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# OLD PEWTER.

## MUSTER ROLL OF NOTED CRAFTSMEN.

Reviewed by JOHN KYRLE FLETCHER.

"Old Pewter: Its Makers and Marks," by H. H. Cotterell. Batsford; 5gns.

The pewterer's craft has a peculiar interest for the people of South Wales and the West Country. It was till two centuries ago the ordinary man's plate, as it served for use upon the oak refectory table and for ornament upon the Welsh oak dresser, from which it reflected a curious silvery light over the room. The question often asked is: What has become of all the pewter which was once in daily use in the country? The answer is supplied by such stories as the one told to me by a lady from Bridgend, who remembered the time when the full dinner service of pewter lay forgotten under the bed in the spare bedroom in piles, and was finally sold to a travelling metal merchant to be melted down to make solder!

### FAMOUS FAMILY OF PEWTERERS.

Mr. Cotterell's book, with its numerous fine illustrations, helps to renew one's love for the charms of old pewter. The real value of the book, however, is to be found in the full list of names of British pewter makers. In its fulness it deserves to rank with the late Sir Charles Jackson's famous work on "English Goldsmiths and their marks."

As an example of the completeness of this record of the pewterers, one might take the account of a famous Devonshire family of pewterers, the Webbers of Barnstaple. There were two brothers, John Webber and Richard Webber, born 1629 and 1632. Then came John Webber, junior, and his son Alexander who was working till 1739, and his grandson, Richard Webber, was making pewter at Barnstaple as late as 1800.

### SOUTH WALES PEWTERERS.

For the benefit of local collectors I am giving the names from the roll of some of the best-known South Wales pewterers.

The earliest in date is Philip Morgan, of Monmouth, who figures as early as 1616. One Cardiff craftsman I have found entered there, and that is Reece Morgan, of Cardiff, under date 1654.

Later craftsmen were Thomas Vaughan, of Brecon, 1695, and Richard Matthews, of Swansea, 1734.

The close vicinity of Monmouthshire to the city of Bristol is probably the reason why so many of the men of Gwent figure in the list. Of course, one generation led the way to the next, as when Lewis Roberts, of Trellech Grange, left home to go to Bristol to learn the craft in 1646. He eventually settled at Bristol and had under him as apprentices, Edmund Davis, of Chepstow, and Thomas Mason, of Monmouth.

Thomas Mason was a master craftsman in 1672, and he made some fine quality pewter. Nor must I forget to mention Edward Earle, of Newport and Caerleon. His date is rather late, 1722, but he was an excellent craftsman and made many of those extra large round dishes called chargers.

### THE DEATH KNELL.

The middle of the 18th century saw the decline of the use of pewter. Josiah Wedgwood's fine pottery and the equally famous earthenware of his rival Josiah Spode, rang the death knell of the pewterer's craft. Some lingered on like Peter Llewellyn, from Cowbridge, who was making pewter in Castle-street, Bristol, as late as 1851.

And now a word for the splendid series of plates in Mr. Cotterell's book. They represent all the well-known types, and many rare specimens from famous collections. It is naturally very interesting to find specimens illustrated which have been in one's own collection, and the advanced collector will find in the special series of plate rims and their probable date a field for close study.

### THE ABSENT BEEHIVE.

One type only I have failed to find illustrated, and that is the well-known Beehive Tobacco Box, which once stood on the table in the country inns of South Wales. It held probably a pound of Shag Tobacco, and was free to all who used the house. Perhaps it was a distinctly local type, anyhow it was a welcome ornament in the bar parlour, and must have been freely used.

I may seem to have been looking for spots on the sun when I record so slight an omission, but my real object has been to call the author's attention to the beehive in the hope that he may perhaps learn of this local type of pewter tobacco box.

There is a curious error abroad as to fine pewter. Some people will assure you that it is so fine in colour because of the silver in it. This, of course, is quite wrong, as the colour comes from the higher percentage of pure tin used in the making. This is the "X" grade of pewter, which may mean excellent. I think the X mark may be applied to this book. It is the crowning work of a life's study of the gentle craft of pewter-making.

re impression it gives is a slightly grey one. In German sculpture—far more than with Italian or French sculpture—the gulf between the masterpiece and the secondary object is, for a variety of reasons, unusually wide and sharply defined. A second-rate wabian piece of about 1500 tells one very little about the interests involved in the work of the great late-gothic sculptors—Gultscher, Gerhaerts, Erhart, Riemenschneider, Stoss, Pacher, Daucher, Leinberger and Berg—not one of whom is represented here. Sometimes Professor Kuhn is hard put to it to find a representative function for this or that wooden object, and occasionally parallels drawn between these pieces and the work of major sculptors seem rather forced. It might appear preferable to teach, say, late-gothic sculpture from only three or four really first-class figures, however unbalanced the resultant coverage of the regions, than from the thirty or forty run-of-the-mill figures which Professor Kuhn has to use here. The secondary can nearly always be described by reference to the primary.

