

QUEER OLD LUXURIES.

Some of the Features of Costly Banquets Among the Romans.

It is not unlikely that Horace's epigram, "De gustibus non est disputandum" [there is no disputing about tastes], was prompted by the dishes indulged in by the Roman nobility in his day. The most complex dish of the present would seem to be simplicity itself compared with the compounds that were spread before the patricians' epicures of the Roman Empire. Salacacby was one of these dishes, and was, we are told by Mr. Hans J. S. Cassel in Cassel's Magazine for May, invented by one Apicius Collius, a patrician who flourished in the time of Tiberius. It seems that this gentleman wrote a book, which is happily extant, called "De Re Coquinaria," wherein he treated the art of cooking from a scientific point of view, and expatiated upon the proper methods of preparing all the fashionable nastinesses of the period. From this book Mr. Cassel extracts the following recipe for concocting salacacby, which we gladly copy for the benefit of American housewives who have heretofore despaired of pleasing their husbands' tastes:

"Boil in a mortar parsley-seed, dried mint, dried pennyroyal, ginger, coriander, stoned raisins, mustard-seed, and a few boned anchovies. Add salt, oil, wine, honey (the Roman equivalent for sugar), pepper, and vinegar, and stir up well. Then mix in a cacabulum, with three crusts of Pycnintine bread, the flesh of two pullets, four goats' kidneys, and one goat's tongue, after which throw in vestine cheese, filberts, pine-kernels, minced onions, cucumbers, and garlic. Set aside in a warm place for three days, then pour a soup over it, garnish with snow, and serve up."

It seems that Apicius was an extravagant glutton, for he spent in the space of two years the equivalent of nearly eight hundred thousand pounds upon his food alone. Then he suddenly took it into his head to look over the state of his affairs, and, finding that he had only the equivalent of about a hundred thousand pounds sterling left, he came to the conclusion that such a pitance was not enough to live comfortably upon, and so committed suicide by poison. Mr. Cassel's article goes on:

"Another dish which seems to have owed its origin to him (Apicius) was tetrapharmakon. So far as we can gather, it consisted of four necessary ingredients—they were, a high peacock, a freshly killed pheasant, the hock and udder of a wild sow, and a bread-pudding which was baked over the whole. But this was not all by any means; these merely constituted the base of the dish, so to speak, for they used to throw in all manner of little trifles, such as nightingales, collops (our collops), fragments of fat pork, etc., all of which tended to give the dish a somewhat rich and varied flavor, which in all probability would not recommend it to the modern-day stomach."

"Ragouts made from peacocks' brains, nightingales', swallows', or parrots' tongues (if the parrots were able to speak the value of the dish was quadrupled), were by no means uncommon entrees at the tables of the emperors, while buzzards, ostriches, and phenicopters (presumed to be the ptarmigan from Norway), frequently adorned those of the wealthy citizens. Anything, in fact, that was uncommon, hard to obtain, or very expensive, was sure to find a place of honor upon the festive boards of the Court."

"Garum (a sauce) was made as follows:—Fish of the proper kind—generally mackerel—were first selected, their entrails taken out and steeped in vinegar for several days. When these were properly pickled, they were taken out of the vinegar and dried. Then they were pulverized with trumetry, pepper, and a variety of other herbs, such as dandelion root, mint, thyme, etc., after which the resulting blackish powder was ground to a thick syrup with honey, put into jars for some weeks to ferment, and, when needed for the table, mixed with Falernian wine to a proper consistency."

"A gentleman of Galba's time, who rejoiced in the simple name of Lucius Bambonelsvergus, so our friend Apicius informs us, wrote a long and learned treatise upon dormice, their habits, and the best way of fattening them for the table. Unfortunately for the cooks of the modern school, however, this valuable book is lost, but it is some consolation to know that Petronius has touched upon the subject. He tells us that dormice got fat by sleeping, and he also gives us several recipes for preparing these little creatures for consumption. Three or four pages of his book are devoted to dormouse sausages, and he then tells us that these should be eaten with a sauce made of poppy seeds or honey."

How granite is polished.

Iron sand is used for sawing and polishing granite. Its employment enables machine polishing to be executed about three times as fast as when set sand is used, and about ten times less is necessary. The process of manufacturing it is interesting. Into an opening at the top of the fire-brick cupola, lined with an outer casing of iron, are thrown from an elevated stage coke and scraps of old cast iron. A fierce heat is kept up in the furnace by steam-driven fans. The metal when melted finds its way out at the bottom of the cupola down a spout, and a powerful steam blast sends it flying in white-hot spherical globules into a brick chamber containing a tank of cold water. The spherules dropping into the water, cause numerous minute explosions. The water is run off, the spherules collected, dried and put through a series of sieves moved by steam power, from which about seven different sizes are obtained, varying from fine, powder to about the size of No. 6 shot. The product is then put into one hundredweight bags for sale.—American Architect.

