OLD WEDDING KNIVES

FEW SPECIMENS LEFT OF ONCE COMMON BRIDAL GIFT.

Some Generations Ago They Were Considered an Indispensable Part of the Wedding Costume — Origin of Custom Lost.

Of the many dainty and curious relics belonging to old wedding customs none is more interesting and beautiful in themselves than the once indispensable bride knives, specimens of which still linger here and there among the cabinets of old country houses.

Or you may discover, says a writer in the Queen, a slender, quaint, old pair of these ancient posy knives, in their delicate, faded cases, hiding behind the glass in some sleepy, provincial museum.

You scarcely realize as you examine them that without her wedding knives duly attached to her girdle the mediaeval and seventeenth century bride would hardly have considered herself dressed. So completely a part of the marriage costume were they and so important an item of the ritual of the ceremony that they once came to be considered almost as necessary to an orthodox marriage as the veil and the ring itself. The old plays teem with allusions to them.

And who can forget the figure of Juliet, wearing her wedding knives, as she stands in tragic anguish in the Friar's cell, and again when she is about to take the sleeping potion. Shakespeare in the old quarto of 1597 made special reference to his heroine wearing them.

Of the hundred and one delicate trifles of the ancient wedding toilet few were invested with more tender fancies or mystic symbolism than these knives; there was first the idea of the severing of the knot of love and then the more practical suggested emblem of good housewifery and domestic policy.

They were not worn in England alone, but all over Europe wedding knives formed part of the bride's regular accoutrements. The highest invention was often brought to bear upon their metal, brocade and shagreen cases and sheaths. In the old Flemish pictures they may be seen hanging from the ladies' girdles beside the bodkin, scissors and other personal articles of the new wife.

Very beautiful indeed are some of the quaint old blades and handles, and all were of superior quality and artistic ornament. As the rank of the bride rose so they became more elaborately chased, and sometimes they were jeweled to a standard of immense value. It is very curious to learn that many of the finest English specimens emanated even in those remote days from Sheffield.

[illegible] usage, disappearing almost concurrently with the ill-fated Stuarts.

Men Fined for Being Vain.

Every ugly man who looks in the mirrors on either side of the entrance to the Christmas Tree association headquarters at Hertzberg's old store on Commerce street, is to be assessed a dollar, and every good-looking man is to be assessed seventy-five cents. That is the edict of the ladies who met to plan for the Christmas tree which is to be for the poor children of the city.

Much merriment was occasioned among the ladies when screened by the painted canvas signs in the windows they observed first one man and another stop before one or the other of the mirrors in the doorway and "primp" himself up. "Don't tell us," they said, "about women being more vain than men. Let's make them pay for the use of the mirrors." So woe to the man who is caught parting his hair or adjusting his tie before the mirrors of the Christmas Tree association headquarters.—San Antonio Light and Gazette.

The Dangerous Fly.

A fly in the house is as dangerous as a rattlesnake, as filthy is a louse, as disgraceful as a bedbug. The time will come when any modern, cleanly home will feel itself shamed and disgraced by the presence of a fly, and when every householder upon whose premises a brood of flies is detected will be fined heavily and sent to jail. The fly is a literal "eye of the Lord" because he is in every place beholding evil and the good, especially the evil, for he loves to lay eggs in it. You can't hide dirt from a fly. He is also the most intimate and domestic animal we breed and keep. An ounce of cleanness is worth a ton of fly paper and wire screens. One-half the money wasted on fly traps and window screens, one-fifth the energy squandered in slapping and profanity, would clean up the back yard and wipe out the fly.—From address before the American Civics association at Washington by Dr. Woods Hutchinson.

The Result.

"I believe that old man really made ducks and drakes of his supposed fortune."

"Then his heirs' hunt for his money will be a wild goose chase."

REALLY WASTE OF SYMPATHY

No Cause for Serious Alarm on the Part of the Duckling's Admirer.