This, however, is a difficulty and a choice faced by all institutional collections with limited funds and an obligation to 'represent' a subject, and there are arguments on both sides. Apart from anything else, the supply of masterpieces is limited. Any university would welcome a collection comparable with Harvard's backed up by such a handbook, and our gratitude is due to Harvard and Professor Kuhn for what is, in effect, the first book in English ever to deal generally with German sculpture.

MICHAEL BAXANDALL

It would not take many corrections to make this a really useful text-book, which would outlast several generations of students.

REYNOLD HIGGINS

#### THE BRIDE AND THE BACHELORS

Calvin Tomkins

Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965, 36s.

This book originates from articles published a few years ago in *The New Yorker*, which explains its light-hearted tone. The title derives from the famous painting by Marcel Duchamp (Philadelphia). Mr. Tomkins gives an entertaining if anecdotal account of Duchamp and of two younger visual artists of the *avant-garde*: Robert Rauschenberg and Jean Tinguely. To include a musician, John Cage, is a justifiable and enlightening innovation in a book on modern art.

Linking these four 'Bachelors' together is a common desire best expressed in some words of Rauschenberg, 'to work in the gap between art and life'. 'Life' means American city life, hence the urban detritus used by Rauschenberg and Tinguely and the recorded noises used by Cage. Rauschenberg's figure of speech points the true difficulty of their programme. Gaps can produce only sparks; if anything permanent forms, the gap is filled, and there are no more sparks.

The value of the book lies less in its gossip biographies than in the candid way it holds up some current *avant-garde* ideas for inspection, leaving the reader to decide how far he can go with, say, John Cage when he says that 'the highest purpose is to have no purpose at all'.

DOUGLAS HALL

#### VASARI: LIVES OF THE ARTISTS

translated by George Bull

Penguin Classics, 1965, 9s. 6d.

George Bull's excellent new translation of part of *Vasari: Lives of the Artists* meets a real need. Using the text of the second, 1568, edition, he has made a sensible and well-balanced selection in translating the three prefaces and ten lives of the best known artists. The book also contains a helpful short life of Vasari, with some discussion of his critical ideas, an explanation of certain of the technical terms he uses and brief notes on the artists by Peter Murray.

The style of the translation is easy and swiftly moving and the diction is sensitively chosen and precise. At times the Italian is too literally translated, so that the phrasing of certain sentences is a shade awkward. The great passages lose nothing of their power in this version, however, and the reader will experience both the passionate excitement of Vasari's description of Michelangelo's *Battle of Cascina* and the quiet nobility of his praise of the Medici tombs.

Matthew Arnold believed that a translator's first duty was to make his reader feel the same emotion he had experienced when reading the original; George Bull's version of Vasari's *Lives* possesses this great merit.

BARBARA SCOTT

#### OLD PEWTER: ITS MAKERS AND MARKS

Howard Herschel Cotterell

B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1963, £10 10s.

Most branches of collecting can boast a written work dealing exhaustively with the particular subject: one that can be referred to with confidence and whose author is quoted with respect. Macquoid and Edwards

jointly provided this service on a wide basis for English furniture with their three-volume *Dictionary*. Sir Charles Jackson's *English Goldsmiths and Their Marks* remains a standard work after forty years, and the name of the late Howard Herschel Cotterell is synonymous with the study of the baser, but not necessarily less valuable, metal, pewter.

All three of the works mentioned now suffer the disability of being difficult to obtain; while they can be consulted in libraries, lack of time and circumstances usually require them to be more readily accessible, and the keen collector wants to (and should) possess a copy of the one dealing with his own province. The first-named book was revised by Mr. Ralph Edwards in 1954 and is again out-of-print; Jackson's second edition of 1921 was reproduced in 1949 and once more in 1965; while Cotterell had been obtainable only secondhand for many years and then at a high premium.

