

Notes

occupation of Britain, possesses a series of Royal charters dating from the first Edward, and a *Domesday Book* dating from 1395, together with many other charters and documents bearing upon the history of the town.

The authors are to be congratulated upon the great care and time expended in bringing into one volume transcripts of all the most important of these documents, together forming a valuable historical survey of the corporate development of the town.

Besides producing an historical work of great value, the compilers have saved the irrevocable obliteration of the early records of the borough, as before the collection of the material for this book, the documents were rotting in old wooden boxes suffering from damp, with the further risk of destruction by fire.

It is to be hoped the more valuable of such interesting archives now repose in the Town Clerk's safe or some other worthy receptacle.

The pewter porringer reproduced commemorates the "Peace of Ryswick, 1697." The figure at the bottom of the bowl is Marlborough: the words in the scroll are—

"To Europe peace I give,
Let Nations happy live."

The monogram is Ryswick. The three figures on the cover are cockerels, acting as a stand under the bowl, if necessary.

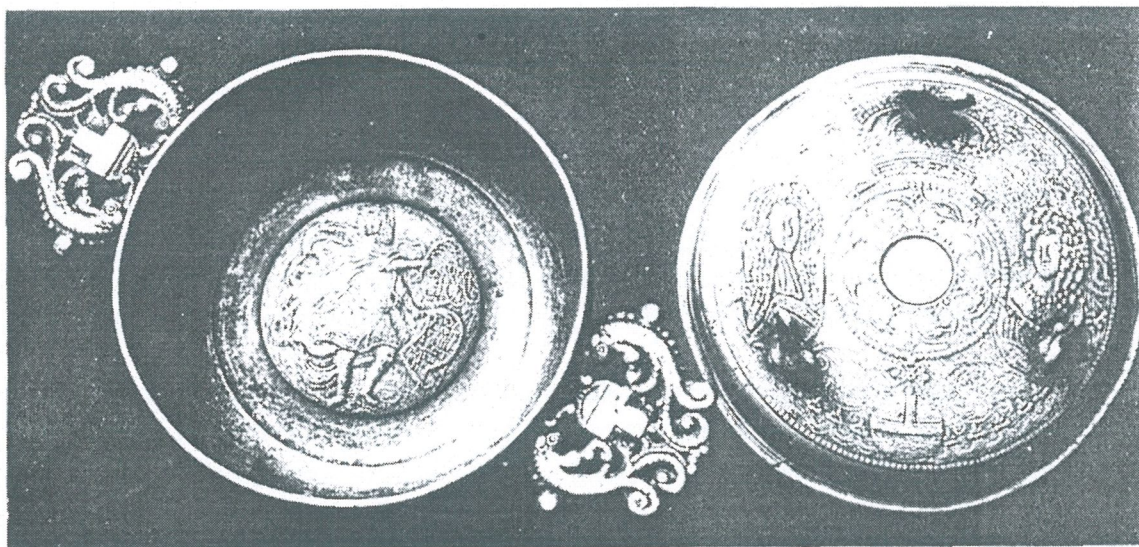
ALEXANDRE DUMAS, the son, used to say that the "ladies fair and frail" are highly interesting psychological problems, and most of the plays he wrote dealt with *demi-mondaines*. But his modern heroines—La Dame aux Camélias, Diane de Lys, and the famous protagonist in "Le Demi-Monde"—although they were sketched from life by the great French playwright, are far less fascinating persons than the ladies of the eighteenth century with whom Mr. Horace Bleackley deals in his remarkable book.

The eighteenth century was, *par excellence*, the century of gallantry, prodigality, and lax morality. These almost amounted to a fine art. The lives of the ladies fair and frail were then interwoven with the career of many notable personages: and because the general atmosphere of that frivolous period was one of delightful mutual tolerance, one reads the life stories of Kitty Fisher and the other queens of gallantry with as much indulgence as interest.

Mr. H. Bleackley has written his monographs with the conscience and accuracy of a Benedictine monk, and also with the broadness of views of a philosopher.

We learn to know not only the life but the character and thoughts of those women who played in England almost as important a part as Mme. de Pompadour and Mme. Du Barry played in France in the days of Louis le Bien-Aimé.

Here are the good-humoured Fanny Murray, the pretty flower-girl of Bath, who did not sell



PEWTER PORRINGER