lucky who comes across this Baxter print at all; it is very rare, it is large (26 by 21½ inches, including margin), and in its finest state sells for £60; it was published in 1841 at £5.

But even more wonderfully "life-like" and vivid is the effect of the rays of light which fall through the "storied windows" of Westminster Abbey, in the picture of "The Coronation of Queen Victoria." This,

BOOKS, PRINTS, AND AUTOGRAPHS 247

published in 1841 for £5, now fetches £60; it is large and very rare. Examine the Baxter print called "Short Change," a boy returned from an errand with change which does not satisfy his mother, and you will see a play of interior life and of domestic comedy which equal a De Hooze. Gyp might have painted the light, as Watteau or Lancret the figures, which are seen in the print called "The Reconciliation"; and so, but for lack of space, I might go on.

Are "Baxters" appreciating in cost? The best and the rarest are going up weekly; *all* clean prints on embossed mounts are a good investment. Those which are unsigned or unmounted are not yet in strong demand. Canadian and U.S. buyers are taking up "Baxters"; I hear that £500 worth went to Canada last year. The "rage" is settling down into a taste. An annual "Baxter Year Book" (published by Sampson Low) is a good guide to prices.

FLY-LEAVES AND END-PAPERS

Many people collect old bindings; a few people collect books with painted edges, or with edges that are both gilt and embossed. "End-papers" is rather a new line in collecting; there are old books with ornamental end-papers, and some fine modern specimens have been published of late. End-papers are those which, half pasted on the inside of the cover and half loose, come immediately at the beginning and close of the book proper.

Next to the front end-paper comes the fly-leaf, and

then what booksellers call the "title," or title-page. A special and increasingly popular branch of this "line" consists of books with endorsements on the end-paper, fly-leaf, or title-page.

The endorsement must be by a famous hand. Signatures of the unknown in these places depreciate the value of a book. But a famous signature or other endorsement, by a renowned or notorious person, enhances value greatly. Let us see how and why.

"Association Books."—A book which contains the signature or other autograph endorsement of some very well-known person is called an "association book"; it has been associated with some one of great repute, who was the donor or the owner. "Look, this was Cardinal Newman's copy of 'The Christian Year'—here is Keble's autograph presenting it," a friend of mine likes to say to people who peep into his Sheraton book-cases. "It would sell for perhaps twenty pounds, and it cost me sixteen shillings." There is a great demand for Association books in New York.

That the owner's should be a famous name as well as the donor's is not necessary for this purpose. Matthew Arnold sent me a copy of his "Prose Passages" in the year 1879, but, unluckily for me, forgot to endorse it. A first edition copy of his "Strayed Reveller and other Poems" was recently on sale at ninety-five shillings; the fly-leaf bears merely the words, "From the author," in the author's hand. Without those words the value would be one-third of ninety-five shillings. But an "association" may have nothing to do with the

author of a book. A fifth volume of a common old edition of Molière, rubbed calf binding, with E. C. K. on the end-paper, and "Ellis Cornelia Knight" on the title-page, would not tempt a shilling out of one's pocket in the Charing Cross Road, if that were all. You might wonder for a moment what life Ellis Cornelia Knight lived in her day—as you often do, don't you?

I do—when you come upon the signatures of the undistinguished dead? There is pathos as well as curiosity in such wonder. But look inside this particular relic, and read this memorandum, written and signed on the fly-leaf by Nelson's beautiful vulgar lady-love: "Given to me by Miss Knight, who I thought good and sincere, we succoured, cherished, and protected



"EMPIRE" STYLE COFFEE-POT.

her and her mother, Lady Knight, and brought them off from Naples to Sicily, and when Ly. K. died, my dear mother took Miss K. to our Home, Sir Wm. and self being there at the retaking of Naples with Nelson. We gave shelter to Miss K. for near 2 years, we brought her free of expense to England, what has she done in Return, ingratitude, God forgive her, for although she is clever and learned, she is dirty,

ill-bred, ungrateful, bad-mannered, false, and deceiving. But my heart takes a nobler vengeance, I forgive her.—EMMA HAMILTON.”

Which is perhaps the weakest attestation of forgiveness ever made. What an action for defamation would lie, were “Miss K.” alive, against the seller of this book! Had she made eyes at Nelson, one wonders? At any rate, that libel on the fly-leaf makes the price of the book £45.

Examine the Fly-leaves.—It daily becomes more difficult to pick up great bargains in books; of all dealers in *rariora* the second-hand bookseller is the one who knows his business most; though it is true I bought a fine Baxter book in Charing Cross Road two years ago for half a crown. But the number of book-hunters looking for association books is as yet comparatively few. Never pick up an old book without searching it for associations. You must have a memory for names, and even for initials; you must be versed in biography; you must know, for instance, that Ellen Nussey was Charlotte Brontë’s friend, her only title to importance; a Brontë book with, “Ellen Nussey” written in it, or even “E. N.,” would be a find. You must also be able to decipher the most crabbed of “fists.” Then you may successfully turn over even the most unpromising odd lot of volumes ever seen on a broker’s barrow, and soon in that part of your book-case where you keep treasures have quite a shelf of “association books.”

Comparative Values.—How slight a connection with

permanent fame can enhance a book's pecuniary value is seen in a copy of the "Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum," published in 1640, which would be worth a few shillings only if the fly-leaf was blank. But a copy of it containing the inscription, "Ex dono D. Jo. Milton, T.Y.D.D.," is priced at twenty guineas, for this copy was given by John Milton to Dr. Thomas Young, his tutor in London. Even that cannot make the book cost more than half the price of the Lady Hamilton association book, you observe.

On the other hand, Swinburne's "Tale of Balen," bearing the autograph of the late Mrs. Craigie—"John Oliver Hobbes"—has been on sale for three half-crowns. Of course, the "Tale of Balen" was one of Swinburne's failures, and the renown of "John Oliver Hobbes" is fleeting, and already almost gone. I have lately seen whole shelves of books which belonged to F. Marion Crawford, the very popular novelist, waiting for purchasers at a shilling or two.

In any case, however, for keeping, if not for selling always, books with associations are a delightful hobby. And you may stumble upon a treasure of the kind almost any day. In Launceston market-place I bought for threepence a first edition of Charles Wesley's Hymns.

OLD EMBELLISHED BOOKS

By "embellished books" I do not mean books grangerised, but books which, at the time of their publication, were adorned by illustrations or em-

bellished by headpieces, tailpieces, fine initials, and so forth. For such combinations of literature and



SNUFF-BOX.

art there must always be a steady demand. But during a particular period the said books were produced with great daintiness and finish, and in this article I am dealing with embellished books of the eighteenth century only.

Eighteenth-Century Books.—Books of this class, published in France, or in England, during the eighteenth century, form quite a bibliographical and collecting study to themselves. Some French books of this kind lie *perdu* on the shelves of the smaller old-book shops, and go unrecognised, uncatalogued, and unsold over here; yet such books are greatly sought after in Paris. I do not doubt that an instructed and energetic collector of books and other curios could acquire quite a little fortune by a few years' work at collecting French curios here and selling them in Paris, and collecting English curios in France and selling them here. And in this I do not refer to the great prizes and rarities only; I refer to the smaller treasures and the smaller prices as well.

Take the books now in question for an example. Few English people know anything of their auction value at the Hôtel Drouot, that wonderful place—a

nest of auction-rooms—which lies at the back of the Boulevard, on the flat, before the streets begin to mount towards Montmartre. The great second-hand booksellers here know the value of the great rarities, but the smaller prizes go neglected, fall into the “bundle lots,” become the property of the “small men,” who put the most arbitrary prices on them, sometimes prices much too high, but often prices much too low.

The reason for this is that a bibliography of books of the sort and period now in question has not been well diffused. Practically all that can be known is known, bibliographically, about Early English and Elizabethan books, black-letter books, first editions (of all dates) of famous books, excessively rare books, and old books almost everywhere; the various periodical publications about book-prices inform the sellers and purchasers of books to that extent, and a large and learned extent it is.

Varying Values Explained.—Again, booksellers' catalogues and records of prices at book sales, unless very carefully compiled and as carefully read, may mislead a purchaser quite easily. It is on record that a copy of the “*Suite d'Estampes, gravées par Mme. de Pompadour*” has sold for 315 francs, but that was the edition of 1782, which contained 70 plates, six added portraits of Madame de Pompadour, and Derome the binder's ticket. A copy of the 1775 edition, containing frontispieces and sixty-two plates only, is not worth anything like 315 francs; it is worth 75 francs at most.

A copy of Baskerville's edition of "Orlando Furioso" has sold at an auction for £120, but terribly disappointed would a book-hunter be who, on the strength of that, gave more than £2 for an ordinary copy. Why? How shall one learn why? The "why" in this particular case is this, that the £120 copy had a binding by the celebrated old French binder Derome; it was the binding which fetched the huge price, not the book proper. The book itself is beautiful, and not common, but not very valuable in the market, unless it be one of the copies which were sent to Paris by Baskerville, to be bound by Derome.

THE SIGN-MANUAL OF THE GREAT

Out of a bookseller's threepenny box I fished a first-edition copy of Carlyle's "Past and Present." And going through it to "collate" it, as booksellers say—to see that no letterpress pages or the title-page or fly-leaves were missing—I came upon what seemed to be a signed autograph letter by Thomas Carlyle himself. It was a brief and characteristic missive to his boot-maker.

Closer examination showed that this was a facsimile only; I suppose the bootmaker had thought it worth while to advertise in that way that he was cordwainer to the Sage of Chelsea. I hardly see why, for one may be sure that old Thomas the cynic wore very ugly boots. I more than suspect that it was he who advertised in the *Times* some fifty years ago: "Lost in the train, a carpet bag full of old boots. Ten Pounds Reward."

I could never get up the enthusiasm for his preachings which youngsters of my day showed, but not for nothing was he dubbed "the Sage."

"A.L.S.," etc.—When you see the initials "A.L.S." in a catalogue of autographs, you know that they mean "autograph letters, signed"; that is, the letters as well as the signatures are in the notoriety's hand. But there are autograph letters unsigned—"A.L."; and there are "L.S."—letters written by an amanuensis and only signed by the notoriety or great person in question. But whether the manuscript be theirs in whole or part, what the collector of autographs searches for is pieces of paper or parchment which bear the hand and sign-manual of the notorious, the famous, the great.

This particular chapter is being written at a window which closely looks out upon Falmouth Bay, and I see the multitudinous script of the waves, each writing its momentary message, obliterating another thereby, and then being instantly itself over-scrawled. The scratch of pen on paper by a famous or notorious person lasts longer than that. It may last a few years, it may last a few hundred. If it lasts a few hundred, it does so, generally, thanks to collectors. That room at the British Museum which contains cases of notable autographs is at once a justification and a monument of what the ignoramus, narrow in his interests, calls the "mania" of collecting.

Classification of Autographs.—There are dealers and booksellers who make a speciality of "A.L.S."

and "L.S." In a printed catalogue now before me, the "autograph letters, signed documents, and manuscripts" are somewhat roughly classified as follows:

1. Rulers, princes, nobles, and Court favourites.
2. Naval and military.
3. Famous statesmen, authors, divines, etc.
4. Arts and sciences.
5. Actors, musicians, etc.

With great respect for the erudition of the elderly poor scholars who, as a rule, indite booksellers' catalogues for them so learnedly, one can hardly consider that classification as ideal, do you think?

Treasures.—For treasures these bits of paper are full of human, biographical, and historical interest. And, from a pecuniary point of view, worth more than their weight in gold. Sometimes they turn up in after-years to confound the reputation of their writer;

"Whatever record leaps to light
He never can be shamed"

is not always true. In the *Musée Carnavalet*, at Paris, I came upon a signature by Robespierre, to what at Westminster we should call an "order for the Strangers' Gallery." Written in the early days of the Revolution, it was a *bon* for a public seat in the auditorium of the National Convention. Well, the significant thing is that it is signed "*de* Robespierre." The snob that the "sea-green Incorruptible," as Carlyle called him, must have been! He lived to hound to death anybody whose name contained the particle "*de*." *He* had no

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JACOBEAN SIDE-TABLE.



EARLY HEPPLEWHITE-STYLE SIDE-TABLE.

right to that aristocratic prefix ; he did not belong to the *noblesse*, whom he fawned upon as a youth and brought to the guillotine as a man. Had that bit of paper turned up against him two instead of twenty years after it was endorsed, it might have brought himself to the guillotine betimes. Such interesting sidelights can autographs cast.

Some Samples, with Prices.—

“ The Duchess continues perfectly well, as does our little Victoria, who has this day been vaccinated, and under such excellent auspices, that I trust there cannot be a doubt of her doing well.” That is from an A.L.S., by the Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, who then (August 2nd, 1819) was about two months old. The letter, 3½ octavo pages long, is priced at £2 2s. For £1 18s. one can buy an A.L.S. by the great Duke of Wellington under date December 12th, 1842, in which he says : “ I had not an idea that I was in-



PEWTER NUTCRACKERS.

debted to Sir Francis Chantrey. He never mentioned the matter to me. I do not possess a bust of myself by Sir Francis Chantrey, and I conclude that I must have given it to King George IV.”

On August 14th, 1845, in his house at Devonshire

Terrace, Charles Dickens sat writing: "Kate, George, and I come down to-morrow by the Ramsgate boat, from London Bridge, at half-past nine; trusting to our good fortune for a boat coming off from Broadstairs." To read that is to see "Boz" dropping down into a rowboat out of the Ramsgate packet, and being landed near Bleak House on the Point. The price of this letter is £2 18s.

A HOBBY FOR NEAR-SIGHTED PEOPLE

Among a collection of early Byron MSS. is a boyish poem, so bad as to deserve quoting in part, to show that great writers are made as well as born:

Adieu to sweet Mary for ever,
From her I must quickly depart;
Though the Fates us from each other sever,
Still her image will dwell in my heart.

No forger of Byron MSS. would ever dream of trying to pass off, as Byron's, verse so weak and faulty as that third line.

The most authoritative French writer on autographs thinks that all good judges of autographs are necessarily near-sighted; it takes the most excellent close eyes, he thinks, to detect a counterfeit MS. Of late, "expert" evidence on handwriting has fallen into discredit in courts of law, and one does not wonder. But *expertise* in the detection of fraudulent autographs is not quite the same thing as that. Such experts have always been few and naturally gifted, and there are the details of the paper, the colour of the ink, the

creases, the water-marks, etc., to aid them. Certain autograph frauds are famous—Chatterton's *Rowley* poems, for instance, and Macpherson's alleged translations from "Ossian." Curious to state, W. H. Ireland, the wholesale counterfeiter of Shakespeare's signature and MS., once dwelt in the building lately occupied by Sotheby's, the place where the best autograph auctions are held.