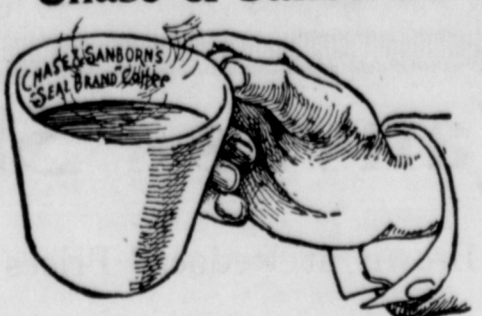
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PEOPLE WITH HOBBIES.

Queer Collections Made of All Sorts of Useful and Useless Articles.

A very peculiar hobby was that of an old woman who had been employed at Court in the capacity of nurse, and who had a most extensive collection of pieces of wedding-cake. The cakes to which the fragments belonged had been cut at the marriages of the highest in the land. The place of honour was given to a portion of Queen Victoria's wedding-cake, and nearly every Royal marriage that had occurred since the accession of William IV. was represented in this curious collection.

Lord Petersham, a noted dandy in his day, had a hobby for walking sticks, and also for various kinds of tea and snuff. All round his sitting-room were shelves, upon one side laden with canisters of Souchong, Bobea, Congou, Pekoe, Russian, and other varieties of tea. The shelves opposite were decorated with handsome jars, containing every kind of snuff, while snuff-boxes lay here, there, and everywhere. Lord Petersham prided himself upon possessing the most magnificent array of boxes to be found in Europe, and was supposed to have a fresh box for every day in the year. When someone admired a beautiful old light-blue Sevres box he was, using, he lisped out, "Yes it is a nice summer box, but would not do for winter wear."

Count Henry von Brühl, a famous German diplomatist, busied himself in collecting boots, shoes, slippers, and wigs of all shapes, sizes, and fashions. This curious hobby was rivalled by that of a late King of Bavaria, whose collection of hats was unique.

A King of Wurtemberg boasted the possession of above 9,000 copies of the Bible; and a nicotine-loving American revelled in a treasury of pipes, of which he could count 365 specimens in meerschaum, brier, glass, china, and clay.

The Duke of Sussex, brother of King George II., had a pair of hobbies that were wide as the poles assunder. He was an indatigable collector of Bibles and cigars.

Pope Pius IX. was a collector of slippers. He always had twenty-four pairs in his wardrobe, made of red cloth embroidered with gold, and ornamented with a solid gold cross; his chamberlain being strictly enjoined not to part with a single pair, however well worn they might be, to any of the many devout applicants for them.

Wigs and walking-sticks were the special vanities of Mr. William Evans, some time principal clerk in the probatory's office for Anglesea, Carnarvon, and Merioneth, and so highly did he value them that he bequeathed one of each to three different maiden ladies, for whom he had in turn felt a tenderness in early life. Another gentleman had a hobby for scarfpins. He is said to have kept a book containing as many pages as there are days in the year, in each of which a different pin was stuck. Every morning he fastened into his scarf the pin which occupied the space allotted to that particular date, returning it to its place when he undressed at night.

Monsieur Nestor Roqueplan, a Frenchman of letters, was a collector of warning-pans, and devoted a gallery in his house to this article of furniture, where visitors might enjoy the privilege of beholding the identical warning-pans that had aired the beds of such celebrities as Queen Mary of Scotland, Catherine de Medici, Gabriel d'Estrees, Diana de Poitiers, Madame Pompadour, Marie Antoinette, Mademoiselle de Fontange, and other noted personages. Another eccentric Frenchman was a bean enthusiastic. He wrote a book upon the history of aricots, and there in influence upon humanity; and rejoiced in collecting beans from all quarters of the globe, and carefully labelling and arranging them. Some of the specimens were very valuable, having cost as much as 500fr. His death was hastened by the mysterious disappearance of some Japanese beans, upon which he set especial value.

A European lady living in Japan acquired no fewer than 700 teapots of various patterns and kinds. Another lady had a hobby for collecting bonnets. She made a rule never to part with one she had worn, and when she died left behind her a wonderful collection of feminine head adornments.

Gillott, the founder of the world renowned steel pen business, had a passion for Cremona fiddles, although he was absolutely without musical knowledge. A London barber's hobby was the collection of dressing-cases—a hobby which he pursued with such avidity that on his death 300 of these articles came into the hands of his executors.

The Queen of Italy is said to be an enthusiastic collector of boots and shoes. Her collection includes shoes of Marie Antoinette, of the Empress Josephine, Mary Stuart, Queen Anne, and the Empress Catherine of Russia.

Put sleeves to Save Life.

Up rises an inventor in the person of superintendent Ferguson of the Municipal Electric Light Company, of Brooklyn, and fills a "long felt want" with a rubber balloon arrangement which is at once a dress improver and a life preserver. When inflated the appliances are eight inches long and three inches above the arm. They are kept in place by an elastic band under the arm and one around the shoulders.

