

EUROPE'S BOGUS ANTIQUES
AMERICAN DEMANDS ARE BOOMING THE TRADE.

One of the traps by which American tourists are caught described by a Connoisseur—China and Furniture Cleverly Faked.

Largely, it is said, because the demand for English and foreign antiques on the part of Americans is greater than by all the rest of the world together, genuine old paintings, old furniture, old China, etc., have risen to an amazing extent during the last few years, while, for the same reason, the production of "faked" antiques has become an ever-increasing and more profitable branch of industry.

England, particularly, is overflowing with these spurious specimens," said Basil Dighton, the Gower street dealer, in discussing the subject the other day. "While Rozen turns out enough imitations of old Empire furniture to furnish the Tulleries a hundred times over. One of the leading experts in London recently had a copy made of a valuable Chippendale table, and when the 'faked' table and the genuine piece were placed side by side the expert himself was unable to tell which was which.

"For all kinds of English antiques of the eighteenth century," continued Mr. Dighton, "prices have risen steadily for the last five or six years. A Romney, which was worth \$5,000 then, is worth \$25,000 or \$30,000 now. Engravings have doubled and trebled in value. Chippendale furniture has risen remarkably; a set of chairs from the Orrock collection sold recently for \$9,000. A Chippendale writing desk was sold at auction for \$90. It was immediately resold for \$4,000, and shortly afterward a dealer disposed of it at the handsome price of \$10,000—I am told.

The owner of a Hopper portrait, ignorant of its true value, recently offered it to a clergyman as a gift. The minister, knowing something about pictures, demurred at taking advantage of his friend and advised him to sell the portrait at auction. It realized \$60,000.

"There are shops in London with whole stocks of bogus engravings, silver boxes, miniatures and the like, and the bargain-hunters are easy victims. The demand for genuine old prints is very keen, and perhaps the most notable instance of their appreciation in value is that of prints sold at \$4 in 1780, which now bring \$500."

One of the traps by which American tourists, in their craze for antiques, are often caught is thus described by a connoisseur:

"People touring in the north of England," he says, "see a fine piece of old furniture in a farm house, and never questioning the genuineness of anything found in such an out-of-the-way place, they buy it. If the tourists should return a few days later they would find a similar piece in place of the one bought, as bait for the next visitor. These pieces are all spurious ones and the fakers are so well acquainted with the traveler's way that they send these imitations to the country places to be sold. Through this practice a Welsh dresser has often been placed by mistake in a Yorkshire farm house, but of course, it takes an experienced eye to notice such little incongruities.

"England is overflowing with 'faked' antiques," he added. "There are 'faked' Chelsea cups holding little baskets of flowers, 'faked' Old Tubs, persons and clerks, recumbent greyhounds and harvest jugs with motives.

"All kinds of English china are 'faked.' Lowestoft ware is faked so cleverly that it cannot be told from the old. Sheffield plate, which is worth five times its value, is ten years ago, is 'faked,' but the fakers cannot produce the glow of the genuine work. Pewter is 'faked' in Germany by the ton, and there are factories near Nuremberg which turn out pewter stamped with a place of origin and date a couple of centuries old.

"The German Government makes excellent copies of works by Reynolds and other English artists, which sell for a dollar or two. They are easily disposed of at higher prices to unwary tourists. Hundreds of imitations of Morland's pictures are sent to England from Holland, where they are made. In Dresden they imitate the old Dresden so well that it is hardly an imitation: it is simply a reproduction of the same thing. Not long ago I saw a Napoleon table bearing the Tulleries crest. It was 'faked.'"

"At the same time real bargains are still to be found now and then, but it takes a most expert connoisseur to be sure of things. Recently I bought a Queen Anne table for 30 cents and it proved worth \$50, and a table for \$7 which would bring \$125. Such bargains, however, are becoming rarer every day."—Washington Star.

RECLAIMING BAD LANDS.

Eight Towns Built on Ground That Was Swamps or Deserts.

According to official figures, since the reclamation law was enacted by Congress in 1902 eight towns have been built and 10,000 people have settled on what were desert lands.

To prepare the way for these settlers 100 miles of branch railroads have been built, 1,267 miles of canals have been dug, many of which carry whole rivers, and forty-seven tunnels have been excavated. It is estimated that the territory embraced in what is known as the arid regions of the United States covers 600,000,000 acres, of which about 60,000,000 acres are subject to irrigation, which, when properly supplied with water, can be converted into farms fully as productive as lands in the most favored sections.