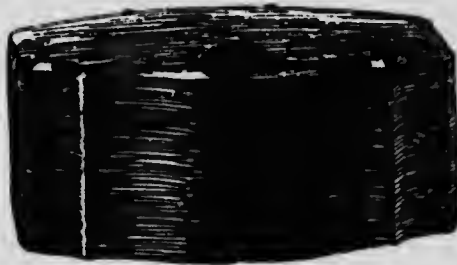
A Good New Book.—Autograph collectors are many, but good books in English on their hobby have been strangely few. Now, however, an authoritative, handy guide has been published at a handy price; I mean the "Chats on Autographs," by A. M. Broadley (Unwin, 5s. net). With this, and the "Guide to the MSS., Autographs, etc., exhibited in the Department of MSS. and in the Grenville Library of the British Museum" (published and sold at the Museum for 6d.) a beginner at autograph-collecting will find himself well equipped.

Some Quotations.—"The publishers of autograph catalogues invariably adopt the following convenient abbreviations: A.L.S. (autograph letter signed), A.L. (autograph letter unsigned), A.N.S. (autograph note signed), D.S. (document signed). In France L.A.S. indicates an autograph letter signed, and P.S. (*pièce signée*) a signed document."

I ask for a classification of autographs, which should be logical and scientific. Mr. Broadley cites the one adopted by M. Charavay. Omitting the purely French references, it is as follows: (1) Heads of Governments,

(2) Statesmen and Political Personages, (3) Warriors, (4) Men of Science and Explorers, (5) Actors and Actresses, (6) Writers, (7) Painters, Sculptors, Engravers, and Architects, (8) Women. But one cannot consider that an ideal classification. Why set "Warriors" in front of "Writers" and "Painters," etc.? Why put "Actors and Actresses" in front of Writers and Artists? And why should "Women" be a separate head?

Detecting Forgeries.—Forgers used to counterfeit autographs by the aid of lithography; now the camera is brought in, to help; but the fraudulent use of the



SNUFF-BOX. WAX

hand, with pen and ink on old paper, still goes on. Tracings, done over genuine letters and documents, are sometimes fobbed off upon the unwary. Facsimiles of letters, published

in books of biography, are taken out, folded, creased, soiled, and then sold as originals. But there are tests of the difference between printers' ink and ink from the pen. If the "manuscript" be done in lithographic ink or by the aid of photography, you may touch the letters by the tip of a tiny brush dipped in muriatic acid and water, and without causing the ink to lose colour; "in a genuine letter the writing so touched would grow faint or disappear." A mere

matter of chemistry, that, you see. "I once discovered a letter of William Pitt the elder to be a forgery by the mere accident of the sun falling on it and showing a narrow rim round each letter. In this case the basis was a photograph, touched up with black paint."

CARICATURE COLLECTING

Is anybody laying by examples of the picture-posters which enlivened the General Elections of 1910? Is anybody making a portfolio of the best things by Sir F. C. Gould and other cartoonists? Why not? Collecting interest and value will attach to them in the years to come, as well as historical meaning.

What lies before me at this moment is not exactly a caricature; it is a printer's proof of Tenniel's most famous cartoon, the "Dropping the Pilot." You remember that great page in *Punch*? It caused a European sensation. Bismarck, in a pilot-jacket, was shown descending the gangway from the liner, while the crowned captain of the *Germania* wistfully watched him retire.

When Mr. Swain had cut the lines of that drawing in a block of boxwood he "pulled" a few proofs of it to see if it looked all right, and one of those proofs is now mine. Any "proof before letters" is more valuable than the final print.

A British Art.—The political cartoon is not peculiar to these islands, but it is mainly a British product. The political cartoon has never flourished so well

elsewhere. Caricatures are common to all ages and peoples, but, again, political caricatures have been particularly British. Rowlandson, Gillray, and Cruikshank are the great past names in that line, but many unknown artists practised it, on pottery as well as upon paper.

The Willett collection of pottery and porcelain illustrative of British history, now in the Brighton Museum, contains many examples of mugs, jugs, busts, statuettes, and plaques, which in shape or in decoration are caricatural. Most of these, perhaps, and certainly most of the caricatures on paper had reference to the long struggle between our country and Napoleon.

A Quotation.—"The most popular form of caricature in vogue during the last decade of the eighteenth and the first two decades of the nineteenth centuries was an oblong folio sheet. These prints were bought in large numbers, and cost on an average one shilling when coloured and sixpence if plain. When exhibited in the windows of publishers, they attracted crowds which frequently blocked the pavement, and seriously interfered with the traffic. Publishers were accustomed to 'let out' portfolios filled with caricatures for the delectation of guests at evening parties.

"The folio print was, however, only one of many shapes in which Napoleon was satirised on this side the Channel. The caricaturing of Napoleon was almost as universal as the fear he excited and the detestation in which he was held. It extended to vignettes on political broadsides, and the headings of

political songs; to imitation banknotes and theatrical bills; to pocket-handkerchiefs; to fans, valentines, jest-books, watch dials and papers, and tobacco-wrappers. It invaded the games, puzzles, and primers of the children, figured on playing-cards, lottery-tickets, snuff-boxes, pipe-bowls, and walking-sticks, and afforded congenial occupation for the potters of Worcester, Derby, Leeds, Bristol, and Staffordshire."

That quotation, which shows how wide a field exists for a gleaner of caricatures, is taken from "Napoleon in Caricature, 1795-1821," written by Mr. A. M. Broadley.

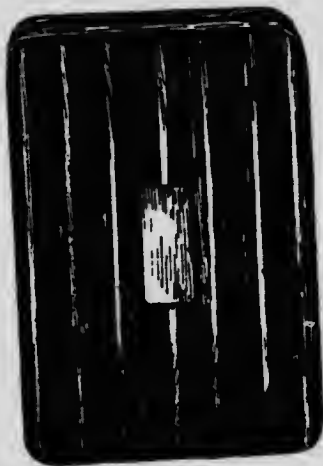
Some Examples and Prices.

—Few caricature-jugs or other examples in pottery now remain on the market; breakages have lessened the stock.

But the print and paper caricatures are more numerous. From a catalogue I take a few examples, and mention the prices:

"Bernadotte.—Hieroglyphic portrait, on horseback, shield and spear, in the act of trampling on a serpent, alluding to the fallen state of Bonaparte. Drawn and etched by W. Heath. Size 8½ in. by 12¾ in. March 4th, 1814. 25s.

"The Head of the Family in a Good Humour.'—John Bull surrounded by representatives of the various



SNUFF-BOX.

Powers. By Rowlandson. Size 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 9 in. *Circa* 1808. 21s."

Here is a Gillray caricature: "'Tiddy-Doll, the great French ginger-bread baker, drawing out a new batch of Kings.' Napoleon as a baker, in front of a 'New French Oven,' and Kings on a shovel. Size 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 15 in. January 23rd, 1806. 25s."

The coloured caricatures are the more desirable to collect, and they can be picked up for a shilling or two yet.

AUTHOR'S MSS. AND PROOF-SHEETS

Are there many collectors of proof-sheets, I wonder? Now that typewriting is almost the rule for what is called "copy," the delightful hobby of collecting great authors' MSS. is likely to die of inanition. But proof-sheets still present a field. In "Recollections," by David Christie Murray, I find the following particularly interesting paragraphs: "My name-father, David Christie, was chief reader at Clowes' printing office; and month by month as the proofs of 'Our Mutual Friend' were printed, it was his habit to borrow the Dickens manuscript and take it home with him for his own delectation before it reached the hands of the compositors. In his time Christie had been 'reader's boy' at Ballantyne's, in Edinburgh, and in that capacity he had laid hands with a jackdaw's assiduity on every scrap of literary interest which he could secure. He had proof-sheets corrected by the hands of every notable man of his time. He had been engaged for at

least fifty years in making his collection, and he kept it all loosely tumbled together in a big chest, which he used to tell me would become my property on the occasion of his death. Amongst other treasures, I remember the first uncorrected proofs of 'Marmion,' and a manuscript copy of a play by Sheridan Knowles. When Christie died, I was in Ireland, and on my return to London *I found that the whole had been sold to a buttermilk man, as waste paper, at a farthing a pound.*"

I wonder if any sheets in that collection missed the grease and the crumpling of the purpose for which the buttermilk man bought them?

Two Thousand Pounds Lost.—But worse is to come. "There was one literary relic, however, of inestimable value; it consisted of an unpublished chapter in 'Our Mutual Friend' in which the Golden Dustman was killed by Silas Wegg. Dickens excised this chapter, had the type broken up, and all the proofs, with the exception of this unique survival, were destroyed." And that, too, went to the butter-shop. "Inestimable value," indeed! Collectors would offer £2,000 for that chapter to-day. No wonder that David Christie Murray went on: "I am not ashamed to confess that when I got back to London and learned the fate which had befallen my old friend's collection, I had a bitter cry over it, which lasted me a good two hours."

What gives the monetary value to authors' manuscripts and corrections on proof-sheets is, *first*, the fame and eminence of the author, and, *second*, the rarity of the thing itself. The extra chapter to

"Our Mutual Friend" would be unique; it would be snapped up, and published all over the English-speaking world. But I fear it has gone the way of all butter-wrappings, to a greasy grave.

Two Other MSS.—Twenty years ago a diligent porer over second-hand booksellers' catalogues came upon an item in a catalogue which made him start and stare. But, yes, there it undoubtedly was: "Original Manuscript of the Ingoldsby Legends, by Barham, thirty shillings." The man who saw that earliest took cab to the bookseller's, paid the thirty shillings, carried the precious MS. into the cab, drove off to a well-known collector of such things, and sold it to him for £30. A few years later it realised £150, at the sale of the Samuel Collection.

A bookseller purchased for £200 the MS. of one of Dickens' best works. For a long time that interesting manuscript had lain neglected. I am told that it had been left on the mantelpiece of an empty house formerly inhabited by a person connected with Charles Dickens in business. The bookseller tried to sell it for £500, and failed; £400, and failed; £300, and failed. A few years later, having to meet a sudden demand for cash, he parted with the MS. for the sum he gave for it, £200. The purchaser at that price kept the MS. for some years, until one morning a bookseller, the agent of a now famous but at that time unknown collector of rarities, came to the owner of the MS. and offered to buy it. "My price is £2,000," said the owner. A cheque was written on the spot.

"THE OWNER'S NAME"

A schoolboy's rhyme, "Steal not this book, for fear of shame, for here you see the owner's name," suggests the origin of book-plates. It is a far cry from that to some of the rare or splendid labels of the kind.

A Royal Book-plate.—Queen Alexandra's is oblong in shape, it has two divisions, and is bordered by oak-leaves and roses. In the lower division you see "Thy wild and stormy steep, Elsinore," the first home of the "Sea-king's daughter from over the sea"; in the upper panel you see pictured the towers of Royal Windsor. On a row of books, at the base of the design, you read the names of Shakespeare, Byron, Shelley, and "John Inglesant"; and, upon music-folios, the names of Brahms, Schumann, Wagner, and Gade—a Danish composer. Across the top of the book-plate runs the score of the opening bars of Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*. Her Majesty's favourite dogs also figure in the design—Alix, a beautiful borzoi, and the spaniels Billie and Punchie. The motto is "Faithful unto death," and the name on the label is "Alexandra."

The Tenebrous Painter's Plate.—One cannot imagine *that* ex-libris ever coming upon the market; the few to whom Queen Alexandra gives a copy of her book-plate will treasure it, of course. But there are old book-plates still more rare. In a capital historical novel, written by Mr. A. N. Cotton, about "The Company of Death," or life in Naples *circa* the year 1647,

the hero takes up a book for a moment, "while Salvator Rosa continued to paint feverishly." Salvator Rosa was, as you know, the artist of dramatic lights and darks. The book belonged to him, and "pasted inside the cover was a small copper-plate engraving," which showed "a skeleton seated before an easel." On the easel rested a portrait of Salvator, crowned with a fool's-cap, and a palette-knife in hand. "Towering above the easel is a gallows, from which, suspended by a rope, there hangs a wreath of laurel." You see the symbolic nature of the plate. The whole is supported by two female figures; on the left, Comedy, who holds in her hand the model of a dying gladiator; on the right, Tragedy, upon whose outstretched palm a Pulcinetto dances gaily. Leaning over the border of the engraving are three winged amorini, the countenance of each is in the semblance of a grinning death's-head. Below is the simple inscription: "Ex-Libris Salvatoris Rosa." If one could only come across a copy of that!

The Plates of Peeping Pepys.—Very rare old book-plates sell for much money, though at one time recently it seemed as if collecting them was in a decline. Not less than twelve guineas must be paid if you are to own an example of Pepys' principal book-plate; it shows the egotist's portrait, of course. But he had another, a large armorial; and this may be bought for four guineas or so. There is a demand in the United States for a book-plate of that period belonging to William Penn, and a copy will sell for ten pounds.

Designer-Plates.—Sometimes it is the designer's name, not the owner's, which lends distinction to a book-plate. Before me as I write lie three "states" of a book-plate designed by Aubrey Beardsley. A winged pierrot, wearing a very small top-hat with rolled brims, advances from an act-drop towards the footlights; he wears a large pen and a large stylus, and exhibits the word *ex-libris* on a placard: a Cupid couchant on the stage peeps up at him from the foot of the curtain.

That is the first "state," the second bears on the curtain the name "John Henry Ashworth," and the third "state" reads "John Henry Ashworth, 1898." Rarity comes into play in this case also, for only a hundred copies of the third state, and fifty of the second state exist. Designer-plates are always interesting, and may be profitable to acquire.

The Franks Collection.—There are several books about book-plates, none very good. "The Journal of the Ex-Libris Society" contained much information, but it is more helpful to the expert than to the beginner. The place to study book-plates at is the Print Room of the British Museum; Sir Augustus Franks left nearly five-and-thirty thousand as a legacy to the National Collections. Somewhere in the great new wing of the Museum a memorial to Franks may be erected, I hope, for whether you go there to study English porcelain or enamels, stone axes or snuff-boxes, civic rings or Rococo jewels, you will be studying, in the main, the legacies of Sir Augustus Franks. His

collection of book-plates is still the finest in quality and the most considerable in quantity extant.

Forgery in this line has more than begun, and such a thing as re-using a long-laid-by "Chippenhale" or "Festoon" copper-plate, with the name altered, is not unknown. It is always worth while to buy cheaply a second-hand book which contains a good book-plate.

CHAP BOOKS

Here are some advertisements of Chap Books, which I quote from various second-hand booksellers' catalogues, to show the kind of small old volume which is in demand.

1. Chap Books.—"True Fortune Teller," "Fortunes of Nigel," "Gipsy's Present," "Miller and His Men," "General Receipt Book," "Copland's Picture Book," "Thumb's Alphabet," etc., bound in 1 vol., 8vo, curious plates, mostly coloured, half morocco neat, 12s. N.D.