Once upon a time, when Mark Twain's favorite daughter was a very little maid, and was spending the summer in the country, it is related that she propounded a question which no one was able to answer. It seems she had been deeply interested in watching the brief career of the ducks from the peaceful shadows of the pool to their appearance upon the dining table, and so she said, "Father, why does God make so much ducks when Patrick kills them?"

Apropos of "so much ducks," there is quite "a much" of them in a certain florist's window. With much ingenuity a little lake has been built into the window and a tiny mill installed, and the clacking mill wheel turns and turns all day, and far into the night, and four exceedingly yellow and very much alike ducklings paddle around in the lake and splash the plate glass to their heart's content. There is just one "ugly duckling" in the lot, and he was the hero, or, perhaps, the heroine, of an amusing little incident.

The ducklings were preparing to retire for the night. They had taken their good-night dip and were cozily snuggling together in a downy yellow heap, there being no mother duck, be it known, to watch over their slumbers. Just as they were comfortably arranged and their yellow bills all carefully disposed of (and it is a problem how four ducklings can get tucked in and not leave some one of the four bills out in the cold), a large, prosperous mosquito came around, evidently prepared to spend the night in riotous biting.

The crowd on the outside of the window shivered—"Oh, the poor little ducks," said one woman, "that mosquito will simply eat them up."

Just then the ugly duckling sleepily opened one eye, and he opened his bill at the same moment, apparently without the least exertion, closing it with a snap. The mosquito was "inside," and his obsequies were brief.

"Well," said the woman, "I won't waste any more sympathy on ducks because mosquitoes are around."

"I thought," responded her companion, "that you had forgotten that terrible tragedy recounted by Mother Goose about 'The frog who would a-wooing go,' and the fate that befell him."

Really Neat Rebuke.

Lillian Russell, discussing the supreme importance of dress, was reminded of an anecdote. "I know," she said, "of only one occasion where dress wasn't the most important thing of all. It was at a Saratoga hotel, and we had arranged a certain [illegible]

Novel Clock.

A novel four-dial clock has been installed in the United States postoffice, custom house and court house at Newbern, N. C. The dial, which is 12½ feet in diameter, bears no numerals, but is provided instead with twelve opalescent glass disks, fifteen inches in diameter. These show white in the daytime, but are illuminated at night by electric lights and reflectors. Each of the hands is also illuminated by means of a red electric light near the point. In order to provide access to the lamps behind the disks each dial may be rotated so as to bring the lamps within reach of a window in the tower.—Scientific American.

The Plague of Rubberers.

One may hope, in spite of the metaphorists, to avoid the breath of the deadly upas tree; one may, by great good fortune, succeed in blacking the eye of the basilisk; one might even dodge the attention of Cerberus and Argus, but no man, dead or alive, can escape the gaze of the Rubberer.

New York is the Caoutchouc City. There are many, of course, who go their way, making money, without turning to the right or the left, but there is a tribe abroad wonderfully composed, like the Martians, solely of eyes and means of locomotion.—From "A Comedy in Rubber," by O. Henry.

Only Two Kinds.

Little Lawrence's grandfather was very ill and a trained nurse had been employed to care for him. When he became convalescent a young woman, who had studied in a hospital for a short time, was secured in her place. A sympathetic neighbor meeting Lawrence, the following conversation took place.

"How is your dear grandpa this morning, Lawrence?"

"He is better."

"Have you the trained nurse still?"

"No, the trained nurse has gone away and the one we have now is half trained and half wild."—Woman's Home Companion.

Disappointed Man.

"I was in hopes, when I married, that I could give my wife everything she wanted."

"Well?"

"I didn't think her yearning capacity would be so much greater than my earning capacity.

CHINA'S BIG WEALTH

FABULOUS HOARD OF GOLD IN SECRET VAULTS.

Imperial Treasure May Be Used to Provide a Navy for the Empire—Vast Accumulation of Years of Tribute.

