

DISHES FOR MONARCHS.

SOME OF THE CHINA OF ROYALTY PAST AND PRESENT.

That Used by Queen Victoria Is Plain and Simple in Design—Superb Ware in the French Collections—Napoleonic Tastes—Plates for the Czars.

The china of Queen Victoria, like that estimable, is very simple and plain, and it has been furnished for years by a single and famous factory at Worcester. It is heavy plain white, with a narrow gold band, and the initials V. R.—Victoria Regina—in the centre. The same standard pattern is used at Buckingham Palace in London, Windsor Castle, and the Queen's private palace at Osborne on the Isle of Wight; and this fact is accounted for by the Queen's well-known habits of economy. It is presumed that the castle in the Highlands of Scotland is furnished in a similar manner, although it is never opened to visitors, and the collector has not been able to secure a sample from that place.

The china of the Prince of Wales comes from the same factory, but it is of great variety and more ornamental than that of his imperial mother, and it usually bears the same crest. The Princess of Wales has a taste for delicate patterns, and she likes the lightest and thinnest china that can be secured. Her cups are like eggshells, and her plates as thin as wafers. Not long ago a great fuss was made by the English manufacturers because she ordered a full service of several hundred pieces from France.

When the palace of the Tuileries in Paris was sacked by the Commune the most superb collection of china that was ever gathered under a single roof was scattered among the people. It included several dinner and breakfast services that had belonged to and been used by Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Louis XVI., Napoleon I., Louis Philippe, and Napoleon III., and all was of the finest of special patterns designed by famous artists, for the French Kings were fastidious and extravagant, and the luxury of the empire has never been surpassed. The palaces at Versailles and St. Cloud were stripped in a similar manner. In time the china was conveyed from the garrets of the plunderers to the pawnbrokers and the shops of the dealers in art and antiquities, and it has been picked up by collectors from all over the world. A New York gentleman has an entire dinner service which belonged to Louis XIV. that was collected for him during the course of two years by a Paris dealer in second hand goods; and simple examples of rare quality can be found upon the walls of thousands of houses. Millions of francs have been made by the dealers in this sort of ware by buying and selling the imperial china.

Louis XIV. was in the habit of ornamenting his dinner plates with the portraits of the ladies of his court. Louis Philippe followed his example, and, if the biographies of the ladies were to accompany their pictures, the plates would bring a much higher price. The china of the latter monarch is of the rarest quality and design, but it is very common, and samples can be purchased at almost any antique shop in Paris, London, or New York. He almost monopolized the Sevres factory during his reign, and the palaces in Paris, Versailles, St. Cloud, and Fontainebleau were filled with gems, that have lost much of their value, however, because they are so numerous. Louis Philippe was very fond of Cupids and garlands, and thousands of pieces bearing these designs are still in existence.

Napoleon the Great adopted the humble bee as his sign manual, and not only the china, but the furniture and draperies of his palace, his swords and carriages, and even note paper bore the representation of that useful insect whose name represents the first letter of the name of Bonaparte. In the centre of his plate one usually finds the escutcheon of France very elaborately and beautifully done in gold.

Napoleon III. used china of very delicate pattern, usually white and gold, with an ornamental "N" in the centre, surmounted by a coronet. It was probably designed to please the refined taste of the Empress Eugenie. He had a beautiful set of white, with a black enameled border, upon which were traced in gold the eagles of France, and in the centre the imperial escutcheon; a similar set in royal blue, another in pink, and others in bronze, green, canary yellow, and maroon. These sets were very large and each was sufficient to serve several hundred people.

The Winter Palace at St. Petersburg, Russia, with the exception of the Vatican at Rome, is the largest residence in the world. It has 700 rooms, many of them of enormous size, and some so large that the White House at Washington could be erected in them, portico and all. It is said that 50,000 soldiers have been sheltered under its roof. The Czar does not occupy it very often, as he prefers the smaller and more comfortable palaces at Peterhof and Gatchina, but most of the court balls, banquets, and other official functions take place there. He has six palaces in and around St. Petersburg, but those are his favorites.