2. Histories of Sir R. Whittington, of the Valiant London Prentice, of Don Bellianis of Greece, of the Noble Marquis of Salus, of Argalus and Parthenia, of the Sleeping Beauty in the Wood, of Tom Long, a Wedding-Ring, Negro Servant, Shoe-maker's Glory, "History of Jack of Newbury," bound in 1 vol., sm. 8vo, numerous woodcuts on text, half morocco neat, 10s. London, etc. N.D.

3. "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Limerick, 1813.—"History of the Tales of the Fairies." Frontispiece. Dublin, 1814.—"Death of Abel." From the German of Gessner. Limerick, 1814.—Ribadineri (P.). "Life and Death of the most glorious Virgin Mary," etc. Frontispiece. Limerick, 1814.—"Daily Devotions. Or the most profitable manner of hearing Mass." Many cuts. Limerick, 1819. The 5 in a vol., 12mo, calf, extra gilt back. 24s.

4. "Arraigning and Indicting of Sir John Barleycorn."—"Mother Bunch's Closet new broke open."—"Death and Burial of Cock Robin."—"Art of Courtship, or, The School of Love."—"Famous and memorable History of Chevy-Chace."—"Art of Cookery made easy."—"Fairy Stories."—"New Riddle Book."—"History of

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Tommy Potts." Together, 9 chap books in a vol., sm. 8vo, many crude woodcuts, half calf, Lichfield, 2 guineas.

5. "History of Argalus and Parthenia," "History of the unfortunate lovers, Hero and Leander."—First (and Second) part of "The Merry Piper" (misbound).—"History of Dr. John Faustus."—"Bluebeard, or Female Curiosity."—"History of Robinson Crusoe."—"History of Montelion."—"History of the Seven Wise Masters of Rome."—"Simple Simon's Misfortunes."—"Diverting Humours of John Ogle." Together, 11 chap books in a vol., many crude woodcuts, half green morocco, Warrington, 37s. 6d.

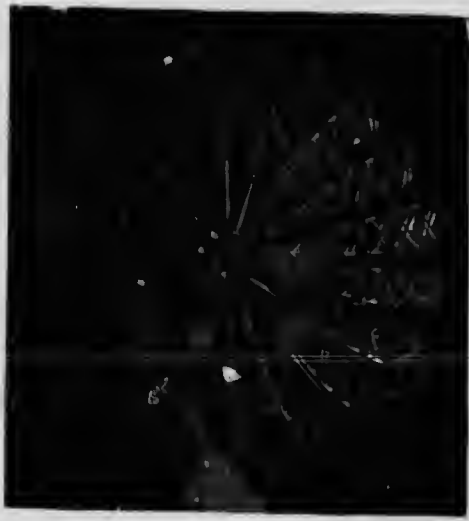
Collected To-Day.—A good many of my readers, on the wrong side of fifty, will remember little books of that sort being current when they were very young. The little books cost a penny, twopence, threepence, or sixpence originally; to-day they may cost you four or five shillings each, bought singly. The collections mentioned above bound up together these paper-backed tracts, toy-books, and fortune-telling books which formed the bulk of the chap-book class. The separate volumes, cloth or calf-bound, cost a shilling apiece or so, originally. A few of them lie before me as I write. Here is "The Little Grey Mouse, or the History of Rosabelle and Paridel, illustrated with numerous wood engravings. Wellington, printed and sold by Houlston and Son. Sold also by all other booksellers, 1815." Here, again, is "The Hermit, or the Unparalleled sufferings and surprising adventures of Philip Quarll, an Englishman, who was lately discovered upon an uninhabited Island in the South Sea. With an elegant frontispiece. A new edition, London. Anno 1796."

Some Famous Chap Books to Look for.—John

Newbery, of the Toy Book Manufactory, at the Bible and Sun, E.C., was the most famous publisher of chap books, and any that bear his name are particularly well worth acquiring. "Good Two Shoes" was written by no less an author than Oliver Goldsmith himself. Then there was Mrs. Grimmer's "Fabulous Histories, or the Robins." Also "The Butterfly's Ball and the Grasshopper's Feast," "Tommy Trip" (by Goldsmith), the "Great A and Bouncing B Toy Book." "The History of John Cheap the Chapman," "Parley the Porter," and "Stephen of Salisbury Plain," were all written by Hannah More. Then there are the "Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green," "Guy, Earl of Warwick," the "Wise Men of Gotham," the "Seven Champions of Christendom," "Robin Hood's Garland," "Mother Shipton's Life and Prophecies," "St. George and the Dragon," "Jack Horner," "Robin Hood and Little John," "Valentine's Gift," "Primrose Prettyface and her Scholars," "Tom Hickathrift," and so forth. Even an incomplete list would more than fill this page.

Why They are Collected.—People collect chap books because they are old, have become rare, and will never be produced again, though some of them have been facsimiled. Other people collect them for the sake of the early woodcuts which they invariably contain—rough woodcuts, some by such famous hands as those of a Bewick, Blake, and Cruikshank, mind you. Some of the early books were illustrated by blocks that dated back to Caxton himself. Anything quainter than the

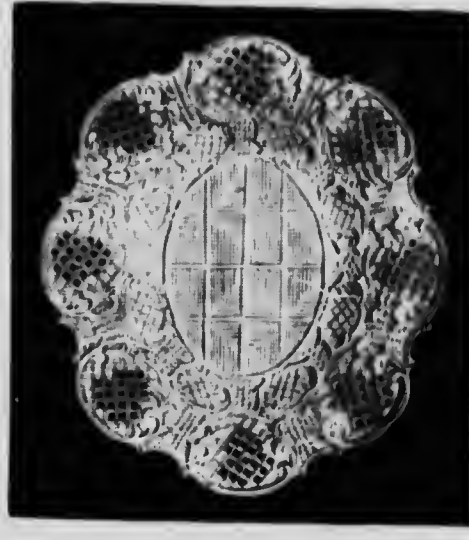
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UNDERPART OF AN EARLY CUT-GLASS DISH.



LATER CUT-GLASS DISH.



SALT-GLAZE DISH, MODELLED AFTER SILVER-WARE.



usual woodcuts can hardly be imagined. If you wish to see what the chap book was at the beginning and at the height of its popularity, there are two public collections that may be inspected. One is at the British Museum, and the other is at the Bodleian. A great number of the old wood-blocks remain extant, and a collector of chap books usually contrives to acquire a few of them also. In the year 1890 Mr. Arthur Reader published a book about chap books containing several hundred pictures reprinted from the old wood-blocks themselves.

The Origin of the Name.—Cheap—chep—chap—chapman—chapman's book—chap book—that is the genesis of the title. A chapman was a cheap man; a chap book was a cheap book. The packmen of the eighteenth century carried in their wallets cheap calendars, fortune-telling books, weather almanacs, and toy books. They bought their stock from printers in London, Banbury, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and so forth; some collectors acquire only the books printed in a certain town, or by a certain firm. "Running stationers" and "flying stationers" were other names for the chapmen. Last Speeches on the Scaffold, and Dying Confessions in Prison, with ballads and the like, were included in their packs. Francis Power, of St. Paul's Churchyard, London, produced a "Juvenile Trials for Robbing Orchards and Telling Fibs." The chap book was usually a very moralising production.

I fancy the price of these quaint little volumes will

appreciate. There is one of them, an American edition of "Goody Two Shoes," which was published by Isaiah Thomas, at Worcester, Mass., U.S.A., for which thirty-six shillings has been paid at a London auction.

MADOX BROWN WOODCUTS

If you should find on a bookstall the numbers or a bound volume of *Dark Blue*, a shilling monthly which began in March 1871, and came to an end in March 1873, look into it, and if you find a woodcut illustrating Rossetti's poem of "Down Stream," buy the number or the volume, as the case may be. For the design of the rower embracing the girl was drawn by Ford Madox Brown, and Rossetti praised it: its particular title is "Last Year's First of June."

Ford Madox Brown was intensely dramatic as a painter, and he inspired the whole Pre-Raphaelite movement. His great picture of "Work" drew greater crowds than any other at the Franco-British Exhibition, though the Gainsboroughs and Romneys of that remarkable Exhibition hung in the same room.

I fear it is useless to counsel you to look out for Madox Brown paintings, Madox Brown water-colours, or Madox Brown drawings, but it is still open to the man of modest purse to acquire Madox Brown woodcuts. There was a second such woodcut published in *Dark Blue*, also to illustrate "Down Stream."

"The Traveller."—On page 144 of the volume of *Once a Week* for 1869, volume III, *new series*, there

is a woodcut called "The Traveller." This was almost the last flash of great art in that wonderful repository of great woodcut art known as *Once a Week*. The design illustrated a poem by Victor Hugo, which Madox Brown translated as well as illustrated. Followed by a dog, the traveller is riding past an inn ; the inn is brightly lit, and the innfolk would welcome the traveller for the night, but he claps his hand to his hat to keep it on and strengthen his resolution, and grimly rides past into the darkness.

The Prisoner of Chillon.—From the shelf where I rank my precious woodcut books I take a perfect copy of Wilmott's "The Poets of the Nineteenth Century," which I was once so fortunate as to buy for half a crown. On page III appears what is perhaps the most wonderful piece of design and woodcutting in the volume in which Madox Brown illustrates the lines :

"He died—and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave."

The better to draw this picture, Madox Brown spent three days in a dissecting-room (or a mortuary, it is not certain which), watching the gradual changes caused by mortality, and making the most careful studies, in colour as well as in bistre, all to enable him to draw correctly a foreshortened figure on a wood-block, five inches by three and three-quarters. This thoroughness, this attention to minutiae, this conscientious, careful use of his powers, great as they were and enabling him to have done rapid and impressionist

work as well as anybody had he chosen, were characteristic of Madox Brown, and characteristic also of the Pre-Raphaelite School which he had influenced. I was privileged to enter Holman Hunt's studio the year before he died, and there I saw his large, elaborate, and beautiful working drawing for the lantern carried in Christ's hand in "The Light of the World." This drawing was made for the use of the metal-worker; not until the lantern itself in very metal was before him would the artist paint its representation into his picture. There is genius in the taking of pains.

"Lyra Germanica" Illustrations.—"Lyra Germanica" (a fine anthology of hymns translated from the German, and published in 1868 by Longmans) contains three Madox Brown woodcuts. One is "At the Sepulchre," another is "The Sower," and the third is "Abraham," drawn in pen and ink from a cartoon of the same subject which had been executed for stained glass. Abraham has a nimbus, so has the boyish Isaac at his side; and these particular drawings are in style almost Dureresque.

The Bible Gallery Drawings.—In "Dalziel's Bible Gallery," published about 1881, appear three woodcuts after Madox Brown. The subjects are "Ehud and Eglon," "The Coat of Many Colours," and "Elijah and the Widow's Son."

"The Coat of Many Colours" is a wonderful piece of work as a design, though it was not well cut by the craftsmen Messrs. Dalziel employed for the purpose. But everything in connection with the "Elijah and

the Widow's Son " picture is superb—the design, the drawing, and the woodcutting are all excellent. The prophet is descending the outside stairs from the upper chamber, with the revived lad, still swathed in cerements, carried under his right arm ; the widow kneels and rejoices below.

OTHER VICTORIAN WOODCUTS

Woodcuts have ceased to be published. The photographic block, a direct transcript from the artist's drawing, has ousted the wood-block. And here is a hint to the collector ; pick up books containing fine woodcuts while you cheaply can. Woodcut printing is possible to-day, but new woodcuts have become a luxury. It is only the Victorian woodcuts which still are cheap. That is because collectors have not yet taken them up seriously.

Some Famous Woodcuts, and Where to Find Them.

—In the *Cornhill Magazine*, volume II, for July to December 1860, appeared on page 84 "The Great God Pan," an illustration of Mrs. Browning's poem by a young artist called Frederick Leighton. I bought the first nine volumes of the *Cornhill*, in the original red binder's cloth, for nine shillings, with at least ninety first-class page woodcuts in them, to say nothing of the vignettes which were done by Thackeray himself. In the 1862 volume there are two by Frederick Sandys ; Millais did a whole series for the *Cornhill*. So did Frederick Walker. So did Lord Leighton ; you

can buy the 1862-4 volumes, containing George Eliot's "Romola," illustrated by Leighton, for two or three shillings as yet.

I bought the first seventeen volumes of *Once a Week*, original binder's cloth, for 30s. There are six Whistler woodcuts in the issues for 1862. You can find in these volumes Charles Keene's illustrations to the original short form in which Charles Reade wrote "The Cloister and the Hearth," then called "A Good Fight."

Good Words was another serial publication of the same date—woodcuts of that period are known among booksellers as "Woodcuts of the Sixties"—and the earlier volumes of *Good Words* are full of admirable pictures. For less than a shilling apiece you can buy volumes containing such exquisite things as Sandys' "Until Her Death," Burne-Jones' "Summer Snow," Keene's "Old Man and Child," and Small's "After the Play." The *Sunday Magazine* also had many fine woodcuts.

The Separate Books.—For five shillings I bought the fine quarto edition of "Poems by Alfred Tennyson," published by Moxon in 1860; the original gilt binding was cracked, but I had it skilfully repaired. In this book on fine "toned" paper there are eighteen pictures by "J. E. Millais, A.R.A."; there are seven by "W. H. Hunt," better known as "Holman Hunt"; and at page 67 there is his finest drawing, "The Lady of Shalott," from which, forty years after, almost, he did his latest great picture; there are also five by

Dante Gabriel Rossetti, six by Clarkson Stanfield, and two by Maclise.

This book is usually procurable for fifteen shillings, but the 1857 edition of it costs twenty-five. Less than that would have to be paid to a bookseller for Dalziel's two-volume illustrated "Arabian Nights," published by Ward, Lock, and Tyler in 1865, and containing 200 woodcuts, 90 of them by A. Boyd Houghton; a copy was recently advertised for nine shillings. In some respects A. Boyd Houghton was the prince among all the artists who drew for woodcutting. The same firm published "Don Quixote" in 1866, and he drew for that also. Also for Routledge's "Ballad Stories of the Affections." Ward, Lock, and Tyler published an illustrated "Goldsmith's Works" in 1865, and it contains 100 fine woodcuts after G. S. Pinwell.

For half a crown I bought a perfectly conditioned copy of Willmott's "Poets of the Nineteenth Century" (1857), profusely illustrated by Millais, Gilbert, Birket Foster, Harrison Weir, Tenniel, Harding, etc. The Birket Foster landscape pictures are exquisite in every way.

The Bindings.—Do not remove the bindings of any such books as these when you have bought them. The custom of the "sixties" was to publish the woodcut blocks in binder's cloth, gilt edged, and often stamped with gilt and embossed. If the original binding is broken, have it repaired; repair will cost less than a new binding, and leave the book more valuable.