*Old Pewter: Its Makers and Marks* was published in 1929, and contained not only a 200-page alphabetical list of pewterers with illustrations of their marks, but showed examples of their work on some sixty-three plates. In addition, it had large-sized reproductions of the five London touchplates with 1,091 marks ranging in date from 1640 to 1913, and the two Edinburgh touchplates with 143 marks of pre-1600 to 1764. Now, the entire work has been reproduced, and the anonymous firm of Japanese printers who have done the job are to be congratulated. There is an agreeable absence of fuzziness usually seen in both letterpress and illustrations under such circumstances, and while the 'pewter-like' silvery binding may not be to everyone's taste it can hardly be termed inappropriate.

Criticism cannot be directed against the work itself, but it seems a pity that no attempt has been made to bring it up-to-date by the incorporation of some of the important facts brought to light during the thirty-four years since it was first published. This might not have been difficult to achieve, for there are eight pages at the end of the volume tantalisingly blank except for the heading 'NOTES', which would have served the purpose admirably without interfering with the make-up. However, we must be grateful for what we have: a book that, in the words of its compiler, will enable the collector 'to date, appreciate, and understand his treasures', and will inform him of all that was known to the author of 'the maker, locality, and date of any marked piece of British Pewter'.

G.W.

#### HINTS TO YOUNG PAINTERS

Thomas Sully

Reinhold, New York, 1965, no price stated

This is one of a series of *Great Tradition Books* edited by Faber Birren. In preparation are Goethe's 'Theory of Colors', M. E. Chevreul's 'The Harmony and Contrast of Colors', and the first English edition of Leonardo's 'Treatise on Painting'. More will follow. This can be a most useful series, because the scarcity of all these books has resulted in their being less often read than merely mentioned.

Sully, like his contemporary Thomas Cole, was born in England, and was taken to America as a child, when his theatrical family settled in Charleston, then at the height of its renown. His periods of study

#### A HISTORY OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE

Bruce Alsopp

For Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd., 1965, £2 10s.

This little book is written by an architect and is intended for readers with no classical background—particularly, one would gather, architectural students. If it is not all that is claimed for it by the publisher's blurb (and how could any one book combine all the virtues here claimed?), it is on the whole a successful attempt to introduce classical and Early Christian architecture to the general reader.

The author starts with Minoan and Mycenaean palaces and tombs; he then passes to Greek temples, and here the dependence of the architects on wooden models is well demonstrated. Roman architecture is treated rather more fully, as is right and proper, for, from the structural point of view, it was the Romans who made the great advances. Then, by way of an epilogue, the reader is given a glimpse of the Romanesque and Byzantine achievements.

The illustrations are numerous and well chosen. It is, therefore, all the more regrettable that the book is marred by too many errors of fact which could so easily have been corrected. To take a few random samples: the grotto under Mt. Cynthus on Delos is not held by any archaeologist today to be Mycenaean, but is a Hellenistic folly put up by one of the Ptolemies; the Naxian lions on Delos had nothing to do with any stoa, and they were made in the late seventh, not fifth, century; respectable Greek women did not go about naked; nor is it correct to designate as 'fakes' Roman copies of Greek statues.

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an intensely vital nature in search of the essentials of self-expression.

Victor Rienaeker has written a very wise and restrained account of this voluminous revelation, restricting criticism and praise to the barest limits, and his restraint produces a feeling of conviction as to the value of this artistic human document. The book is admirably arranged; indeed, a very model of its kind. Moreover, it is beautifully printed; and the illustrations, so generous in number, are well produced, those in colour being delicately done as befits their subjects. The volume is, of course, indispensable to all collectors and lovers of Corot.

K. P.

OLD PEWTER: ITS MAKERS AND MARKS, by HOWARD HERSCHEL COTTERELL. Pp. xv + 432 + plates 76, 6 folding plates, and text illus. (London: Batsford.) 1929. £5 5s. net.

Domestic vessels in England have been chiefly made of five materials—earthenware, silver, pewter, glass, and porcelain. Other substances have been used, but these are the big five. They differ from one another both aesthetically and artistically; aesthetically in their visual and tactile appearance, artistically in their physical and chemical properties, in so far as these affect their aptitudes as artists' media. Each of them has its own ethos, which may be explained either physically in terms of the material or psychologically in terms of taste. Some people prefer pewter to silver, others prefer porcelain to earthenware, and these are in each case elementary preferences. Their ultimate statement is psychological, but they can only be traced through the way of life or social character in which they are nourished and declared. People like that with which they are familiar.