The plates used by all the Czars are larger than the ordinary size. Those of Catherine were ornamented with conventional signs of blue and gold, and bore the imperial crest in the centre. Catherine the Great was one of the most luxurious and profligate monarchs in history. She is known as the Cleopatra of modern times. She was a liberal patron of the arts and sciences. She filled a palace that she called

the Hermitage with one of the finest collections of pictures and statuary in the world and called to her capital the most famous artists, as well as the most famous poets and authors of Europe. Her taste was exquisite—more to be admired than her morals—and it would be natural to find in her collection the most beautiful of china, but it is commonplace.—Cincinnati Tribune.

SLAKE SWALLOWS SLAKE.

Details of a Contest in Which There Was a Good Deal of Science Shown.

An interesting episode in snake life took place in the curious little store run by O. R. Deane, where there is any kind of a pet, either dead or alive, that the average man or woman wants, and some that none want. For a year or two Mr. Deane has had a vigorous black snake in his window, confined in a small cage with a turfed bottom. Yesterday a small boy brought in a common grass snake which he picked up on the "island." Without much idea that the blacksnake would eat his cousin, though he had heard serpents were so villainous, he had curiosity enough to try it, and slipped the fellow into the blacksnake's cage.

For a time the smaller snake lay coiled up quietly at the side of the cage, and the big fellow not only did not seem to notice him, but crawled carelessly over him once or twice. This was in accordance with a peculiarity noticed by Mr. Deane in feeding him frogs. As long as the frogs set quiet the snake would take no notice of them, but the instant they hopped, flash would go his neck, and the poor animals would be doomed. So it was with the grass snake. He didn't seem to know a good thing when he had it, for by and by he became inquisitive concerning its new quarters, and stuck up his head to look around. That settled it, for almost as quickly as the eye could see the black snake had fixed his mouth around his roommate's slender neck just behind the head. Then he began to work his jaws in a fashion peculiar to the snake. They are loose-actioned affairs, working in nearly every direction and unjointing if necessary. He wanted to get his victim so that he would go in head first, for who ever heard of a snake crawling backward? So he kept hitching one side of his jaw and then the other till finally he got all ready to shut up the telescope. When the two were precisely headon the little fellow began to disappear, suction taking him in and crooked teeth preventing him from wriggling out.

But the little snake was gamy, and made his conqueror fight for his dinner. After about eight inches of him had disappeared head first, he evolved a plan to stop that method of procedure. He wrapped himself around the body of his host about four times and held on. In vain the blacksnake sucked; he was like the boy that stood on the burning deck—he would not go.

"H'm," said his snakeship, "this won't do I can't digest you comfortably this way." And so he began to shorten himself and, swell up in the middle, as an anglerworm does when you put him on the hook. By this means he gained an inch or so, which he swallowed. Then, holding hard with his teeth, he lengthened out again and unwound some more of his dinner. Then he repeated the process again and again till all about eight inches of the little snake had gone in. The victim was very much alive still and tried new tactics. He threw his tail around the blacksnake's neck in two or three folds. He was hanging out of his mouth at one corner, out of the way of his teeth, and the blacksnake had no purchase on him. With matters in that state it was a question of physiology whether the grass snake would have been digested or would have eaten up the blacksnake from the inside out. But the latter had evidently done that thing before and knew a trick or two himself. He squirmed over to the side of the cage and rubbed his neck vigorously against the wires, loosening the grass snake's neck a mite. By sucking vigorously he got the advantage of this, and soon the last hold was broken and his victim slid into the depths, wriggling his tail deftly as it disappeared. The process of entombment occupied twenty minutes.

Not long after this the blacksnake was as trisky as ever, and no trace could be seen of his swallowed cousin, which was rather strange, as the small snake was all of two feet long, and as big around as your thumb, while the black snake was but 4 1/2 feet long and not more than 1 1/2 inches in diameter.—Springfield Republican.

WANTED ALL OF THEM.

Declined to Take Only One Wife as it Would Spoil the Set for Him.