PART VII

MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTING

PEWTER SPOONS

OF a fellow student, Heine wrote that "when Grabbe left home for the University, his mother put into his hands a packet which, so he told me, contained silver spoons—half a dozen tea-spoons, six little coffee-spoons, and a big soup-ladle—domestic treasures from which women of the people sadly part, for they think that silver spoons as a possession distinguish a housewife from folk who own none but spoons of pewter. When I first met Grabbe he had already pawned the soup-ladle—Goliath, as he called it—and later, if I asked him how things went with him, he would gloomily answer, 'I am at my third spoon,' or 'I am at my fourth spoon.' Once he said with a sigh that the big ones were going, and it would be very short commons for him when he came to the little coffee-spoons, and when *they* were gone, there would be no commons at all."

But silver has cheapened, and old pewter spoons are worth more than new silver spoons to-day. *The*

authority on old pewter writes that "spoons are now too valuable to be allowed to lie about in an unprotected condition." By *the* authority I mean Mr. Massé, whose "Chats on Old Pewter" (Unwin, 5s. net) is the handiest and best cheap book on the subject which a collector can possess.

Chasten Your Zeal.

—But let no enthusiast beginner exclaim to himself, "Why, I saw a pewter spoon in a little shop the other day!" and rush off to buy it. Because the odds are that it will be a spoon or ladle made of Britannia metal or lead, and not antique at all. I am not here referring to fakes (there are plenty of them about), but to material, and space forbids dis-

sertation upon the differences between true pewter, lead, German metal and Britannia metal, and other amalgams. Metallurgy is a more difficult guide than the shape.

Bowls and Stems.—The old pewterers copied the



COPPER URN.

shapes which the old silversmiths used ; though old pewter spoons were not hall-marked and bear no date-letter, you may define their dates roughly by their shapes. Do not expect to find pewter spoons of very early periods. Just as Tudor and Jacobean silver became nearly all of it melted down, to be coined, so pewter spoons of earlier date than the fifteenth century have been worn out, for pewter is very perishable. I suppose we all know William and Mary, Queen Anne, and Georgian silver by its shape, when we see it ; look for the same kind of guide when you go hunting for old pewter spoons.

And, first, the bowls ; there is something quaint and unsymmetrical about most of them. Often the outline of the bowl resembles that of a tennis-racket ; sometimes it resembles that of an elm-leaf, non-serrated ; sometimes it is almost circular ; sometimes it has the outline of a plover's egg. Ladle-bowls are more regular in shape, more like the ladle-bowls in use to-day, but *larger*, as a rule, and set at an acuter angle with the stem, which joins the bowl more awkwardly. The old *spoon*-bowls were more in the plane of the stem, and shallower, than is the case with the silver or plated spoons made to-day.

As to the stems, they are usually shorter than their modern successors, and look disproportionately so, and are *neither flat nor round*, because pewter-ware was finished by hammering, as, though the stem might have been cast round enough, hammering squared it a little. The stems of spoons made to-day are flat :

the section of a seventeenth-century pewter spoon will be square or rhomboidal ; there is something a little angular as well as solid about the stem of an old pewter spoon.

Knops.—We have all seen old or modern "apostle-spoons," of base metal or silver ; the "apostle" figure is the knop of the spoon—the knob at the top of the stem. Rat-tailed silver spoons are greatly hunted for ; so are rat-tailed pewter spoons. A true rat-tailed spoon has no knop, its stem tails off to a blunt point ; but spoons with a tapering ridge running under the stem are also called rat-tailed, so that a "rat-tailed" spoon may have a flat knop, large, and rounded oblong in outline.

The knops most often found on pewter spoons are the ball, the seal, the acorn ; there are also the rat-tail, the diamond-point, the lion, the melon, the hexagonal, the strawberry, and the deer-foot. The "apostle" and the "maiden-headed" or "double-horn-headed" knops are excessively rare ; the two latter figure a woman's head and head-dress, with single or double raised coif, in the fashion of the early fifteenth century. Sometimes the knop of a ladle will have a short, sharp bend away from the plane of the stem.

As a rule, pewter spoons are clumsily large, almost wooden-spoon-like in dimensions. Do not expect to find them of coffee-spoon or even tea-spoon size. And do not expect to find many in any size. A dozen is quite a collection.

The little curio-shops are full of forged pewter spoons, that seem all right in metal and colours, but the shape of the handle or stem, the finish, the hammering, and the aged appearance are all defective or wanting.

OF CERTAIN OLD PENDANTS

From time to time I have picked up certain small ornaments in the form of pendants intended to hang from fine chains upon a lady's breast or bodice. The material is silver; the silver has been gilded where it shows, and where it does not show, the cause of that is a covering in enamels. These ornaments are full of interest, and, to me at any rate, mystery, too. They are small, from an inch to an inch and a half in height; they are slung by fine chainwork, which sometimes includes small or seed pearls; they are set with what are precious stones, or seem to be, but stones that are not very valuable, and with pearls of the less shapely and costly sort. The points of mystery are, what were they made for? why in certain unvariable designs? and for whose wear? You may see something like them in jewellers' odds-and-ends trays and cases; but as they are counterfeited and forged, what you may see, though it gives an idea of the jewels I am writing of, may not be the real thing in itself.

They used to seem to me to have been made for the necks of ladies who were the wives or daughters of members of knightly orders. Thus the most frequently

seen shape is that of the "George" and the "Lesser George" worn by Knights of the Garter—I mean the central part of the Garter jewel, the figure of St. George on horseback spearing the dragon; or that of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, which has a similar centre-piece. Another form is that of the white elephant, which is the centre-piece of the jewels worn by Knights of the Danish Order of the Elephant. Another is the dove of the "Order of the Holy Ghost." Another form is that of a slung hunting-horn, which perhaps represents the Bavarian Order of St. Hubert. The Bavarian Order of St. George also includes the figure of a knight attacking a dragon, however; so does the Russian Order of St. Andrew, and the Sacred Order of Siam has for centre the figure of a white elephant. And as there are quite a score of European orders of chivalry which have badges which I have never seen reproduced in the kind of jewel I am now writing of, I must perhaps give up the idea that the object was for wear by ladies who were wives or sisters or daughters of members of the order. Because, for another reason all the orders of chivalry which, so far as I can know, are represented by such orders; for example "the pelican for its piety" and "the mermaid." But I seem to remember having read of Knights of the Pelican existing in the past.

At any rate, there is a mystery about this type of ornament, and I have searched several books likely to contain information, but to no avail. But when I turned to "Chats on Old Jewellery and Trinkets,"

by Maciver Percival (Fisher Unwin, 5s. net.), I found quite a store of information, some of which I had already discovered or conjectured for myself, and some which I had not. For instance, the book gives a picture of a parrot pendant—I have seen one of the real things ; of a ship pendant, a lizard pendant, and of a " pendant in form of a pelican with her young." The bird is enamelled white, with portions of the metal showing through as feather marks. Now I once acquired a pendant like that, and it was washed incautiously ; the result was that the enamel disappeared from the feathers, leaving the gilt silver that was under the enamel visible as a whole. " The pelican in her piety " was a favourite subject with bygone jewellers, by the by ; it represents the old belief that the pelican feeds her young with flesh and blood torn from her own breast.

Put aside the cheap modern imitations of these things, done upon a very thin and flimsy foundation ; if you find one of better mass and quality, the enamel brilliant in colour, and a little translucent, and the " bed-rock " material silver-gilt, it was probably made in the seventeenth century in imitation of what was then the real thing—viz. a Renaissance jewel of the sixteenth century. But a Renaissance jewel of the sixteenth century of the kind is the rarest and least findable of objects ; it was made in gold, set with really precious stones, and enamelled translucently ; if you wish to see the original real thing, you can do so in the Waddesdon Bequest room at the British Museum,

a wonderful pendant indeed, that only a Rothschild could afford to buy.

So that now your best hope is to come across a seventeenth-century imitation of a sixteenth-century pendant. "Still," the book says, "a collector should never despair." He seldom does, I fancy; hope springs eternal in him. "There is always a possibility of finding treasures where least expected, if the knowledge of what to look for has been gained. But there are baits cast for the bargain-hunter; these beautiful things have been copied, and also the general style has been imitated. These inferior copies are often of small specimens, as these have a better chance of sale as personal ornaments than there would be for pieces of greater size." And yet "even the cheapest copies of these things are far prettier than most of the jewellery which can be bought in the ordinary way, and are much more suited for artistic people to wear."

THE HORSES OF SOMA

A netsuke, a tsuba, a colour-printed woodcut, and a bowl rest on the writing-table near me, and each represents a horse.

Consider the bowl; it is Soma ware; it was made in Soma; Soma was a Principality of the old feudal Japan. The Princes of Soma were great hereditary Daimos; Daimos were the territorial noblemen of the bygone Japan. The Prince of Soma's crest, device, or blazon—one cannot call it a coat of arms—was a

horse. And therefore Soma porcelain and pottery display, in relief or painted, upon their rough, indented, outer surface, a horse as a mark. Sometimes the horse grazes, sometimes it bucks; sometimes, tied to one short post or between two posts, it kicks up its hind legs viciously.

Should you come across a bit of "Oriental" marked with the Soma horse, better purchase it cheaply, while you can. While you can, I say, for good old Japanese ware is being more and more collected.

The Netsuke.—I take up the netsuke; notice the two holes in it; they are short channels or, rather, tunnels, through which a string was passed; in use, the netsuke a little resembled the block upon the cordage of a pulley. This particular netsuke is of wood, and was carved into the shape of a grazing horse by some artistic serf at Soma at least a hundred and fifty years ago. The patina or polish shows that it was long in use; and because of that, the fine carving of it, and the material being hard old wood, it belongs to the class of netsukes most desirable to collect. Pray do not suppose, beginner, that the brand-new elaborate things seen by the dozen in pawnbrokers' windows or "imitation shops" are the proper kind; or even the small, dirty-brown bone things, which seem to have been used by dirty people. Beware, too, of imitation netsukes, neither wood, nor ivory, nor bone, but moulded celluloid; these are too light-weight for ivory, and you may also detect them by the line down the sides which marks a joining, due to the use of the back and front



RUMMER, SQUARE-BASED AND ORNAMENTED WITH ENGRAVING AND WHITE ENAMEL.

parts of the mould. New Japan is forging counterfeits of old Japanese works of art, so beware!

The Soma man who carved the horse netsuke took a root of boxwood, or wood like box, cut off four thin shoots just above the root or stem, and utilised the four stumps for the legs, just where they joined the bit of root, which he shaped into the head, tail, and body of the horse. A Japanese visitor picked this out as the best of my small collection; yet it cost me only five shillings in the Fulham Road.

The Tsuba.—I picked the sword-guard out of a score, at a shop in the City, price nine-and-sixpence; it is plain iron. But the art in it! The Soma craftsman *cut* it out of hard iron—you can see the marks of the knife in it, so to speak. A horse and its halter-rope, that is the subject; the horse is bucking, much as Buffalo Bill's bronchos used to do at Olympia; the four hoofs are all in the air together, and the rope, curling round and under them, completes the circular shape of the sword-guard.

Note that fine, antique, carved iron tsubas are more sought for by Japanese connoisseurs than the later and more ornate sword-guards, inlaid with gold, silver, or copper. But again beware! Collecting is more than ever becoming a science of skilled detection. In an "art shop" the other day I spied some scores of what purported to be iron tsubas, turned into paper-weights, clips, and so forth, on sale at eighteenpence each. For eighteenpence you are offered an iron tsuba, smeared over with gilt or silver-bronze paint, and decorated by

a filed-out flower ornament embossed, and riveted on. And "Aren't they selling, though!" the shopman said, when I questioned their origin. "Six dozen, at least, I've sold this very day."

I examined what were left; they were not even the common cast-iron tsubas used in the degenerate days of fifty years ago, just before the Japanese ceased to wear side-arms. They were rough imitations, *stamped* out of soft iron by machinery—thin, fragile, and never filed, chiselled, and finished in the ancient craftsmanlike way. They are worthless and offensive counterfeits; but people are buying them; I don't believe they ever even saw Japan. But presently, with the embossed ornament taken off, when the bronze paint has worn dull, they will be selling in curio-shops to the unwary—no manner of doubt about that.

The Print.—And so are modern reprints of Japanese woodcuts, as foul in colour as photographic copies of Morland and Bartolozzi prints. In the real thing now before me the Soma horse appears. It was drawn by Tsukioka Tange, an artist who lived during 1717-1786; the wood-engraver was Yoshimi Nyeimon, and the print was published in 1762. The Japanese lettering tells that, and the prancing horse—a rare feature in Japanese prints—suggests that the artist belonged to the suzerainty of Soma. What an artist he was! The horse prances, the Prince leans out from the saddle with lifted whip, and the serf shrinks and scuttles away from the blow. It is all in motion, it is all alive.

THE CLINCH OF THE BLADE

The finest ornamental metal-work ever done in the world was the tsubas, or sword-guards, made in Japan between the years 1586 and 1868. The word "tsuba" is short for "tsumiba," which meant "the thing which clinches the blade." And "tsuhamono" is a derivative, which came to mean a "man-at-arms."

The sword-guards made during the warlike period in Japan (from the date of the Norman Conquest here to the time of Drake) were simple, and little decorated. The blade was then the important thing. In the icy steel born of fire the Samurai beheld the mystery of life coming out of death. The sword was the symbol of honour and manliness. In its unclouded sheen they recognised the purity and chastity of the loyal. The most precious dowry a bride could bring was the honoured sword of her ancestors, and some old Japanese dramas had their plot in the quest and recovery of such a blade.

A Samurai's sword was part of his personality; Taiko-Hideyoshi, the Japanese Napoleon, saw the swords of his generals lying on a table in the ante-chamber of his room, and so expressed was the individuality that he could recognise to whom each sword belonged. Next in importance to the blade itself came the tsuba.

The Choice to Collect.—I began to pick up Japanese sword-guards years before I could know anything about them scientifically, by distinguishing periods and

styles. It is difficult even now for one who is no Orientalist to do that. Books on the subject are so few and poor that one has to study them intuitively, and divine more than they tell. The sword-guards one sees for sale over here almost all belong to the modern period—that is between the years 1586 and 1868. In the latter year Japan began to Europeanise herself, and soon after that came an Imperial edict prohibiting swords from being worn. The tsuba then became a thing of the past, and tsuba-making is a dead art now.

You can take your choice between collecting the sixteenth and early seventeenth-century tsubas, steel, perforated, and little decorated in relief, or collecting late seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth-century tsubas, the ornaments which clinched the blades of swords for dress and parade. Or you can pick up examples of each sort, which is what I do myself. You will avoid the clumsy, common things detached from Japanese "Tommy's" swords that were worn in the sixties of last century—cast-iron things, small or smallish, not hammered into strength or wrought into beauty, but at the best embossed a little with vague and rusty designs.