A bill was introduced in Congress at the last session for the purpose of reclaiming overflooded and swamp lands in Arkansas, Indiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, and other

States, and those back of it may that it will be "pushed" at the next session. The member who offered this measure roughly estimates the amount of overflooded and swamp lands to be reclaimed at 50,000,000 acres, the reclamation of which would increase the land value more than \$2,000,000,000, and, if subdivided into forty-acre farms, would supply 2,500,000 families with homes and put 12,000,000 people on lands now practically worthless.

AXE IN TRESPASS TRIALS

Sharp Edge Turned Toward Prisoner When Sentence is Pronounced.

Every one is aware of the dreadfully significant part the executioner's axe plays in a trial for high treason. The sharp symbol of death is carried before the prisoner, with its blunt side turned toward him so long as he has not been sentenced, says Macmillan's Magazine, and just before sentence is pronounced the sharp edge is turned his way.

Evelyn, who was present at the trial of Lord Stafford in 1689, tells us that the axe was turned edgeways to the unfortunate nobleman as soon as it was ascertained that the voting of his peers went against him—an effective but ghastly piece of stage management which must have had a sickening fascination for the unhappy and probably innocent man. In those days, now happily gone by, no one seems to have reflected on the unnecessary cruelty of harrowing the feelings of men about to die by such shocking judicial play.

Not every prisoner treated with this purely symbolic but otherwise superfluous and unpleasant ceremony as contemptuously as did Lord Balmorino. When the three coaches conveyed the Lords Kilmarnock, Balmorino and Cromartie from the Tower to be sentenced at Westminster, on July 28, 1746, a difficulty arose. It was not laid down by prescription or use in which coach, if there were more than one, the fatal axe had to be carried. "Oh, put the ——— thing in here," cried brave old Balmorino, "I don't care."

Yet, notwithstanding his contempt for this horrid symbol, the undaunted old man cheerfully suffered death for his attachment to another symbol, the White Cockade; but Lord Kilmarnock, in the next coach, was dreadfully frightened, as he showed himself to be, by his thorough realization of what the awful axe would mean to him. He inquired minutely into all the details of an execution, wanted the Governor of the Tower to tell him whether his head would roll or rebound, and when on the scaffold he saw the executioner dressed in white, with a white apron, he whispered to his chaplain, "Home, how horrible!"

FOUND HIS SKULL CROOKED.

And the Matter Lost One of His Best Customers.

The machine that measures heads when hats are to be accurately fitted gives surprising revelations regarding the shape of people's skulls," said a Sixth street hatter.

"Ordinarily an odd shaped skull must be very badly formed indeed before it attracts attention, for the flesh and hair make all skulls seem of the same shape, except when a man's head is very long or very round; but the machine has little sections, fitting closely to the skull, and reproducing in dotted lines on a piece of paper the exact outline. The ideal form of the skull is almost an oval, and I usually think of it as of that shape, so that when men come in and have their heads measured for a hat, they often look very much disgusted to find that their brain pans have a bump on one side, or a hole on the other, or are about twice as thick behind the ears as they are across the forehead.

"I lost one customer, a Broadway merchant, who insisted on having his skull measured and his hat fitted. He had been buying hats of me for ten years, and always had trouble with a new hat, until it fitted itself to the shape of his head. One day he saw the machine and determined to be measured and fitted. I tried to jolly him out of the notion, for I knew there must be something outlandish in the shape of his cranium, and was afraid he would get angry, but he wouldn't be jolled, so at last I measured him and of all the shapes you ever saw that was about the worst.

"The outline looked like that of a football, half full of air, and with one side kicked in. He looked at my cranium map, said a very bad word, walked out of the store and never came back. I didn't blame him much, for a man with a skull like that would naturally want to keep the fact to himself. He is dead now, poor fellow. Insane? No. The shapes of people's skulls don't seem to have anything to do with their brains."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Shotgun Photography.

Cameras on the wing are flying through Germany. A projectile to take photographs and claimed to have been successful at the height of half a mile is the idea of Herr Marie, a German photographer. A camera having the form of the usual kind of conical shell is thrown into the air by means of a kind of trap. At a predetermined angle, as the camera turns to make its descent and is pointed slightly downward, the shutter is automatically released and a picture is taken of a broad expanse of country. In still air the flight and spot at which the aerial camera will fall can be calculated with much precision. Precautions are taken to avoid damage by concussion and the results are expected to be of great possible value in military operations.—Pittsburg Gazette-Times.