Pewter, like its colleagues, has a social context, determined on the consumer's side by its economic price and by its aesthetic qualities as a stuff, on the producer's side by its aptitude as a medium. Earthenware is rougher stuff than porcelain, pewter rougher than silver. If you are an artist you can do *more* with silver and porcelain than you can with earthenware and pewter; you will not necessarily do better, but your work will be capable of greater artistic content. The finer stuff is more fit for complexity, and it therefore appeals more readily to unembarrassed taste. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries taste was most embarrassed by poverty—the peasants who received wages used earthenware; their taste was frequently good, but it was always coarse. Taste was least embarrassed among the rich who paid wages and used silver; both the material and the users of it were capable of refinement. Between these extremes came those who neither paid nor received wages—in the towns the independent tradesmen, in the country the yeomen farmers. Among these the chief inhibition on taste was prudence, which in its religious aspects is called puritanism. The ware preferred of the tradesmen and farmers must not cost too much, but it must wear well and look well; it must be above all things "good." Pewter answered these conditions perfectly. It was not very expensive, it went well in the simple mundity of a Jacobean interior, and, unlike its later rival flint-glass, it would last for ever. The character of pewtering as an English art was fixed by the prudential movement of the seventeenth century; renaissance form is found, but it is neither frequent nor emphatic, and in the eighteenth century pewter is less apt than silver or porcelain for the finished abandon of rococo or the slim elegance of Adam.

Since pewter was practically undecorated its artistic as distinct from its aesthetic value must be judged on form—not form in isolation (for form is never isolated), but form consonant with, and limited by, the aesthetics of the stuff. Pewter shapes are sometimes slight, but seldom definitely bad. They offer on the whole a good average level of vessel design, committing no solecisms, but rarely rising to genius, touched, but not saturated by the decorative modes, too clumsy for finesse but saved by that quality from the debaucheries of porcelain, always solid and sober and a little ungainly. At the present time pewter is approved mainly for its aesthetics. Dishes and flagons not exciting in themselves have a massive and gloomy gaiety when mounted on oak dressers, and Mr. Cotterell does well to emphasize their decorative qualities by a photograph which shows them in their proper setting. Pewter presented scenically looks as well as German troops at their manœuvres or calf-bound volumes on a library wall. In this respect it is the antithesis of porcelain, which is horrible in quantities, but beautiful in isolated units. On the vexed question of to polish or not to polish Mr. Cotterell seems to take the affirmative; he is an enthusiast for cleaning, and that soon leads to scintillation. But if the setting is well conceived unpolished pewter is equally decorative. Polished, it ceases to be pewter, and becomes only a poor understudy of silver, which has different aesthetic properties and therefore requires a different "set."

Mr. Cotterell does not examine the pleasant art with which he is concerned in the four aspects which are essential to it: (1) its technique (including chemistry, process, and aesthetics); (2) its economy; (3) its style as an individual art and in relation to English decorative form in general, and finally (4) its social history. He possesses great knowledge of his subject, but he is content to limit his task to a supply of information. His book is a work of reference and a good one, but it is nothing more than that. The most valuable part of it is an alphabetical list, containing more than 6,000 names of all English, Scottish, and Irish pewterers whose names are known and a list of those who are known only by initials. The marks are given and there is a further list of marks not associated with any name or initials. These lists are the result of many years of study, they are compiled with admirable care and accuracy, and they are likely to be invaluable to collectors. Mr. Cotterell also gives a short account of touch-plate marking (with photographs of touch-plates at the end), a list of pewterers' tokens and secondary marks, trade cards from Mr. Ambrose Heal's collection, and a good photographic survey of pewter itself. The rest of the book is scrappy and ill-arranged; a string of documentary extracts is not even chronicle, let alone history, and collectors of a fabric like pewter are not better off for having a coherent history of their subject persistently denied them. It is a vain triumph to find that a recent acquisition was made by John Smith of Birmingham, of whom nothing else is known. Mr. Cotterell's lists have another value than this. Marks are the most important evidence for (a) the distribution and (b) the chronology of the pewterer's craft in England, and on these two kinds of evidence the history of the art must ultimately rest. Pewter is worth a definitive history, and in this book there is all the primary information required for writing one. As it stands the book is entirely unsynthetic. The lists might well be published separately and cheaply as a mark-book of convenient size. The rest of it consists of the footnotes and appendices to an

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unwritten history of English pewter. I hope Mr. Cotterell will write one, but when he does I hope that he will be more sparing of laudatory superlatives and italic emphasis; and that his problems will not be "shrouded in almost impenetrable mystery."