These, or imitations of them, too flimsy to take in anybody, surely, are the sort that are being sold in "Japanese art" shops in London to-day for a shilling or eighteenpence apiece; but these futile counterfeits are almost the only forgeries yet performed.

The Earlier Sort.—They are steel, the earlier sort, and perforated; they are not heavy; a heavy, solid

tsuba concentrated the concussion of a blow near itself, and the blade was likely to snap at the hilt. Although they are all perforated, more or less—that is, the ornament and the design of the ornament largely consist in omission—the designs were free, they gradually became more elaborate, and they show on the unperforated portions of the tsuba some ornament in relief or inlay. Undercutting, and carving of the edges of the perforations, began late during this period ; never cast aside a tsuba which suggests that the iron has been carved by a pocket-knife as if it were wood.

The Later Sort.—These date from 1688 onward. War no longer raged, steel was no longer essential, soft iron could be used, and also copper, brass, and amalgams, as the material of a tsuba ; so that the metal and colour of a tsuba help you to assign it a date. Colour became an important element in the workmanship, and all possible alloys were used to give hues. “ Picture-style ” and “ colour-painting,” names given by the Japanese to tsuba styles of this period, suggest the striving after pictorial effect. Inlaying and chasing imitated brush-strokes, and even landscape ; never neglect a tsuba which shows Fusi-yama, the sacred volcano, in the background—to collect “ Fusi-yama ” tsubas would be a capital short “ line.” About the middle of the eighteenth century they began to inlay tsubas with precious stones, and coral even ; until then the inlay had been gold, silver, copper, and brass. From the late eighteenth century until the end in 1868, there was artistic decadence, though still

wonderful workmanship ; effect was too much striven after, the material became unimportant, and all grew to be over-loaded and bizarre, unsuitable for clinching a blade.

ON CERTAIN BRASS FIGURE ORNAMENTS

Brass figure ornaments for the mantelpiece are a hobby of mine, and I have collected about seventy, each different. Better in colour than gold, as well as quaint and cheaper, warmer-looking than silver, and brighter than bronze, under the magical chiaroscuro of firelight they gleam and gloom and glow delightfully. And they are eminently companionable to live with, whether they dwell on the mantel in one's study, shine between the porcelain in the drawing-room, or still rest on the high shelves of the farmhouse and cottage chimney-breasts which were, I think, their first homes.

The illustrations show the kind of brass figures I mean ; they are not statuettes, but reliefs ; I will refer to some of them individually presently. But first let me trace them to their origin, for, next to the find and the acquisition, nothing is so interesting to a collector as research. How did these particular small "ornaments for mantelpieces" evolve ? And about what date did they come into being ? After a good deal of inquiry, in which the Rev. A. H. Gilruth of Douglas Water has greatly helped me, I have come to the conclusion that brass figure ornaments derive from the brass firedogs of mediæval times, and in the shape and size here shown came into existence towards the

end of the eighteenth century. There is, perhaps, a second line of descent for them, however—through the tall brass door-stops that kept doors ajar in Georgian days. Some of the most artistic figures seem like copies in brass of eighteenth-century French ormolu, and I own one that is copied from a Wedgwood cameo.

At what date did hearths, fenders, and fireirons made of brass come into use? Let us go to New England for evidence as to that. In 1720, when Judith, daughter of Judge Sewell of New York, was to be married, her father sent to England for furniture. Among the items in the order was the following: "A brass Hearth for a Chamber, with Dogs, Shovel, Tongs, and Fender of the newest Fashion (the Fire is to ly upon Iron)." I imagine these "Dogs" would not be fire-dogs for supporting logs, but fire-dogs transformed into rests for fireirons, and necessarily reduced in size for the purpose. But fire-dogs and fireiron-stands alike have common features, the bar on which the logs or the fireirons rested and the upright piece at the front end of the bar. This upright piece stood on the hearth by legs, or a bow sometimes, and you can note the slight survival of the bow in the supports of the figures of the *Musicians*; sometimes the upright piece stood on a plinth, which is perceptible in the other examples. The upright pieces were ornamented, as a rule. In the King's Robing Room at the House of Lords there are a couple of elaborate brass frontispieces to fire-dogs, copied from originals at Knole. Now if one took a small angle-bar, and sol-

dered the free end of it to the back and middle of any of the brass figures pictured here, one would get a miniature fireiron-stand or fire-dog. Mr. Gilruth tells me that fireiron-rests with brass figures for the upright pieces are actually in use on hearths in Scotland still, and I saw a pair of brass-fronted fireiron-stands of Queen Anne date the other day.

But now let us consider how the uprights or frontispieces came to be detached from the angle-bar, or made without reference to angle-bars at all; and how, again reduced in size, they became elevated to the rank and position of mantel ornaments. It is here where the well-attested theory of the "'prentice-piece" fits in. Your Georgian apprentice brassworker, when near the end of his indentures, had to produce a special bit of handicraft—a "masterpiece"—in brass, to prove himself worthy to become a journeyman or "little master," as they say in Hallamshire to this day. Collectors of old brasswork recognise some of these "'prentice-pieces" when they see them in the form of brass toys, flowers in flower-pots, tiny hearths, fenders, and fireirons, miniature sets of weights and measures, and so forth; sometimes you find them still in the very glass case which enshrined them as they stood on the mantel or chest of drawers in the apprentice's home, a proud possession and proof of his skill. What more natural than for a 'prentice to turn out a miniature copy of a fireiron-stand or fire-dog? Then the prettiness of the thing would strike the eye, and further copies would be taken from the mould,



BRASS CHIMNEYPIECE ORNAMENTS.



and the figures thus produced would come to rank as ornaments worthy to neighbour with the Staffordshire earthenware figures on cottage mantels. Next, the ornaments would become a branch of the brass trade. *Et voilà*, the derivation, the evolution, is complete.

These small brass figures are wonderfully attractive, homely, quaint, and not without artistic merit; and of course they are anything but modern. Something about the dates of them can be learnt from costume. "*Dr. Johnson*," as the sleepy old toper spilling his liquor is slanderously called by curiosity dealers, wears the wig and habit of the last decade of the eighteenth century. The hats of the *Fisherman* and *Shooter* are perhaps a little later than that, though the *Shooter's* gunstock is earlier. The *Boy with the Dog* and the *Girl with the Pet Rabbit* are quite Bewickian in style; I fancy, indeed, that a good many of these ornaments were copied from old woodcuts. Of the *Musicians* one is "Chippendale Chinese" and the other is "German Romantic"; which dates them at about 1770. The *Napoleon* is slim and young, and wears the tricolour cockade, so I date him about 1797. I have never seen a brass figure ornament which bore any numerical indication of date or any maker's name or mark, so that all is necessarily conjectural.

But something as to relative age can be learnt from the material. Brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, can contain varying proportions of those metals; the usual ratio is 6 oz. copper to 4 oz. of zinc, and the greater the proportion of copper the earlier and also the softer

the brass. Something like the tests for "soft" or "hard" porcelain can be applied to these figures. The more the proportion of zinc the more brittle the brass and the less its capacity for smoothness and high polish. The more brittle the brass the less perfect the casting, also. It follows, therefore, that the allegorical *Europe* (sitting on such a very small horse) and *America* (the spear touching a tobacco-plant) are pretty late, for they are rough, hard, brittle, and imperfectly cast. Then, again, weight is some test of age; the earliest of the figures I possess is probably a *Chanticleer*; that is small, but weighs $6\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Next there is the evidence of the plinth or pedestal. In the case of the *Chanticleer*, the bird, the base, and the stand or plinth were all cast in one piece, but that would be an early method, soon departed from; in every other case but one that I know, the plinth was cast separately, and fastened to the base of the figure by brazing, or screws, or copper rivets. The plinths of the *Musicians*, like those of *Robinson Crusoe* and *Man Friday*, are chased and cut; the *Peacock* has a showy plinth and *Napoleon's* is almost a pedestal.

Of course I can only mention and picture a few of the figures. There are *Cupids* very graceful and Frenchy, there are *Dancers* who might have been native at Pompeii, there are *Horses*, *Lions*, a *Boy with a Lamb*, and there is a *Pheasant*, which is much counterfeited, by the by. I possess a large *Vigil of a Young Knight*, probably dating back to the days of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." In Scotland there is a *Bobbie*

Burns at the Plough, Mr. Gilruth tells me, and a *Boy and Girl Fishing*, and a *Boy and Girl Birdnesting*, a *Jigging Irishman*, a *Man and Wife Fighting*, and a *Death of the Goose*. I own a *George IV* in his Coronation garb. New portrait figures have appeared from time to time, devised in Birmingham; a *Sir Garnet Wolseley* and a *Lord Roberts* seem to be the latest.

The figures I collect are all rather small, only two of them more than $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. high, the plinth and base included; but there are other such figures of larger size which were used as door-stops, or are ornaments derived from door-stops. Brass figure ornaments usually go in pairs or sets, but I have not collected pairs unless each member of the "pair" is different. For the figures of *Europe* and *America* I gave 6s.; for an *Asia* 4s. 6d.; for the *Africa* (which seems to be exceedingly rare) I was once asked 17s. 6d., but I have bought one lately for 6s. For *Dr. Johnson* I paid 6s.; for *Napoleon*, 4s.; for the *Peacock*, 3s.; for the *Fisherman* and the *Shooter* 2s. 6d. each; and for *Crusoe* and *Friday*, as for the *Boy and Girl*, 6s. the "pair." I have a little armorial figure of a *Stag* (the only armorial brass figure I have ever seen) which cost me 5s. It is still quite possible to acquire a fairly exhaustive collection of fifty or so for about ten guineas; but it is necessary to utter *Caveat emptor*, for counterfeiting has begun. Nothing is more easy than to take a mould from a genuine old figure and cast copies by the score. But the copies are usually made of cheap "white-metal," dipped in brass or lacquered, and a scratch in the

base will reveal the white-metal showing through; besides, the counterfeits are unduly thin, fragile, and devoid of patina.

I can remember seeing brass figure ornaments stand on the high mantels of farmhouses in Worcestershire forty years ago, and I have seen them *in situ* in Sussex within the last ten years. Five years ago I saw one in a miner's cottage in Nottinghamshire. From emptied farmsteads and cottages they have gone into dealers' shops in towns; to carry them back and let them rest in country houses, week-end cottages, and suburban villas is almost a charity, for to the last they will be rural and simple old English things, witnesses to a wholesome and native art, as far removed from the Rococo or the Oriental as from the horrible *art nouveau*. Among greenery and healthy rusticity they should dwell.

ABOUT BATTERSEA ENAMELS

I am examining two bits of "Battersea" recently returned to me by an artist in repairs. The wounds of time, where the vitreous surface had flown off, leaving the basal metal visible, have been skilfully doctored; the broader cracks are filled in. Fine hair-cracks remain, but those are almost a guarantee of "Battersea." Now those two beautiful old wine-labels—"tickets" was the contemporaneous term—announcing "Claret" and "Madeira" in unmistakable English, generous in size, curved to the decanter, quaint in shape, artistic in the design, and lovely in

the colour of the ornamentation, transfer-printed, too, seem perfect again, and, though I picked them up for only seven shillings apiece, there is no dealer or collector who would not acclaim them as fine specimens. They were lying about loose in a shop in Hammersmith Broadway.

Dainty Wares.—Let us be grateful to the memory of Alderman Sir Stephen Theodore Janssen, of the City of London, for what he caused to be done in York House, Battersea, when the first half of the Georgian century was coming to its close. Never elsewhere, I vow, were enamels distilled and fired so graciously frivolous and dainty as these. Limoges had produced Gothic pictures and altar-ware in enamels that are splendid and costly beyond compare; Genevan enamels had been gorgeous in hue. Germany had produced enamels bad in design and colour—bad with the special unfitness of Germany for true art. But the Battersea enamels were graceful, gentle, courtly—like sonnets and Elizabethan lyrics—the Herrick's "Hesperides" and the Gautier's "Emaux" in that kind. Copper, and then a coat of liquid glass and tin, and then the transfer-printing or brushwork, the colours, and the gold. Colours of turquoise, purple, orange, grey, grassy green, and rose, upon bonbon boxes, watch cases and dials, needle-cases, thimble and nutmeg holders, patch-boxes, snuff-boxes, decanter-tickets, brooches, toothpick-cases, coat-buttons, sleeve-links, crosses, medallions, salt-cellars, candlesticks, inkstands; such were the dainties and *delica-*

tessen which an Alderman, rotund with City banqueting, from York House, Battersea, sent forth. Study the fine collections in the National Museums at South Kensington and Bloomsbury. You will then recognise the ware whenever you see it waiting for a collector. The Schreiber collection at South Kensington and the Franks collection at Bloomsbury taught me to know those two forlorn little treasures in the Hammersmith Broadway shop.

"Battersea" Characteristics.—The candlesticks and the salt-cellars are particularly individual. Usually the candlesticks are white or cream-colour in ground, dotted over with flowers, and in shape resemble Queen Anne silver candlesticks. The flower-painting resembles "Chelsea." The salt-cellars are round in shape, raised upon small claw-feet of gilt metal, painted with flowers or figure-pieces in panels or "reserves," and adorned with Sèvres-like gilt wreathing. But the most indicative thing on pieces of "Battersea" of flat or nearly flat shape—box-tops, watch-faces, brooches, medallions, etc.—is the transfer-printing.

One of the valuable life-lessons you get from collecting is never to be cocksure, so I will not go so far as to say that transfer-printing was never done on enamels except at Battersea; perhaps, to a small extent, it was done at Bilston, where also, a little later on, enamels were made. But Bilston enamels were inferior in every way. I know, of course, that a large proportion of Battersea enamel-work was hand-painted. But, since it would puzzle anybody to name a Continental

enamel-works where transfer-printing was done, I say that transfer-printing decoration does, as a rule, guarantee an enamel as being "Battersea."

"Transfers."—You will remember that transfer-printing was done from paper impressions, which had been taken from engraved copper-plates, the still-wet ink of the impression being carefully pressed and set off upon the enamel, porcelain, or earthenware surface of the object. This was from the first, and always, a characteristically English method. M. Roquet, who had painted enamels at Geneva, coming to London, and writing in French a book on "The State of the Arts in England," in 1755 wrote in his chapter on English porcelain that three or four china-works existed in the London suburbs, the chief being at Chelsea, and added that at another establishment near, "some of the objects are painted in cameo ('au camayeu') by a species of impression." *Au camaïeu* would be the proper art term in French to describe the effect produced by transfer-printing, a process of decoration which was seldom successfully imitated abroad.

