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THE COLLECTOR

CONTAINING

ARTICLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS, REPRINTED FROM
THE QUEEN NEWSPAPER, OF INTEREST TO
THE GREAT BODY OF COLLECTORS,

ON

China, Engravings, Needlework Pictures and Embroidery,
Old Silver, Brass, Pewter and Pinchbeck, Miniatures,
Egyptian and Grecian Antiquities, &c.

EDITED BY

ETHEL DEANE,

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TOY SILVER TEAPOT, CADDY, AND SPOON, BELONGING TO A CHILD'S
TEA SERVICE.

Bonbonnières were universally carried in Georgian days, and very interesting ones have been handed down to us in moss agate and sometimes in enamel, ornamented with pearls.

The two boxes in the lower part of the picture are of notable beauty, and would serve for this purpose or for snuff. The upper one, of pure silver, shows some well-modelled figures in bold relief inclosed in the scroll work, while the one below, in form resembling a shell, is of the most exquisite workmanship. The foundation is piquée tortoiseshell, very finely wrought with gold and silver in a lace-like border, the pattern within standing out in bold relief—a veritable gem. The small violin is a dainty form of vinaigrette, and the last object of all is an etui quite a hundred years old, filled with implements for needlework, and very beautifully wrought. Many etuis have been handed down to us; one in silver, which belonged to Queen Charlotte, is notable for its beautiful workmanship.

Of quite a different character is the chatelaine at the side, once in possession of a peasant at Rottenburg, where it was purchased. He had carried it for years in his fob. Note above the appendages the Hanoverian arms. It appertains to the eighteenth century, and the seals and watch keys attached are very interesting, one of them enclosing a bell, and much resembling

in character the seal on the opposite side of the picture.

This collection has been brought together from all parts, and combines some great curiosities and some fine specimens of work.

A. H. S. C.

OLD PEWTER.

Even in "collecting" Fashion claims a place, and at the present time she has decreed that old pewter is to be to the fore.

The old oak dresser, the fine old carved overmantel, the old buffet sideboard, form a splendid background to the soft brightness which only old pewter seems to possess, and these old "pieces" gain a further charm if we embellish them with pewter plates, crested, if possible, and certainly "marked," and some of the gracefully shaped upright pieces of old pewter which the collector can still come across.

The word "pewter" is a generic term for a variety of alloys. Tin forms the predominating compound, but ordinary pewter is tin alloyed with lead; this latter used on account of its cheapness. The finest pewter is tin, hardened by the addition of a trifle of copper.

The old pewter has gained, as everything lasting does, a mellowness with age, and has a look as if a good quantity of silver were added. This may not be so, but certainly it has a very different look and "feel" to modern pewter.

The first thing to do on getting an old pewter



GROUP OF OLD PEWTER.

"piece" is to have it thoroughly cleaned, and this is a really difficult task to the amateur, especially when, as frequently happens, it has been left untouched for some time, perhaps because it has been lying by unused, or to give the truly "old" look which the dealer values. If the pewter is very dirty, which is generally the case, its soft surface being inclined to absorb grease and dirt, it should be boiled in strong soda-water, and afterwards cleaned with the usual preparations. Brick dust and paraffin is a very good mixture.

Much of the old pewter is marked with what looks like the old silver stamps, and this is thought highly of. It is said that when so many people brought their silver services and freely gave them to fill the empty coffers of the luckless Stuart Kings, that the Monarch gave an exact replica of the service or what-not in pewter, and had it stamped with the silver mark, and this was a sign that it should be redeemed when the King "came to his own again," which, alas for them! never came to pass. This may account for so much old pewter apparently bearing the silver stamp. There are also the registered pewter marks, which the Association of Pewterers keep a register of, but no names of makers are preserved, so that it is very difficult to trace the exact period. Much interesting data was lost in the Great Fire of London.

Mr. Walsh, of the Guildhall, is writing a book on pewter marks. Up till lately information has been greatly withheld, but there are now places where the marks and stamps on pewter may be seen and studied.

Pewter was apparently made before the Roman period, and in the British Museum we find fine specimens of old pewter dishes and vessels in fragments, which were found near some Roman buildings by the Rev. E. H. Engleheart, near Andover, Hants. There is also in the British Museum a plate finely engraved with the Resurrection, depicting angels with emblems of the Passion, and one dated 1619. In the Franks collection are a good number of spoons; one "Pied de Biche" spoon, William and Mary, with their heads engraved on the top, 1690; also an old kitchen spoon, with pastry cutter top, eighteenth century, found near Fleet-street. There is a very fine English pewter dish, dated 1583, and inscribed "Ione Coppin," Susan Church; and a dish with the arms of All Souls, Oxford, engraved on it, found in Oxford early in the seventeenth century, and given to the museum by John Jennings. We must also mention three pewter plates, stamped with crown and feathers, found with others near Guy's Hospital, probably about the time of Henry VIII.

Pewter was evidently very generally used, on account of its cheapness, and when the silver services, salvers, mugs, &c., were treasured up and used only on high days and holidays. We must remember that we are speaking of times when silver was really valuable, and pewter was the next best thing; able to be highly polished and of a substance which could be worked upon easily, to reproduce the lovely shapes and designs of Queen Anne and early periods.

The small pewter teapot illustrated is a good specimen of the elegance of shape that so much of this old ware lends itself to; the covered sugar basin is part of a set of Queen Anne design, and is almost unique. It consists of teapot, sugar basin, and cream jug in pewter, is particularly graceful in shape, and bears the pewter mark.

The salt cellar and mustard pot are very good types of these articles in daily use by our ancestors.

As with everything of the kind, the "faker" is at work, and "old" pewter is on the market with a "mark" very much *en évidence* which proves, under the microscope, to be recently engraved, and not stamped on it years ago as it should have been. Handles are "faked" on to plain "pieces"; "engravings added, and done so well as to deceive all but the most wary.

Some of the old pewter salvers, with their well-worn surfaces, are well worth securing. Here, also, the "faker" tries to deceive by adding scratches, but with careful study these can be detected.

It is well to thoroughly examine the back of an article, as the "faker" generally leaves some carelessness to unmask himself, and whilst carefully scratching and rubbing the front, will often leave the back entirely smooth or with only a few roughings.

As to prices. These, of course, vary as to workmanship, dates, crests, &c. One should be able to get a fair specimen of a mug, dated, from, say, 10s. 6d.; a covered jug, 18s.; smaller "pieces," from 6s. 6d.; a fine old pewter inkstand, 20s. to 30s. Of course, such an unique specimen as the Queen Anne set mentioned above would be more expensive, as a service complete is always more rare. H. A. WOOLLAN.

OLD PINCHBECK AND ROCOCO JEWELLERY.

It is quite a saddening thought how little we are now making will be "collected" in a hundred years time, at least for the beauty of design and workmanship. How different is the quality of the work, the amount of time and patience expended, or even,