W. A. THORPE

ARCHITECTURE AS A CAREER, a Manual for Aspirants and Students of either Sex, by PHILIP A. ROBSON, F.R.I.B.A., F.M.S.A. (London: B. T. Batsford.) 5s. net.

This little guide will be found extremely useful to all those young people who have an inclination to architecture as a profession. The author, who is himself a Fellow of the R.I.B.A., knows what he is talking about, and, as the following list of some of the contents shows, his information is thoroughly practical. He discusses, amongst other things, whole-time recognized schools; ateliers and evening schools, training abroad; scholarships; open prizes for students, books recommended; official openings, England and abroad; and insurance.

By way of criticism we would only remark that his introductory chapter is somewhat debatable; it conveys the impression that he has greater faith in the "past" than in the "future" as regards the æsthetical development of architecture; that he quotes a questionable passage from Ruskin with approval, and that he looks upon architecture as a "clothing" of construction in one place, whilst mentioning with approval a "canon" which asserts that "all is design." Unlike the human structure, a building must visibly show that its "bones" can stand of their own accord, because they have no functional "clothing" like the muscles and sinews and skin of the human body. The building cannot be clothed with architecture because it is architecture; there is no difference—or there should be none between a builder and an architect. After all, however, in a practical guide such as this the ever debatable theoretical questions are of little or of any importance; for which reason the fifteen illustrations, interesting in themselves, seem here somewhat irrelevant "clothing."

WILLIAM THOMAS HORTON (1864-1919), a Selection of his Work, with a Biographical Sketch by ROGER INGPEN. (London: Ingpen & Grant.) 10s. 6d. net.

The late William Thomas Horton was one of those ill-starred souls that are overcharged with sensations but incapable of finding a suitable vent for the images these evoke. He commenced architect, but as his biographer here tells us, "he grew to detest it." Following Thomas Hardy's example he thought of taking up literature, but Hardy advised him that he should "on no account desert the architectural profession with a view of making a better income by writing." Nevertheless, Horton did write a little; he also did a little soldiering. Then, in his thirtieth year, he "first turned his attention to art" and came under the influence of Beardsley, for whose "Savoy" he furnished some drawings. He "was for many years much interested in Spiritualism," and William Blake inspired him. "His world was mainly a world of dreams or waking visions, and the greater part of his work consisted in portraying these fleeting images." His soul was ever awaiting the salvation which his mind searched for but could not discover. Like Beardsley, he died in the arms of the Roman Catholic Church.

Neither Horton's temperament nor his talents were strong enough to make an artist of him. The examples of his graphic work reproduced in this small volume bear

this out. Some of his romantic town- and landscapes done in pen-and-ink are mildly attractive, but the line drawings into which he endeavoured to put symbolical meaning are derivative, amateurish, and almost naïvely ineffective.

Mr. Ingpen's biographical tribute to his friend conveys the impression that there was more behind the artist's sad and unsatisfactory life than the biographer could or would disclose.

MODERN MASTERS OF ETCHING: No. 22, L. C. ROSENBERG, A.R.E. Introduction by MALCOLM C. SALAMAN. (London: "The Studio," Ltd.) 5s. net.

"The Studio's" twenty-second volume of their "Masters of Etching" series is devoted for the first time—if we disregard Whistler, who is essentially, if not English, at all events a European—to an American etcher, Louis C. Rosenberg to wit. Like so many of his contemporaries, he approaches his subjects with the eye trained to see architecture; or, as Mr. Malcolm Salaman truly says in his prefatory note, his architectural "records are less concerned with the elusive transient effects of atmosphere, and the transient appearances of places, than with the light that reveals buildings in their definite pictorial aspects, so that a façade would be seen with all its architectural form and detail beautifully shown, and a portico would lose none of its ornament, while the structural elements would rise firmly from their bases and the weight, volume, and texture of the material would be eloquent. With these architectural records, too, the artist has always his human note to utter. . . ." This is an excellent statement of Mr. Rosenberg's qualities as an illustrator of architectural treasures in America, Europe, and Africa. Influenced by Piranesi, Meryon, and perhaps also by modern etchers such as Bauer and Cameron, Mr. Rosenberg's technique and sense of design show, nevertheless, a personal quality, here especially evidenced in such plates as "The Great Bazaar, Constantinople," and "The Ponte Fabricio, Rome," which makes him hold his own in the ranks of the contemporary artists who have taken a similar field.