Tests.—If you come across an enamel transfer-printed in black, puce, or rose-pink, which suggests an engraving printed in monochrome, whether afterwards coloured up or not, the odds are great that you have found a bit of "Battersea," unless it be a modern forgery from Paris. But the forgeries (there are plenty of them) lack the daintiness and grace of the originals; the colouring is too crude and vivid, the whole ap-

pearance is too fresh, and the absence of cracks and showings of the metal is a sure warning, for hardly a piece of "Battersea" quite perfect is now extant. Moreover, the engraving done by the forgers is poor; the work of Robert Hancock's burin at Battersea, like that of Ravenet's, was sure, clear, and masterly.

The Rarity.—Battersea enamels are now rare; buy whenever you can. The earliest-dated piece is of 1753. A business crisis occurred at the works in 1756, and a sale of stock and goodwill was announced. Maybe the fabric struggled on till 1775, but there cannot have been much output after the crisis. The latest-dated piece of English-made enamel extant seems to be a snuff-box painted with a ship and the words, "Brave Nelson is no more"—he died in 1805. But that cannot have been enamelled at Battersea.

THE EIGHTEEN ENAMELS

About three hundred years ago a certain Jean Perricaud, the descendant of a race of hereditary craftsmen, performed a *chef d'œuvre* at Limoges, that quaint old city so centrally situated in France. He took eighteen variously shaped pieces of flat copper, covered them with a coat of thin enamel, "fired" them, producing a smooth, glassy surface on them, painted on this surface miniature-like pictures in glassy colours, "fired" the paintings again and again, colour by colour—in great heat, heat sufficient to fuse the colours and blend them with the base, yet without destroying the outlines, tints, or shadings—and thus



BATTERSEA AND BILSTON ENAMEL BOXES.



BATTERSEA ENAMEL BOXES.

produced a masterpiece of the enameller's art. Decoration in vitreous enamel is perhaps the most difficult of all the artistic crafts.

The eighteen small plaques of decorated copper, the largest not twelve inches high and the rest only three or four inches in diameter, were then fitted together, balanced one against another, framed into a harmonious whole, and set up over an altar, when it became evident that what Jean Perricaud had produced was a series of little pictures of scenes in the life of Christ. For two centuries this glorious altar-piece adorned some church in central France. Then came the Great Revolution, and the altar-piece disappeared.

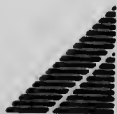
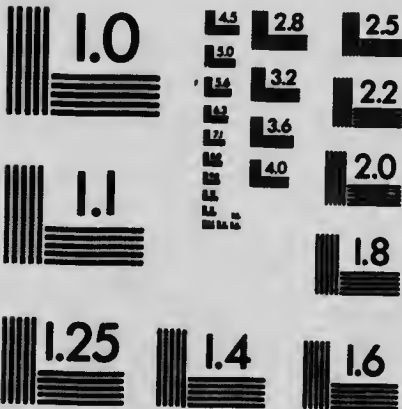
The Job Lot.—About eighty years ago an old gentleman of a collecting turn of mind found a job lot of eighteen queerly shaped bits of vividly coloured enamelled copper lying about in a London auction-room. Renaissance enamels were then of little note, there was no market for them, and the old gentleman, blessed with a taste and an insight finer and longer than was current at his period, was able to secure the job lot at about the price of so much old copper. He took them away to a remote spot, in his native land of Wales; there, after some years he died, and there a sale of his accumulated treasures took place.

The Knock-out.—Meanwhile, a knowledge of sixteenth-century Limoges work had begun to permeate the collecting world, and a few London dealers, finding "Limoges enamels" mentioned in the advance copies



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of the sale catalogue, went down to the remote spot in Wales. The country auctioneer did not the least know what Limoges enamels might be, so he put up in one lot the eighteen pieces of painted copper, wrapped in brown paper, just as they had been found in the old gentleman's collection; his very description of them as "Limoges enamels," he had taken from the old gentleman's manuscript list of what his collection contained. The Welsh farmers present at the auction did not understand the situation, either. "Now, gentlemen—what shall I say? A shilling apiece?" There was no response from the farmers, and the London dealers kept silence. At length one of the "London gentlemen" went so far as to say that he "wouldn't mind giving ninepence apiece for the lot." The auctioneer effusively thanked him, and the hammer was about to descend, when some patriotic local person began to bid, and the associated dealers were compelled to go as high as £25 before one of them could secure the bargain.

Going off to the village inn, the dealers auctioned the eighteen pieces of copper among themselves, and the highest bidder got them for £450. The difference (arising in less than an hour) between £25 and £450 was divided among the trade conspirators, and the eighteen pieces, in their brown paper wrappings, came up by coach to London.

At the Museum.—Soon after that a private collector bought them for £600, and, a little later, the South Kensington Museum was given the opportunity of

acquiring them for £800. There at South Kensington the eighteen enamels now rest, in peace and glory, for ever secure from vicissitudes such as they have experienced in the past. There at South Kensington they rest, honoured above all, amidst the master-pieces of other Limoges craftsmen, the triptych by Nardon Perricaud (another of the family), the portrait of Cardinal Guise by Leonard Limousin, the Valois casket, and the beautiful black and milky-white *grisaille* work by Pierre Raymond and others.

The Moral.—Such is the story, fished out and first told by Mr. Soden-Smith, one of the band of English collectors and connoisseurs who changed the whole aspect of English collecting half a century ago. You and I, reader, may never come across eighteen pieces, or even one piece, signed "Jean Perricaud," or even "J. P.," in a back-street London auction-room or broker's shop, unless they be fakes and frauds painted there to lie in wait for us. There is a "Perricaud" enamel in the Louvre, valued now at £4,000; a piece out of the Soltikoff collection was bought, many years ago, and brought to London, at the price of £1,200. But none of these quite equal the splendid harmony of colour and the durable brilliancy of the eighteen bits of enamel for which ninepence apiece was the first bid eighty years ago. The moral is that collectors should be alert to recognise beauty and rarity and potential money value in things not at present much thought of; the moral is that we should not collect in herds so much, sheeplike, following the bell-wethers

of collecting ; the moral is that treasures—though not in Limoges enamel—lie *perdu* still, for the seeing eye and the thinking brain to discover, now and again.

MAINLY A WOMAN'S HOBBY

Chaucer mentions "ensamplers," but no fourteenth or fifteenth-century samplers have survived. A few seventeenth-century and plenty of eighteenth-century samplers are collectable still, and an interesting study they make, especially for a woman. Closely examined, they reveal much more than one would suppose, and there is always the chance of a quaint discovery. For instance, the one now before me ; it must often have been seen by John Ruskin, for it used to hang in his father's house at Judd Street. It has been rebacked with satin, by somebody who esteemed it. A comparative study of dated samplers shows that it belongs to the eighteenth century, though it mentions no year. It possesses a feature which makes it unique. Above the Noah's Ark trees of the (very) formal garden, above the Noah's Ark house, and in among the usual birds, butterflies, and zigzag ornaments, is rising a balloon, very well imitated in marking-stitch. I think this sampler celebrated the first balloon ascent from British soil, by Tytler, in 1784 ; even so in 1910 a girl might have stitched into her sampler the new wonder of the aeroplane. The usual alphabet is missing in this case, and the only lettering is "Mary Ann Jane Yoxall, aged 10 years."

Traces of Locality and Date.—A lady, searching

for old samplers to collect, frame, and hang in her "own room," should keep in mind the fact that Yorkshire and Lancashire samplers done in the eighteenth century were small-sized as a rule, and were worked in coarse wools upon a brownish-white background.

The letters of alphabets worked into samplers done in Scotland are usually large and highly ornamented. If a sampler is decorated with sacred monograms and symbols of the older faith, it was probably done in Ireland, at a convent school.

If the needleworked parts of the sampler are enclosed in a worked border, the date is subsequent to the year 1740, most likely. The oldest samplers extant are borderless. If the border be simple in design and narrow, the date is prior to 1770 probably, for about that time the sampler borders began to be broad, sprawling, and ornate.

Samplers containing alphabets and lettering were intended to show that the girl knew both how to sew and read. Samplers containing maps, intended to encourage the study of geography and needlework simultaneously, seem to have come into



LACE-MAKING
BOBBIN.

popularity about the date of the great French Revolution. That sudden upheaval, and the Napoleonic wars which followed it, would give a zest to geographical study at the time, just as the Boer War did to the study of maps of Africa.

The material worked upon conveys indications of date, in those cases where the sampler does not mention the Anno Domini. Early eighteenth-century samplers were worked upon yellow linen; white linen indicates seventeenth-century work; sampler-cloth, or canvas, did not come into use until about 1750, but, after that was used almost invariably, so long as samplers were worked at all.

The style of ornament indicates something. Careful study of a sampler will sometimes detect an Italian influence on the ornament, or a Louis XV influence, or a "Chippendale" influence, or an "Adam" and "Empire" feeling, as the case may be.

The kind of stitch is sometimes indicative. Satin-stitch and bird's-eye stitch bespeak the seventeenth century; marking-stitch began early in the eighteenth century; darning-stitch seems to have been in vogue between 1780 and 1820, or thereabouts.

The Earlier Samplers.—"The older the better, and the more worth collecting," is almost a maxim for sampler collectors; the seventeenth-century samplers excel their successors both in needlecraft and design. The original purpose of the sampler, done at boarding-school or elsewhere, was to prove the girl's mastery of the needle; but in the end the sampler became a kind

of formal picture, in which the things represented assumed more importance than the skill and beauty of the stitching.

Most seventeenth-century samplers are narrow and long—strap-like, in fact; one at South Kensington now is nearly six feet long. Most late samplers are broader and oblong, nearly square; these began to be the fashion late in the eighteenth century. The earliest samplers extant consist of embroidery done in several kinds of stitches; sometimes they show "insertions" of lace done by the girl's own hand. Drawn-work and cut-work also adorned some seventeenth-century samplers. Early in the eighteenth century these features disappeared. A sampler containing lace is specially valuable.

The earliest-dated sampler extant seems to be one which shows the year 1643; a few bear the date 1648. But these were not the earliest of all. A book of songs published in the year 1612 mentions "a short and sweet sonnet made by one of the Maides of Honour, upon the death of Queen Elizabeth, which she sewed upon a sampler in red silk." So far, no sampler of such date has been found.

I suppose this kind of work has practically ceased to be done. Rarity will ensue, and prices will enhance, but at present even the most desirable examples are not dear; one dated 1648 has been sold for about £7.

Dirty samplers can be cleaned; decayed ones can be repaired. Samplers are daintily ornamental when framed and hung. When I see one, I think of Becky

Sharp, at Miss Pinkerton's Academy for Young Ladies, in Chiswick Mall.

"CRUELL NEEDLEWORKE"

It was about the year 1622 that Dame Anne Sherley made her will, and bequeathed "my Turkey carpet of cowcumbers, a chaire of needleworke of apples, my carpet of needleworke of gilly flores and woodbynes," also "five of my chaires of cruell needleworke" to her heirs and assigns. Crewels were used even then, it appears.

The full list of the ingenious labours which Dame Anne Sherley and her sewing-maids performed with the needle, may be studied in "English Secular Embroidery," by M. A. Jourdain.

Wide is the range of "lines" and collections of this kind; embroidered bed-hangings, applied work, patch-work, *passementerie*, upholstery, emblems, book-covers, gloves, cushions, pictures, bead work, carpet work, costumes, darning, samplers, quilting, portraits, stump work, and what not. In my "A B C About Collecting" I have written on "Acupictura," or pictures in needlework, a fascinating subject, more one for women collectors than for men.

Needlework Miniatures.—Yet there are some branches of interest to all. In how many collections of old miniatures do you see a needlework miniature? In very few. Yet needlework miniatures are charming old things. They are none of them so old as some other kinds of miniature; the earliest needlework

pictures hardly date back much before the reign of Charles I. Perhaps tapestries suggested them; at any rate, the earliest needlework pictures were done in tent stitch—*petit-point*—a stitch which imitates the work of a tapestry loom. Needlework miniatures are very rare. You may see one in the Bodleian Library, a head of the Duke of Buckingham, embroidered on the cover of an edition of "Bacon's Essays," published in the year 1625. In the Wallace Collection there is a needlework miniature of Charles I, and there are several of the same subject extant, done in that unhappy king's "own hand." At the Victoria and Albert Museum you may see a hair-embroidered portrait of Peter Paul Rubens. But you will be lucky if you find a miniature of the kind in a decade's search.

Costumes.—Much more numerous, but also more sought for, are seventeenth and eighteenth century costumes for women and for men; the most valued are those which were embroidered by hand. A large collection of these was recently dispersed from a small village in Nottinghamshire. The collection belonged to an elderly gentleman who lived at a Hall, and was a collector indeed! He had furnished the upper rooms of his fine old mansion with Elizabethan and Jacobean beds, chests, coffers, and furniture to match, and had taken down all the doors, so that the rooms stood *en suite*. The better to show off his large collection of old costumes, he had, at some time or other, bought up the whole stock of a travelling waxworks show, and he dressed the figures, put them to bed, or

set them beside the beds as if in attendance on the sick or dying; so that ghastly effigies—the wax had not been repaired or repainted—of celebrated criminals, such as Weare and Mrs. Manning, all clad in costly costumes of the olden times, stood about those upper rooms, and even by daylight made a night-mareish, nerve-shaking show. I was to have been his guest, and slept among them, but I fled. All that is over now; I wonder whither those beautiful costumes are gone?

Fine examples of embroidered coats, long-sleeved vests, bodices, and petticoats, may be seen in the capital's little local museum at Peterborough, and the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington is rich in treasures of the kind. In the latter collection there is an eighteenth-century petticoat, made for a Duchess, which is covered with needlework representing branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits growing out of fanciful rockwork, and bridges amidst houses, winding roads, and trees; the *rococo* and Chinese Chippendale styles at their worst.

Sometimes you come across a beautifully needle-worked cover for the sheath of a dress-sword. For the men of those days delighted in embroideries, and had their coats and waistcoats adorned in this wise, upon the pockets, and along the edges of the lapels, the front, the tails, and the sleeves. In the eighteenth century the fashion for English noblemen and gentry was to get their silken costumes made and decorated in Paris, just as it is the fashion in France to get tailored from London to-day.

OLD KEYS

There are not many collectors of old keys—in this country. In France there are a considerable number of old-key collectors; it is true, no doubt, that the best keys made in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were French. There is at least one extensive collector of old watch-keys in England; and old watch-keys in gold, silver, or pinchbeck, cut, chased, set with stones more or less precious and quaintly formed, are quite an interesting "line." I possess two bulbous ones, oval seals of onyx set in pinchbeck, with a swivel above and the key below, that hung at some dandy's fob-chain a century or more ago. But watch-keys are rather a class apart. It is of the larger varieties of keys that I now wish to write.