At Oxford in quite recent times, there was a don, the master of a college, whose admiration for aristocracy sometimes led him to truckle to the great ones of the earth.

The don had three handsome daughters, and it was the hope of his life and the desire of his heart that they should make aristocratic marriages. The daughters were in full sympathy with their father on this point, and were in no danger of loving anybody who was not in every sense eligible.

Among the undergraduates was an Indian prince, a very important personage in his own country, and not by any means an obscure one in this. He was rich, and everybody knew what everybody in a case like this never fails to know. The Oxford don thought it was his duty to invite the princely undergraduate to dinner, and his daughters, always willing that their father should do his duty, agreed with him.

The prince was invited, and accepted the hospitality offered him. Everything was done to make him welcome. The young

ladies on every occasion behaved as young ladies should behave and the prince made no secret of his admiration of them in a princely sort of way.

One morning the prince, very carefully dressed, asked for an interview with the don. After the door was closed he began to hesitate and had to be encouraged in a fatherly way, and at last succeeded in expressing a wish to marry the don's three daughters—he would take the lot.

The don was at first so much astonished to say anything, but after a little delay he explained to the prince that the law of England would not allow even a prince to have three wives. The potentate was slow to understand the nature of the difficulty, but at last retired to consider the matter. Later in the day he returned and renewed his offer, but declined to take only one, as it would spoil the set.—Pearson's Weekly.

KING OF PICKPOCKETS.

Joseph Wailey, who Made a Fortune as a Thief and was then Converted.

The ex-king of pickpockets in London, Mr. Joseph Wailey, has just died of pneumonia at the age of 83 years, forty of which he spent from time to time in jail. Like a grand old-time monarch, he had several wives; at least seven are known to have constituted his better half. His family of course, was extremely numerous, but he didn't bother himself much about looking after them. He was born at Southampton, and commenced to practice his profession at the age of 10. He was then engaged almost exclusively in the handkerchief department, but he progressed rapidly, and was soon promoted to the branch of jewelry and pocketbooks. When he was about nineteen years old he was President of the first pick-pocket trust ever formed in England.

Mrs. Wailey, his mother, was a good and religious woman, and when her bad son Joe was sent to jail for the first time she died of grief. Joe cried bitterly over the loss of his mother, but soon dried his tears and resumed his old vocation. He became tired of Southampton, and started for the capital. On his way to London he was attacked by footpads. He pitched into them and killed one, but they finally succeeded in robbing him, and he arrived in London penniless. Six months after his arrival there he found himself, as he said, "in comfortable circumstances." He had now the means of extending his operations. He founded and directed for several years a band of robbers in different lines, including burglars, footpads, pickpockets, and sneak thieves, that were the terror of the suburbs of London.

Most of Wailey's companions were captured and sent to jail, but he for a long time managed to hide himself from the police. On one occasion he jumped into the Thames, and the morning papers came out the next day with an account of his suicide. But Wailey was an all-round athlete, and swimming was one of his notable accomplishments. So he reappeared at Gravesend, where he was the most successful blackmail on record. This new branch of his profession amused him most, because he did not know before he took it up that there were so many fools in the world as there really are. What he termed his very simplest tricks brought him in large revenues. The trust was extended until it had members in all the principal cities of England, and Wailey was still king, except during the interregnum that followed any one of his numerous convictions. At last, when he became rich, he began to think of retiring from business and living peaceably upon his hard earned money.

His mind took a religious twist, probably an inheritance from his mother. One Sunday morning, while wandering through Victoria Park, he noticed a large crowd gathered around a stand from which a colored man was preaching. The colored man was Celestin Edworthy. With the old-time instinct of a pickpocket, Wailey at first thought he would work the crowd, but he simply worked his way near enough to the preacher to be able to listen to his words; and he did listen with the greatest attention. He became moved, and tears ran down his cheeks. Then and there he confessed his sins—no small affair. Without speaking of his ephemeral transgressions, such as his seven or eight marriages, Wailey had amassed a fortune of about \$100,000 by active practice in all the various branches of his profession.