Cruise's Island Safe.

It is with much pleasure that we are able to state on the authority of Dr. J. S. Kettle, secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, that the so-called disappearance of Juan Fernandez at the time of the Valparaiso earthquake was a canard. Nothing of the kind took place.—Publisher's Circular.

WORTH QUOTING

If J. P. Morgan makes many more trips abroad, suggests the St. Louis Republic, Europeans will have to come to America to see their famous art-galleries.

The statement of that Berlin professor that alcohol is a cure for neuralgia will cause a headache epidemic in many a healthy settlement, prophesies the Atlanta Constitution.

In the fire that destroyed Helicon Hall recently Jurgis Sinclair lost the manuscript of a novel based on the Thaw case. In almost every calamity rejoices the Chicago Tribune, there is some comestory blessing.

Don't count a rich man's relatives until his will has been admitted to probate, is the warning of the New York Sun.

A president of the "Roosevelt type" would be all right, but the caution of the New York Commercial is that Mr. Roosevelt should be careful to preserve the type that the public has in mind.

Illinois has put an end by law to the abuse of theatre ticket speculation. In doing so, observes the New York Tribune, the third state in the union shows a progressive spirit and civic courage which other commonwealths would do well to imitate.

"What is a kiss? Heaven knows, not I," sings a poetess in the New York Times. We confess, says the New York World, that we would like to see the lady's portrait. It might explain a great deal.

James J. Jeffries is the only belligerent on record who is faithfully living up to the principles of the Peace Conference, declares the New York American.

If there be one thing about which the people of this country have a better right to know than any other it is the financing of presidential campaigns, affirms the Washington Post. If there be one thing which a candidate for President should desire above all others in his campaign, it is that no money should be improperly obtained or corruptly used.

A recent novel says a man really needs two wives—a Martha wife to air the beds and order the dinner, and a Mary wife to look at and talk to. Guess whether the novel was written by a woman or a man, tastes the Boston Globe.

We believe there is little difference of opinion, especially among laymen, that expert evidence in criminal cases, and particularly when mental incapacity is the defense, is being rapidly discredited, laments the New York Post. The ailment is coming to be regarded with as much suspicion as the average handwriting expert, and his contribution to the efficient apportionment of justice has been made more than doubtful by a system of which he is personally not the least conspicuous victim.

Canada has already stolen a march on us in the matter of perpetuating the American bison, admits the New York Sun. President Roosevelt proposed recently that the Government acquire a herd of 200 head owned by Michele Pablo of Mexico, and while the plan was under discussion Canada intervened and bought the animals for a reservation in the Northwest. The Dominion Government is doing what we should have done—twenty-five years ago, when there remained a herd here and there in remote fastnesses and the early disappearance of the buffalo in a wild state was threatened.

The Kennebec Journal says that Game Warden George W. Ross, in December, counted 100 barrels of dead hares going to Boston and New York markets over the Washington County Railway. Furthermore, it is estimated by the game wardens that more than one million hares are shipped from Maine every year and as many more used as food within the state. Notwithstanding this, and the fact that thousands of hares are devoured every year by beasts and birds of prey, this small animal continues to increase.

A Hypothetical Question.

"Miss de Smythe," began the young man, "I want to ask you a hypothetical question."

The girl nodded assent.

"If a young man of good family and sound health and an assured income of \$3,000 were so beset the most charming of girls and feed her less cream for a year; if she had a complexion like a rose, hair a crown of golden glory, the hand of a fairy, the hearing of a queen; if she knew how not to play the piano, how to induce her small brother to absent himself, was versed in cooking, competent to superintend a home; and if the young man auspiciously catching the girl alone were to murmur into her ear of pearl, 'Will you marry me?' what, in your estimation, would be her condition of mind, and what her answer?"

"While not an expert attendant," responded the girl, coolly, "I think she'd believe him a chump for being so slow, but she'd say 'Yes.'"

With the preliminaries thus settled the naming of the day was a simple matter.—Philadelphia Ledger.

An Attentive Congregation.

A little meeting house in Beacon-shire. It was a hot summer evening, and the minister prosed on interminably, till, pausing to look around, he found everybody had gone to sleep but the village idiot. "Nobody," he exclaimed reproachfully, "is listening to me, but one poor idiot." The idiot immediately rose and said: "If I were not an idiot I should not be listening to you," and marched out of the building.—Spectator.

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