A Chief Distinction.—Generally speaking, no key of wrought or hammered iron can be of earlier date than the fourteenth century; generally speaking, no key made of bronze can be of later date than the fourteenth century. Note that when I say "made of bronze," I mean made of bronze entirely—the handle or "bow," the stem or "pipe," and the wards all being of bronze. It is the case that keys made of bronze in part or of ormolu which has copper to resemble bronze, or of brass, or of other yellow metals, were produced in the eighteenth century, and, for all that I know, are being produced to-day, the part of the key which projected from the key-hole being made of metal to suit the

metal decorations on the piece of furniture as a whole—contemporary keys to old French furniture, to wit. I own a fine Georgian tea-caddy, for instance, the contemporary key being bronze in its "bow" and "pipe." But in all these cases the wards, and at least a part of the "pipe," were of iron or some form of iron. Of course, if any part of a key be *steel* that rather modernises its date.

The Kinds to Collect.—I suppose we have all of us seen old keys lying in dealers' shops, and metal-brokers' and marine-stores shops are fertile hunting-grounds for this purpose. But a key is not collectible simply because it looks old. It must have distinctness of shape, or it must show proof of artistic workmanship, or it must possess some uncommon quality of size, or it must be wholly of bronze or brass or other coloured metal, or it must bear evidence of antiquity, or it must be associated with some particular kind of old lock, if it is to be worth your while collecting.

Roman Keys.—That "there is nothing new under the sun" receives some proof from the fact that "Yale" latch-keys rather resemble the bronze latch-keys used in the Rome of "great Julius" and of Catiline. Old Roman keys sometimes are found to be of iron, but iron being the more perishable material, it is the bronze keys which have most remained. You can see some of them in the Guildhall Museum. A Roman key had a handle in the form of a loop or ring, the ring being sometimes joined to the stem at a right-angle, so that the ring might be worn on the finger; this applies to

the smaller sizes of keys only, of course. Solidity and simplicity were the rule in the Roman keys. Sometimes the "bow" or handle had the form of a hand; often the wards resembled a rake or a claw; the workmanship was rough, and (even allowing for the effects of time) polish and finish were lacking.

Mediæval Keys.—The heavy mediæval key links the Roman key with the artistic Renaissance key. A typical mediæval bronze key can be seen in the very remarkable, rich, and well-arranged museum and art gallery at Nottingham Castle. Mediæval keys were usually bronze. Mediæval keys have an ecclesiastical and churchy look—the symbol of the cross, or the trefoil (for the Trinity) will be seen in the bow; the wards are complicated, and suggest the Gothic. You will find such keys as these depicted in missals, and on tapestry, or carved as emblems on the tombs of bishops and crusaders. I think it may be said that mediæval keys, being rare, are more valuable than the highly-ornamented and finely-sculptured keys of the Renaissance.

A General View.—In my "Château Royal" novel I describe the keys belonging to a collector, M. de Grandemaison: "Keys by the hundred; simple keys, intricate keys, master-keys, skeleton-keys, small keys, big keys, keys plain, keys lavishly ornamented, keys with two chimeræ back to back for the handle"—these are Renaissance—"cathedral keys of the thirteenth century, Gothic keys of the fifteenth, keys of the Renaissance with handles shaped like salamanders, keys

with the hedgehog device of Louis XII, seventeenth-century keys shaped like dolphins, sham Gothic keys under Louis XV, keys with trapezoid handles contemporary with Henry II, and cross-shaped keys of the time when Henry IV came riding through the gateway of Château Royal to the arms of his mignonne. Upon the surface of many of these keys appear spidery lines of gold or silver, inserted to damascene and ornament the iron, but—sign of age—the gold has dulled to a coppery hue and the silver has the look of pewter.”

English eighteenth-century keys were finely made and are worth acquiring, but they are not particularly rare.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY KNICK-KNACKS

The wise collector is like Autolykus, “ a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles,” and does not confine himself to lines already well-known and pursued ; in fact, he *cannot* unless he be very wealthy indeed, and it is not for the wealthy alone that I write my chapters here. Where twenty years ago there were a hundred collectors at work on a “ line ” there are now at least a thousand, and a collector is wise in every way who strikes out a path for himself. And there is hardly any possible line which may not become remunerative, sooner or later. I do not say that, for instance, the enthusiast who never rests till he possesses an example of every regimental button every issued to the British Army will find his buttons a Golconda when he comes to sell them, but he all the delight of collecting—the hunt,

the find, and the acquisition—has cheaply known. In this chapter let me talk about some of the "ornamental trifles" (which is a dictionary definition of "knick-knacks") that are lying about and seldom sought after just now.

Dainty Rages and their Relics.—The eighteenth century was for fashionable women in England and in France a period of indoor life, as a rule; there were many sedentary hours to pass and to cheat of their weariness somehow. Fancy needlework has at all times been the great resource for otherwise unoccupied women of fashion, but in the eighteenth century they were apt to discover other methods of sedentary pastime also. Fashions in such occupations spread from France to England or from England to France, and the fine lady in Mayfair trifled with knick-knacks resembling those which occupied the fingers of the fine lady in the Marais at Paris. Early in the eighteenth century the rage for cutting out prints began, and it spread like an epidemic. Much of the present rarity of the prints issued at the time is due to the fact that fine ladies cut the figures out of them (particularly the coloured ones) and then gummed the cut figures upon cardboard boxes, hand-screens, and so forth. Boxes and hand-screens thus ornamented still remain in existence; I saw one in a shop-window the other day; and on some of them there are pieces cut out of prints which cost fifty livres at the time they were issued, and, if complete, would be worth five hundred livres to-day. Then came the rage for hand-

colouring prints. You will find in old portfolios stipple-prints and mezzotints, very carefully tinted in water-colour—the handiwork of fashionable dames a century ago; and some of them have puzzled print-collectors terribly, seeming to be modern forgeries, and yet old.

After that arrived the rage for making “pantines” and “pantins,” little figures cut out of cardboard, painted and jointed, with threads to make the limbs move; and also the toy theatres in which they were to play the marionette. Harlequins, Scaramouches, Shepherds, and Shepherdesses, dancing cardboard figures of all sizes and values, from one that cost a shilling to one that Boucher designed and painted for Madame la Duchesse de Chartres at a cost of £60, decked the consoles in Belgravia, Russell Square, the Marais, and the Faubourg Saint-Germain. Examples of these quaint old figures still remain extant. Doll-dressing belonged to the same category, and the tiny old dolls in their robes and furbelows of contemporary brocades and laces make a capital “line” for a woman who is a collector to-day.

Imitative “Art.”—“George Paston” tells us that “so terrified were the women who lived under the third and fourth Georges of seeming to execute anything with professional skill, that they deliberately invented a kind of ‘mock art,’ for which England has been unique among the nations. For example, to model well in clay would have been considered strong-minded, but to model badly in wax or bread was quite a feminine occupation. Filigree and mosaic work was imitated

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MINIATURE IN STAMPED BRASS FRAME.



in coloured paper, 'medals' were made of cardboard and gold leaf, 'Dresden china' of rice paper, cottages of pasteboard, flowers of lambswool, coral of black-thorn twigs painted vermilion, and 'Grecian tintoes' (so called) were painted—or plastered—in black lead mixed with pomatum. the high lights being scratched out with a pen-knife." (By the by, in Gandy's "The Artist," one of the earliest Baxter books, there are full instructions for making "Grecian Fainting," "Japan Painting," and others of the things mentioned above.) And just as they copied line-engravings in human hair stitched into white satin, so the Georgian ladies imitated prints in lead pencil; I possess three wonderful examples of their skill in that way.

Fashionable Oakum-picking.—Then came the rage for unpicking gold and silver lace, unravelling old shoulder-knots, brandebourgs, and epaulets. Madame de Genlis, in her "Memoirs," showed how a diligent lady might unravel enough old gold and silver lace to sell for as much as £80 in one year. To this day you will find in odd corners of bric-à-brac shops old epaulets, edgings, and so forth, consisting of tarnished gold or silver lace. In the year 1772 Christmas-boxes to ladies largely consisted of fans, tiny chairs and tables, coffee-cups, birds, windmills and "pantins," all specially made-up of gold or silver lace in order that the ladies might have the pleasure of unravelling it, thread by thread. When unravelled, it must be wrapped around bobbins, and old bobbins still full of the old thread may be picked up to-day. Gold lace *was* gold lace in

those times ; Dutch metal had hardly been invented. And this mention of bobbins brings me to another class of eighteenth-century knick-knacks, more easy than the above to come across now.

Workbox Fittings.—I mean the dainty trifles which occupied the drawers, tiny recesses, and specially made receptacles which are to be found in the old workboxes which still remain. Bobbins of ivory, bobbins of horn, bobbins made of a metal shank between a beautifully pierced and carved mother-of-pearl disk (the top of the bobbin) and a round of bone (the bottom of the bobbin), may now be picked up for sixpence or a shilling apiece. Then there were the thimble-cases, made of carved ivory or bone, and if you find one with a *bone* thimble still inside it you have acquired an ancient knick-knack indeed. Next, there were the tape-measures. The Georgian tape-measure was usually made of pink silk, marked off into nine inches and multiples of nine inches, not into twelve inches and into feet, as the severely practical tape-measures are to-day. The carved and pierced bone, ivory, or silver cases of these old tape-measures are pretty and interesting trifles, and take the most extraordinary forms. I have one which looks like a cathedral spire ; I have seen one that worked like a windmill.

Needlecases of pierced and carved bone or ivory, long ones, to hold darning-needles and tapestry-needles, are still to be found. Then there were the pincushions, some of them large and ordinary, but

some of them small and dainty, consisting of a pad of pink velvet, mounted on the top of a short pillar of bone or ivory. And, of course, no eighteenth-century workbox was complete without its powder-puff, powder-box, or its stiletto to use as a bodkin, its steel instruments to use in "pinking," and its spools for silk. I saw an Early Victorian workbox complete with all its dainty fittings selling for thirty shillings the other day.

Endless Variety to be Looked For.—In fact, the range for the collector of eighteenth-century knick-knacks is almost endless, and I have by no means touched upon all the articles which this line offers to the quick and recognising eye. Nearly all the knick-knacks are small, dealers do not make a feature of them, they are not exposed in shop-windows, and you have to hunt for them, as a rule. But when you find them you can usually buy them cheaply—at present, that is.

BRASS AMULETS FOR HARNESS

In my novel, "Smalilou," I wrote of "a pony dized with gypsy symbols, the egg and snake and new moon in brass." Here are some pictures of such symbols, chosen from a collection of hundreds.

A New Line.—Harness ornaments in brass are almost an unworked vein for collectors. I know of a small show of them at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford; and Miss Lina Eckenstein, Dr. Plowright, and a few Oxford and Cambridge dons and professors have made

collections of the kind. Two articles on horse brasses and amulets appeared in the *Reliquary* (October 1906 and April 1906). But beyond that the subject, so far as I am aware, has not been written on; it is virgin soil. "There is nothing on brasses in books," Miss Eckenstein wrote in one of the articles cited; "even the words commonly applied to them—such as horse brasses, medals, and metals—do not figure in this connection in the dictionary."

The use of such harness ornaments is dying out, partly because of kindness to animals—a complete set of nineteen brasses weighing more than six pounds—and partly because motors are so numerous displacing draught-horses. Brass harness ornaments will soon cease to be made, and will then have passed into that delightful limbo from which collectors rescue treasures after a generation or two of oblivion. Now, therefore, is the time to acquire these interesting bits of old brass. You can find them in marine stores, old-metal stalls, horse markets, and country saddlers' shops, for threepence or sixpence each. A few already are to be seen in curio-dealers' shops, priced at three to five shillings each. Forty did not cost more than twelve shillings in all; they hang against the rich red end of an old mahogany bookcase, and over my sanctum door; and if there be luck and safeguard in them, then am I plentifully amuleted indeed.

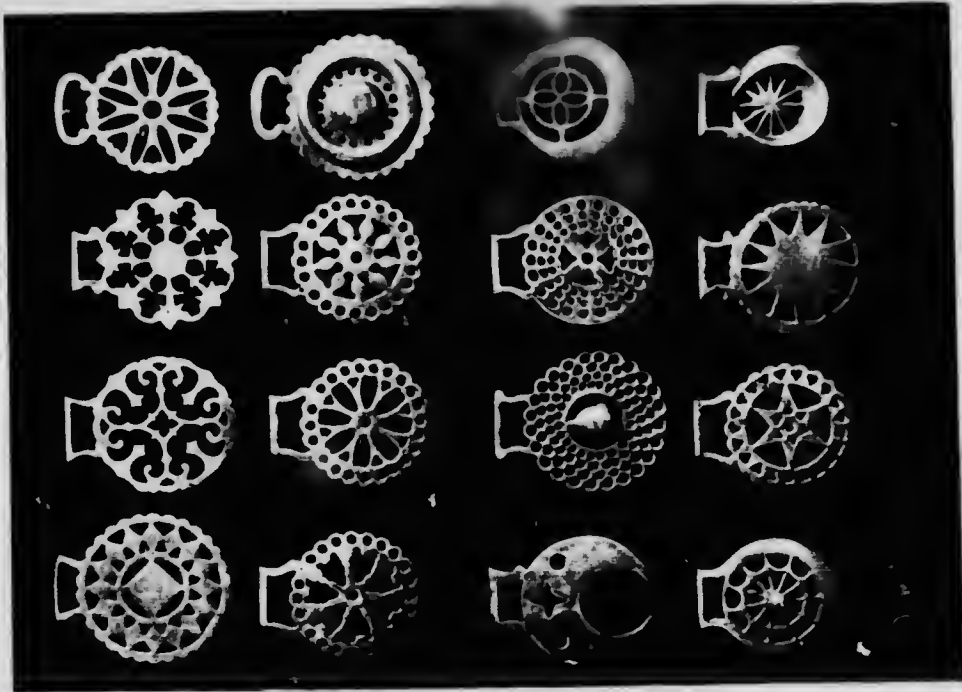
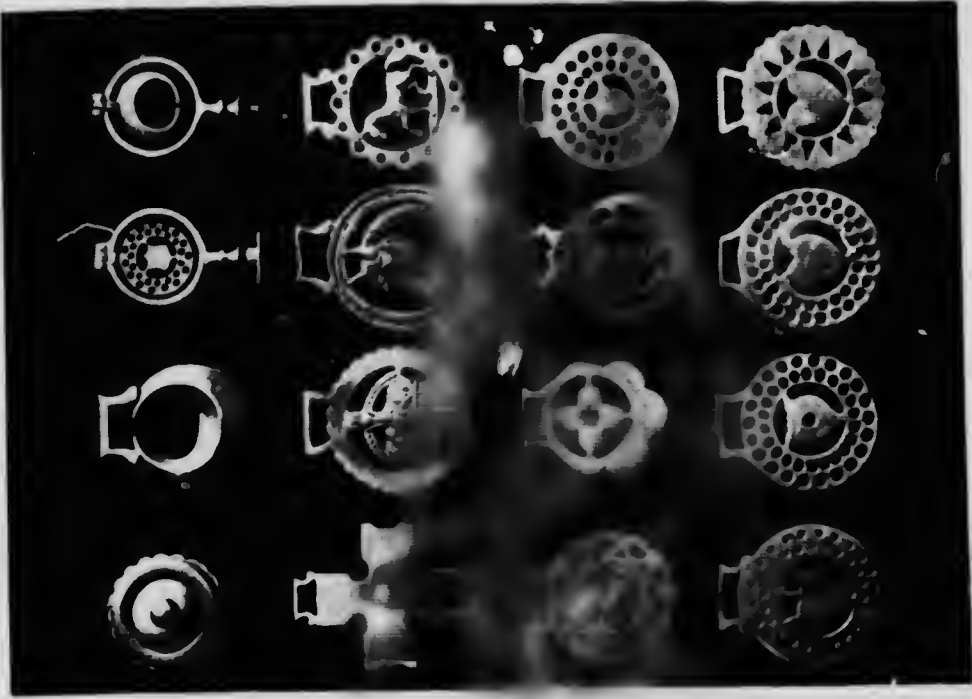
The Number Collectable.—I have counted up to 180 different patterns of the kind shown in the illustrations, not reckoning the boss and the two "flyers"

which appear in one of the top rows. A collector need not despair of picking up an example of each pattern, therefore, and it is always a pleasure to have a collection (of anything) that is quite complete. On draught-horses in the streets or country lanes you may observe these ornaments in plenty; a complete set consists of a face brass hanging on the animal's forehead, two ear brasses hanging behind its ears, ten martingale brasses hanging on its breast, and three brasses on each of its side-runners down its shoulders. These "metals," as carters and horsekeepers call them, usually belong to the carter or horsekeeper, and not to his employer; bought as additions to the harness, not as an original part of it, for ornament at May Day parades.