The reproductions in this volume maintain the excellent standard of the series. H. F.

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BY KINETON PARKES

GESCHICHTE DES KUNSTGEWERBES ALLER ZEITEN UND VÖLKER, IN VERBINDUNG MIT ZAHLREICHEN FACHGELEHRTEN, herausgegeben von DR. H. TH. BOSSERT. Band I. Pp. xi + 394 illus. + plates 28 (7 in colour). Band II. Pp. viii + 407 illus. + plates 28 (8 in colour). Large 8vo. Cloth, leather back. (Berlin: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth, A.G.) Marks 42 each.

Dr. Bossert has assembled a strong body of experts to his aid in order to provide a thoroughly trustworthy guide to the study of folk-art of all times and peoples. The work is to be completed in half a dozen volumes. The first two are admirable in every way and reflect the greatest credit on contributors, editor, and publisher. The illustrations are copious, and the plates, including those in colour, are beautifully printed. The work inevitably becomes the standard one for the general student and reader. Volume I is concerned with prehistoric work, and Herbert Kühn

asier to cope with: and by the devices to ill one odour by another. *Pommes de senteur* or pomanders were no doubt as desirable as they were fashionable. The fan was originally fly whisk. The personal effects of Charles V of France included some of these *esmouchoirs*, their purpose being 'to drive away flies from the King when he is at table.' In churches the flabellum, 'pro muscis fugandis,' was in frequent use. From such beginnings developed the charming toys designed by Agostino Caracci, Abraham Bosse, Boucher, Cochin, Chodowiecki, Gavarni, Conder and Albert Rutherston. I suspect that Herr von Boehn's anecdotes and gossip have not always passed the ruthless test of authenticity, and there are occasional slips: 1635 as the date of Charles I.'s wedding, for instance (p. 243). 'Atlas' should be translated 'satin'; and Stefano della Bella is preferable to Etienne de la Belle. There is some repetition, unavoidable perhaps, from previous volumes of the series. But these small criticisms seem almost ungracious after such entertainment, and scarcely affect the value of the book (particularly its illustrations) as a compendious supplement to Viollet-le-Duc, Enlart, Redfern, Mrs. Palliser and other specialists.

R.S.

*Old Pewter: Its Makers and Marks.* Howard Herschell Cotterell. 11½ by 9 ins., pp. xv + 432. Plates 76, 6 folding plates and text illustrations. B. T. Batsford, Ltd. £5 5s.

Of recent years the increasing popularity of English pewter among collectors has led to the publication of a number of handbooks on the subject, including the works of Malcolm Bell, C. A. Markham, H. I. L. I. Massé and A. F. de Navarro. These deal for the most part with pewter from the collector's point of view. The historical side has been exhaustively treated by the late Charles Welch in his 'History of the Pewterers' Company.' To the information contained in these various works Mr. Cotterell has added the result of many years of most conscientious research, and we now have between the covers of one handsome and well illustrated volume practically all the available knowledge relating to this very interesting subject.

The book starts with an historical introduction, followed by 'The history of pewter-

marking as told by the records of the Pewterers' Company.' There is also a very interesting chapter dealing with the famous touch-plates at Pewterers' Hall, in which, by a skilful process of reasoning the author establishes that the touches were not, as hitherto supposed, struck on the plates haphazard, but in chronological order. The remainder of the first part, some thirty pages, is devoted to secondary marks, collectors' difficulties, pewterers' tokens, trade-cards, etc., and includes a most useful paragraph on the care of old pewter. In this connection the author very rightly refuses to subscribe to the worship of dirt, and decides that pewter should be kept clean and polished.