Upon the question of restriction linked to his repentance the records are silent. But at all events he got religion, and got it bad, as his pals used to say. He turned preacher, and was considered one of the most eloquent among the lurid orators of open-air religious meetings in London. He became as great a favorite among the good and righteous as he had been among the bad and ungodly. A great throng attended his funeral, and in that throng, by way of honoring the dead, the pickpockets were present actively.

Punishing Prisoners in China.

The unhappy prisoners were flogged as they were ignominiously paraded round and dragged mercilessly along, for they could hardly move, each having a large wooden collar round, 3 feet by 3 1/2 feet, and 3 1/2 inches thick, attached to his neck. The board is in two parts, each of which contains two semi-circular apertures. The half boards are screwed together, so as to form a huge collar frame, leaving the head and one of the hands visible above. A chain is attached to the board, by the other end of which the warden drags the prisoner. On the board are inscriptions in Tibetan and Chinese, giving an account of the nature of the crime and penalty inflicted. The poor wretches were ready to sink under the weight of the board, but this they were not allowed to do; whenever

one attempted to sit down the whip of his cruel warder served to keep him up.—Nineteenth Century.

KEEN CUBAN KNIVES.

The Insurgents Have Been Fighting for Liberty with the Machete.

There is no weapon of peace or war like the machete, which the Cubans are now using in their fight for liberty. Every country has a sword of its own, but Cuba is the only place whose only sword and only instrument of war has been her reaping hook or cane knife.

It she trees herself from Spain the most decisive part of the work must be done with the machete.

A Cuban leader in giving to the writer his estimate of the chances of the Cubans, said that the conflict hinged very largely on how many of the people in cane fields had good machetes. There is not one Cuban in a hundred who knows how to use a gun. The islanders have been denied the use of firearms so long that those who have fallen into the possession of guns in the battles of the ten years' rebellion often threw them down when they got into battle and relied chiefly on their cane knives. The battle of Baira, in which so many Spanish heads were cut off, and which was the bloodiest in Cuban history, was won by cane knives in the hands of the Spaniards.

The great execution of the machete lies in the wonderful skill in handling it. There are three classes of these knives. The first is nothing more nor less than a sword, twenty-eight inches in length, made of the very best spring steel and incased in a leather scabbard. It looks like an ordinary sword, but is much heavier. It is worn by the Cuban officers and gentlemen. The next is an overseer's machete, very flexible and with a slight stroke it will sever a man's head from the body.

But the broad, heavy, sixteen-inch knife is Cuba's peculiar weapon of offense and defense and her principal agricultural and domestic implement. It is used for nearly every service, for which we use an axe, an axe, a cleaver, a pruning-hook, or a scythe. Forests are cleared with them, and they are about the only tool in a butcher's shop. Nowhere else in Spanish America is the machete so generally used. Nearly the whole of Cuba is devoted to the cultivation of cane and tobacco, and every stalk of these crops is harvested with the machete. Great skill in handling them is the result. An army of the most skillful fencing masters in Paris could not stand up before an equal number of Cuban cane cutters. In one of the engagements a short time ago, when a detachment of Spanish cavalry charged upon the Cubans in the open, as the onslaught was made the Cubans are reported to have caught the Spanish sabres in orquillas, or forked sticks, and then cut men off their horses as if they were nothing more than stalks of grass.

These regular cane knives, on account of their peculiar shape, cannot be worn in a scabbard. They must be worn hanging exposed from the trunk, and the fact that they can thus be worn at all denotes that the wearer is one of very careful habits, for the blade is always kept as sharp as the very best steel can be made. Absolutely every Cuban wears one. It is his most highly valued piece of property, and he will do almost anything to secure a good machete. In the mountains of Southern Cuba he is at home with his machete. He would not give it for the best American rifle or revolver. The undergrowth is too dense for anything but the passage of the machete through the bush. He trims his footpath and waits to spring upon a Spaniard and behead him. And there is nothing that a Spaniard dreads so much in Cuba as the work of these knives. Their stroke is the stroke of death in nearly every instance.—Boston Home Journal.