The Meaning of Them.—I don't suppose a London carter or horsekeeper has much idea of what the brasses signify, but once, as a boy in Worcestershire, I asked a gypsy driver what they meant, and he told me they "kept off the duvvel." To the same question put in Italy a carter will reply, "To keep off the evil eye, *signore*." For the Italian populace still believe, as all the ancients believed, that the eyes of certain naturally malignant persons dart noxious rays at human beings and beasts. Virgil, in his Third Eclogue, sang of the evil eye as making cattle lean. But the superstition goes a good deal further back than Virgil; it goes back to the very beginnings of the recorded existence of mankind, and it has been observed in every land. In one short chapter I could not discuss a hun-

dredth part of the myths and folk-lore involved ; I can only here say that the earliest horse ornaments were worn as amulets, safeguards against sorcery, and votive decoration ; custom and tradition have kept up the practice of wearing the same designs even to our own day. The earliest horse ornaments consisted of symbolic representations of the earliest worshipped gods, the sun and stars and crescent moon. Among all the horse brasses I have ever seen, only one Christian symbol, the cross, was found—you observe it in the illustration ; it is quite recent—new, in point of fact—and has a pagan form of hanger at the top of it ; I have seen that same hanger on a pilgrim's badge of the eleventh century. All the other horse brasses reproduce symbols that are Buddhist, Egyptian, Moorish, or Gypsy. Let us study them awhile.

The Eye and the Heart.—Look at the illustration which shows a boss or bridle ornament at the top left-hand corner. It represents a human eye ; the pupil is brass, the iris is blue enamel. This came from Italy, where such an " eye " is valued as a preservative against the evil eye. Around the iris you note a sun-like brass rim, and outside that a ring of tiny crescents. The next brass is a crescent—the moon. The crescent is reproduced in the fourth, a " flyer " (which rises from the horse's head or collar). The brass with a Royal crown in it is worn by Army draught-horses, but even the crown itself is topped by two crescents, one crossing the other, and the fleurs-de-lis, which edge the crown, are nothing but the lotus of the East ;



BRASS HORSE-AMULETS.



outside the crown in the brass is a circle—the sun—and outside that a ring of crescents. The horse-shoe brass is a crescent also ; a horse-shoe was first thought of because it was a crescent inverted. The brass which begins the third row shows many crescents, solid or open, and the horse inside it is the horse of the Saxon standard, and the one cut in the chalk of the Downs. The brass next to that is crescental in shape, and contains the lotus, which itself contains a star. The lotus or fleur-de-lis appears in the next to that. In the last brass of the third row the lotus has developed into shield-shape ; in the next into something like heart-shape. In the next the bull's head appears, with horns ; and to this day in Italy the superstitious put up two fingers, as horns, against a stranger's gaze. In the last brass but one the centre-piece is more heart-shaped. Notice how all the four brasses just mentioned contain circles representing the sun. In the last brass on this sheet the heart is fully developed ; it stands inside a sun-like rim, which is itself surrounded by hearts.

The Other Illustration.—In the first brass the heart of the last has become a diamond ; hearts and diamonds and clubs and spades on cards contain the same mythological idea. Then come seven brasses representing the sun, the seventh especially. The inverted crescent is pierced by two suns and a star. In the next brass the centre represents a lotus-seed, corrupted or degenerated, through endless copying, and something more like an acorn. In the next brass the petals of

the lotus are seen. In the next the lotus petals merge into star and sun surrounded by the crescent moon. In the first of the last row the star and crescents are more plainly evident. In the next are stars within stars and crescents. The last but one shows the star very notably. And in the last the star is associated with the crescent, as in the Turkish standard itself.

Hints to Collectors.—The oldest brasses are the most desirable to acquire. They are the heaviest; they are of cast or wrought brass; sometimes they weigh as much as six ounces; at the back of them you can see the grain of the metal. The more recent brasses are thin and brittle; they were stamped, not cast; you can detect the stamping by the edge or burr which is left at the back edge of each perforation. Brasses representing Lord Beaconsfield within a wreath of primroses, or cannon under captured Boer flags, or King Edward VII, are, of course, quite recent. But the thing for a collector to do is to obtain one example of every known design, either old or newer. If dirty, a brass should be steeped in ammonia a while, then polished with one of the many soaps for metal, and then thinly coated with vaseline to preserve it from oxidation.

THE COLLECTING OF WATCH-COCKS

You may have seen necklaces made out of parts of old verge watches—out of watch-cocks, or, as the French call them, *coqs de montre*. Apart from the decorative use of watch-cocks as strung together into

necklaces or bracelets, or made into brooches and other fastenings, there is quite a world of knowledge and research in connection with these lovely things. The art that was expended on them was in itself very marvellous; as much as thirty shillings apiece was paid to the workmen who made them in the days when they were fixed into watches—our grandfathers' and great-grandfathers' and great-great-grandfathers' days. And the art of them is so individual; hardly ever will you come across two that in curves and details of the ornament are at all identical. Nobody now can know who were the designers, but the ornamental lines of watch-cocks are supremely good as bits of design.

Historical.—The history of watch-cocks goes back for three centuries, and the dates of them can best be assigned by the study of dated watches, or watches bearing the names of makers whose dates are known from the records of the Clockmakers' Company or of the Paris Clockmakers' Guild; sometimes the hall-mark indicates an otherwise missing date. French collectors classify their *coqs de montre* into Louis Quatorze, Régence, Louis Quinze, and Louis Seize divisions. I do not know of any such clear-cut divisions as those for English watch-cocks. But the English-made are the firmest, and, strange to say, the most beautifully ornamented, as well as the best. In the days when each part of each watch was hand-made, when there was no standardisation of parts, and those who purchased watches were people with plenty of money, cost was "little object" but inevitable, and

ornament was lavished on the cases, the cocks, the pillars which connected the two plates of a watch movement, and other parts of a watch; the hands alone often cost £1. In 1793 a watchmaker named Josiah Emery told a Select Committee of the House of Commons that he had made thirty-two or thirty-three lever watches, and his price for them was £150 each. About that date the lever movement began to supersede the verge movement, and the making of watch-cocks declined.

The Verge Movement and the Name.—I need not, if I could, go into the technical differences between the verge movement—the earliest of all—and the lever movement; but, broadly, the balance-spring, or hair-spring, in the verge was open to the watch-case, and in the lever watch it is closed. The first function of the watch-cock was to hold in place one end of the balance-staff, and a slight piece of metal sufficed for that. But the size of the piece of metal was soon increased to perform the function of a cover or shell for the circular balance-spring, and that, I think, is how the name *coq de montre*—which in English became watch-cock—arose. For “shell” in French is *coque*; the circular protection of the balance-spring was a shell or *coque* to it, and *coq* is doubtless a corruption of *coque*. There is another theory as to the name, I know; by watchmenders the circular piece is called the “body” of the watch-cock, and the arc-shaped or four-sided part is called the “tail”; but in that case, where is the head of chanticleer? Never till the

late eighteenth century did French watchmakers give a tail to the *coq*, and I think the second theory as to the name cannot hold good.

French and English.—The great distinction between the French-made and the English-made is that the *coq de montre* had no "tail," which the watch-cock invariably had. Another distinction is the material. Until the middle of the eighteenth century the material in France was nearly always silver; in England it was always brass. Only the British mechanics of the time appear to have been equal to forging a brass—watch-brass it is called—as hard or almost as hard and durable as fine steel, or to drilling and piercing, sawing, and then engraving that hard metal into the beautiful and individual designs which rejoices a collector's eye.

In English watch-cocks the "tail" was nearly always open-work till about 1770, though the solid "tail" began to be made about 1720. Something about that date can be judged from the design at the neck, or that part where the "body" and the "tail" are joined. The early watch-cocks show a basket there, and the idea seems to have been that the lovely floral lines represented flowers in a basket. The "ears" or bits of floral design left and right of the basket and apart from the "body" survived even when the basket had given place to a mask or face. The oldest English watch-cocks have open feet of irregular shape and "ears."

The Prices Now.—Nowadays the whole "works"

of a verge watch can be bought for a shilling, the watch-cock included. I have picked up watch-cocks at a penny each. You will find them in watchmakers' windows, ready gilded, for 1s. 6d. or 2s. each, and bracelets of them can be bought for 15s., and necklaces for £2 or £3; they are also made into brooches, clasps, hat-pins, and scarf-pins.

COLLECTING SMALL THINGS

"Collecting small things in a small way" appears on the title-page of a book by the Rev. A. W. Oxford, M.D., and the title is "Notes from a Collector's Catalogue, with a Bibliography of English Cookery Books." I have seen Mr. Oxford's intensely interesting collection. Were it but for the bibliography of works on cookery alone it would be valuable, yet it is valuable also in other ways.

Quotations of Wisdom.—This is how the book begins: "I must keep three rules if I wish to collect wisely—(1) Collect only what is beautiful or of great human interest. (2) Collect only things which are scarce; let there be a clear limit to whatever is being collected. (3) Give special attention to things which museums would be glad to possess." And this wise counsellor adds that "I must never let myself be carried away by love of freaks, such as coins wrongly stamped, or books with mistakes in their title-pages, which were withdrawn from circulation as soon as the mistake was discovered." And "I have often found things common which at first sight seemed very rare.

Now, before I go far in collecting a new thing, I ask myself, 'Can a millionaire overtake me in a week?' If it is probable he can, I send the collection to a sale-room and start on something else. Moreover, I must not start on any branch which is too vast for my modest means." As to "things which museums would be glad to possess," Mr. Oxford says that "every village ought to have a museum in which such things as smock-frocks, flails, screeves, and local engravings should be preserved. If no proper building can be erected, why should not a part of the school, or even of the church, be used?"

Collectable Small Things.—

Let me catalogue a few of the delectable and collectable small things which Mr. Oxford has got together. Cards and their accessories—counters, for instance. There are the counters and their boxes to be found, in great variety, made of gold, silver, ivory, bone, tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, porcelain, pinchbeck, wood. There are counters consisting of George III shillings and threepenny-bits. Porcelain counters were usually of foreign make. Then



PEASANT-MADE WOODEN
NUTCRACKERS.

there were trays or receptacles for counters while at play; some in Battersea enamel, some in salt-glaze, some in cardboard lined with silk, some of *papier mâché*. Gaming tickets, of wood, tortoiseshell, and ivory, are to be found, some of them marked "White's." There are dice-boxes also, and domino-boxes, and so forth.

Then what about a series of London hall-marked silver vinaigrettes? And nutmeg-boxes, that used to be carried in the pocket in days when every gentle-



NUTMEG-BOX IN WOOD.

man thought himself a dab at brewing a bowl of punch? These nutmeg-boxes contain a grater under one lid and a receptacle for the nutmeg itself under another. Mr. Oxford has more than 150 of them in silver, not to mention some in Battersea enamel, wood, Sheffield plate, iron, brass, and ivory. These boxes go back to the Stuart period, and ceased to be made in the early period of Queen Victoria's reign.

Mr. Oxford has also a number of old stay-busks, about the quaintest things I have ever seen. Most

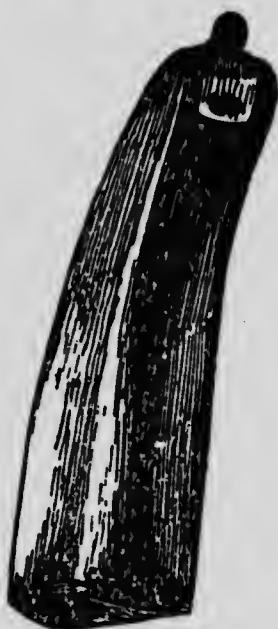
of these now extant were made for women of humble station, carved in wood or whalebone—the latter by sailors, it would appear. But there are also ivory ones, long, for the long Elizabethan stomacher. The wooden ones are marvellously carved as a rule. Some of them are triangular and positively bulky. But I warn my readers that old stay-busks are very rare.

Knitting-needle holders, again, are in great request. They are wooden, as a rule, but some are silver, some iron, and some of bead-work.

Travelling ink-holders are another "line"; and so are pounce-boxes, used before the introduction of blotting-paper.

Seals and scarabs, circular metal calendars (those perpetual almanacks) for the pocket; tokens in metal inscribed with sentiments, which were used in days when few people could write a letter; diaries and commonplace-books; and so on—the range of small things to collect and store in small cabinets in small houses, or in flats or apartments, is really quite remarkable. And to this range there is no other guide to be compared with Mr. Oxford's book.

Snuff-boxes Mr. Oxford rules out, as being numberless



SNUFF-HORN.

and limitless. Patchboxes have the same defect as a "line." But, really, I do not know that it is at all essential to have a *complete* set of whatever you are bent on collecting. My own rule has been to pick up anything I come across that I like, and know to be antique and genuine, if I can obtain it for a low price.

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