Next to follow are the illustrations, which consist of 76 photographic plates showing several hundred different objects. They have been most carefully chosen, and show typical pieces, to which, either from their marks, dated inscriptions, or close resemblance to similar pieces in silver, it is possible to give reasonably accurate dates. The descriptions beneath the objects illustrated are on the whole good and workmanlike, but surely the Grainger candlestick (Plate XX), which is historically the most important example in the book, deserves more than five lines of text. In this very short description the author certainly tells us that this 'glorious piece' resembles 'the Nuremberg Edelzinn and the French Orfèverie d'Etain,' but he fails to mention such interesting facts as that it bears the Arms of the Pewterers' Company, the Royal Arms of England, and the Lily-pot—a badge assumed by the Pewterers in honour of their patron the Virgin Mary. It might also be pointed out that the object illustrated on Plate XXXIIIc is not a caudle-cup but a sauce-pan, and that the spelling of the word 'karafe' used to describe an English water-bottle is unnecessarily Teutonic in form.

The second and by far the larger part of the book is devoted to lists of pewterers and their marks. The first of these gives in alphabetical order the names of no less than 5,374 pewterers, their touches, where known, their dates and any other ascertainable facts about them. The next list consists of marks formed of devices with the initials of the pewterers, and is followed by a third series composed of drawings of obscure marks, that

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is to say, such as bear neither the names nor the initials of their owners. A most useful feature and one that should prove invaluable to collectors is a complete subject index to the devices of the various marks illustrated in these three lists. At the end of the volume are large-scale folding collotype plates of the four London and two Edinburgh touch-plates. There is also a fairly comprehensive bibliography, followed by a good general index.

Taken as a whole, Mr. Cotterell's book is a monument of patient research, and fully justifies his publishers' claim to be the standard work on English pewter.

C. T. P. B.

*The Cottages of England.* By Basil Oliver, with Foreword by Stanley Baldwin. 9½ × 6½ ins., xxiv + 91. B. T. Batsford. 21s. net.

It is certain that Mr. Oliver's book, 'The Cottages of England,' will be bought and enjoyed by very many people.

There are near a hundred pages of well-reproduced photographs of beautiful examples, and nearly all of these pages bear two pictures. The written descriptions of the cottages and the comments on the sources of their quality are clear, and the criticism of the self-conscious treatment sometimes bestowed on them is characteristically direct.

The book has appeared at the right moment; there is much talk of these lovely old buildings to-day, and its publication now will result in an even wider interest, a keener sense of their value, and a firmer determination to preserve those that are left.

The title, 'The Cottages of England,' may be misleading to some who might expect to learn from a book so described how these buildings served the lives led by workers, past and present, on the land; there is, however, little reference to more than the external appearance of these homes. Of modern cottages never a word is said, nor are there any pictures of them. The book is not a history of cottage building, nor is it concerned with the cottagers' lives.

Mr. Oliver expresses in a modern way the same love of the picturesque that our grandparents indulged, a love which, because so

often associated with the background against which 'the poor' lived, has been found almost offensive by those who desire the independence of that class.

Mr. Oliver assumes, and I think rightly, that these cottages should be preserved to-day for the sake of their beauty alone. But he would also have them used by the country cottager and not by the townsman who likes to spend his leisure in pleasant places. His desire is clearly that agricultural workers should continue to live in these cottages, not because they suit that section of the community best, but because these folk seem best to suit them. This is true: a cottage occupied by a ploughman, a shepherd or a carter, does ring more truly of the old-time country than does one used by the reader or myself for our pleasure in holiday time. It may be perverse to write thus, but we are in a difficulty. We all love and admire the simplicity of old-fashioned life when it is still found continuing naturally in the surroundings where we knew it in childhood. No doubt the author of this book is moved with others by the romantic appearance of gypsies lounging about a fire, with tethered horses and a standing caravan in the background; but would he find pleasure in such a scene had it been preserved in Hyde Park or Clapham Common? If we push far our desire to continue a manner of life that is dying, there is danger that the evidence of that life may only be preserved artificially, as in the imagined camp of gypsies.

England is being urbanised; the process is inevitable. The farmer and his labourer are as surely abandoning old ways of life as have already the miller and the maker of cloth, and as surely will their habits change. It is a question whether it is possible, amid these changes, to preserve *for these people* the homes in which they used to live. That it would be pleasant so to preserve them is denied by none; that it is possible, some question. It is, however, certainly good that Mr. Oliver and his publisher have produced a book which, if it does no more, reminds those who buy it of the life and beauty that is now at stake. At least the old cottages of England, the lovely shell of a past way of life, may be preserved.

A. R. P.