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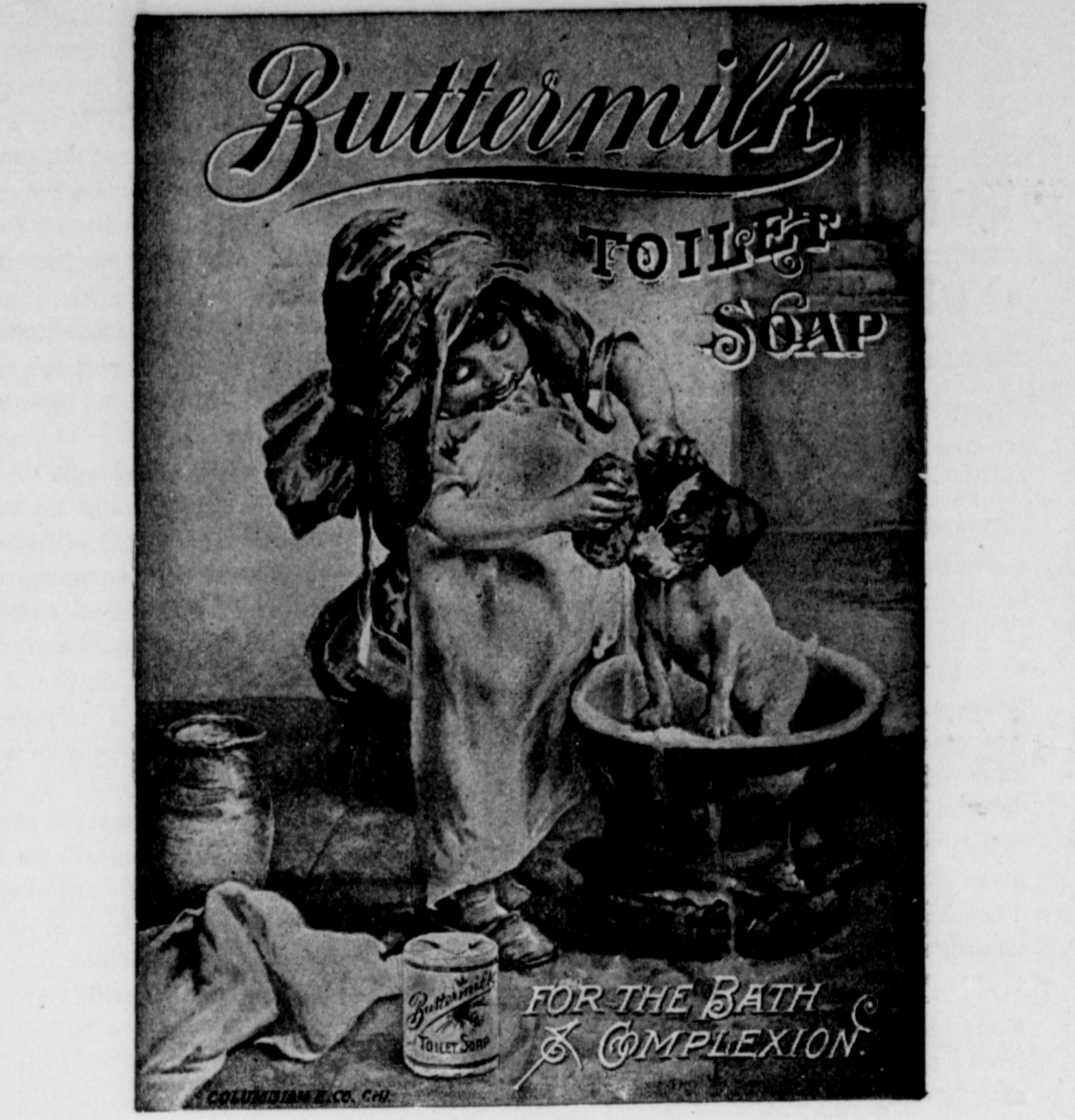
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