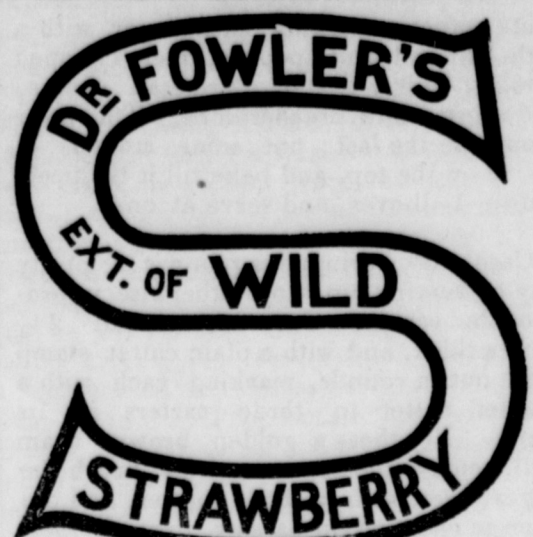
The pulps are inflated by the wearer blowing into a tube. They are made of thin rubber and sewed with silk to match the dress. They are so adjusted as to cause the wearer to float safely. Several pairs have been shown at local seashore resorts. A fair member of the "1492" company at Manhattan Beach was the first person to appear in the surf with them, and she created a sensation.—N. Y. World.

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The water supply is obtained from Loch Katrine, thirty-five miles distant, and is copious and pure. There is no better water furnished any city in the world, and we believe that Dublin is the only city that gets it cheaper. There have been \$12,500,000 invested in water works. In 1870 a sinking fund was established, and it is expected that the fund will pay off the whole debt by 1941, when the water works will be the unburdened property of the corporation. In the meanwhile the supply of water has been enormously increased, the quality improved, and the price reduced more than 50 per cent. In addition to the supply of water for the usual purposes, it is now proposed to drive machinery by a hydraulic pressure of 1,050 pounds to the square inch throughout the business area of the city.

The Glasgow corporation has long been in the field as a manufacturer of gas plants, which were owned by two private companies and commenced the production and sale of gas. The quality of gas was improved, while its price was reduced. The city furnished twenty-two candle-power gas at the rate of 60 cents per 1,000 cubic feet.

The street railway of Glasgow were operated by a private company. Six years ago the council endeavored to impose certain conditions on this company, such as regulating the fare and limiting the hours of work for the employees. The company refused to make any concessions, and as a result the council decided not to renew its charter, but to take possession of the street railway property itself and operate it. It put on 300 new cars, 3,000 horses, and 1,700 new men. The city introduced a 1-cent fare, hitherto unknown, and made 4 cents the maximum fare. The experiment of operating street railways by the city has proved a success. The city has made money, and at the same time has improved the plant and reduced the fares. It now carries 300,000 a week for 1-cent fares, 600,000 for 2-cent fares, 35,000 for 3-cent fares, and 20,000 for 4-cent fares. The next step will be to abolish all fares above 2 cents.

The distinguishing feature of Glasgow's financial management is the sinking fund. It is now applied to every municipal enterprise of the city. On examining its accounts one finds that all serious debts are on the way to be liquidated by the operation of this automatic device.

The ability, the honesty, and the economy which have been brought to bear in the administration of the public affairs of Glasgow have been secured by the elimination of politics. The council is composed of solid business men. Politics is practically unknown in the meetings of the council, nor is eloquent speech in great demand there. There is no city in the world so well governed as Glasgow, and none whose affairs are conducted so thoroughly in keeping with the principle that the public officials of the city are to be regarded as the directors of a great co-operative undertaking in which every citizen is a shareholder, and the dividends of which are payable in the better health, increased comfort, recreation, and happiness of the whole population.

How to Make a Room Beautiful.

What a room needs is to be lived in comfortably, cheerfully, and wisely, and by that process every corner becomes "a cosy corner."

If by one window is a writing desk or table, kept in good order, with light falling in the right direction, that part of the room will become with use a pleasant resort. A work table placed where you can best use it, whether by daylight or lamplight, is another attractive spot where children and visitors like to find you, and to think of you after they have left.

A piano used as a kind of catchall for ornaments, is no addition to the charm of a room; but a piano that is used and loved like a friend, is the centre of attraction. Any mantel piece, however plain, is in better taste than the structure of velvet often used to conceal its bareness. A centre table is not useful, as a rule, and it has a strange power of breaking in upon general conversation by separating talkers from one another. A round table is better placed at one end of the room than in the middle. There, it has its use, it makes another pleasant place; otherwise, it should be removed, for no piece of furniture that is not used, adds to the comforts of a sitting room.

A long, narrow room challenges the ingenuity of its occupant. The problem is to break its length and increase its apparent width. This is done by dividing it into parts, making arrangements for music, writing, reading, and sewing, so as to make skilful use of windows, lamps, and fireplace. Of ornaments there should not be many. And the walls! Ah, there the adviser pauses, for pictures have a value to their possessors not to be stated in any catalogue of fine art. In every room should be some beautiful religious picture, and in these days of fine photographs it is possible to enjoy the greatest treasures of that art that the world possesses. Be happy in your room and make others happy there, and it will grow into beauty in the hands of Time, even while he is at work upon the color and fabric of every article within its walls.—Donahoe's Magazine.



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