It is proposed to select the sons of high Manchu officials attending the Nobles' school at Pekin and send them to the naval colleges at Nanking and Tientsin for a preliminary course of study preparatory to a foreign education in the navies of the friendly Powers. It is reported that the Chinese government has already arranged with the British authorities to train the cadets on board British warships and that permission has been granted by the regent to select 100 students at once.

The absence of competent native officers to train the men for the new navy and command the ships is a factor in the scheme occupying the serious attention of the authorities. Students are now being educated in England, France and Germany, and a request has been made to have the number increased. Whether the naval academies of Europe and America will be as freely opened to China as they were to Japan is problematical, for there is a tendency to discontinue such courtesies.

The escapade of a Chinese naval pupil on board the French training ship Borda, who decamped to Belgium with papers stolen from an officer's cabin, has served to intensify the dislike of French officers to the admission of foreign cadets to the training ships. There is a revulsion of feeling in France at least to this system, and the officers are complaining that after educating the Japanese they are now expected to teach the Chinese.

The recent incident of a Chinese military student in Japan who acquired the mobilization plans of the regiment and other valuable information, led to the summary dismissal of all Chinese students from the army, says the Journal of the American Asiatic Association. The order, it appears, was subsequently rescinded.

Of course the all important part of the scheme is to raise the funds. And as already pointed out, every cash of revenue entering Pekin has a capacious maw open to receive it. The desperate strain of the government to raise funds for the navy program are fully disclosed by the many proposed schemes for this purpose.

But the persistence of the regent and his advisers in carrying through the scheme, in spite of the apparent lack of sufficient resources and his refusal to accept foreign financial assistance suggest another view of the situation which has not been touched.

While the government is poor and in financial straights there remains the great wealth of the imperial family to be reckoned with. Overlooked by the allied troops, who ransacked the palace from end to end, the accumulated treasure of years lies untouched in the secret vaults over which the foreign soldiers lit their camp fires, unconscious of the wealth underneath.

The tribute of years to the Empress Dowager and former sovereigns are here hoarded and available for the country's defense. Native reports are to the effect that an investigation by the chief of the imperial household disclosed the fact that the treasure amounted to 19,000,000 taels of gold and 999,000,000 taels of silver, or roughly speaking some $1,000,000,000 gold.

This amount of actual treasure is enormous, and it may be greatly exaggerated. But there is every reason to believe that the imperial treasure must be vast, as the tribute from the provinces, gifts from officials and other perquisites of the throne have been rolling into Pekin for years. The money has not been expended on any great public improvements or buildings or diverted into any provincial reform scheme, so it is safe to believe that it exists.

Thirty-Six Years a Bellboy.

A tourist arrived at a hotel near the Grand Central station recently, and when the bellboy, in answer to the clerk's call, stepped forward to take the hand baggage to the room assigned to the new arrival the latter looked quizzically at the "boy" and said: "You look enough like the boy who took up things for me here 25 years ago to be his brother." The servant smiled, and said: "You are nearly right, sir, because I'm the man who waited on you then." On further questioning he said: "I was one of the old boys at that time, and pretty soon it'll be 36 years since I've been bellboy in this house."—New York Tribune.

Proceeding With Caution.

"Why do you insist on keeping that political enemy of yours before the public?" asked one statesman. "You are constantly celebrating him."

"I'm not celebrating him," replied the other. "But I want him to be sufficiently noticeable to keep him from coming into some convention as a dark horse and starting life anew."

Endless Entertainment.

"What are you so deeply interested in?"

"It's a serial story about some people who are saving for a steam yacht."

"Good story, is it?"

"Yes; and I expect it will run on for years and years

TRY POND LILY SALAD

MADE WITH LETTUCE, BOILED EGGS AND OTHER THINGS.

Veal Croquettes That Are Tasty, Made From Meat Left Over—Stuffed Peppers, Madge's Cookies and Pie Cruts.

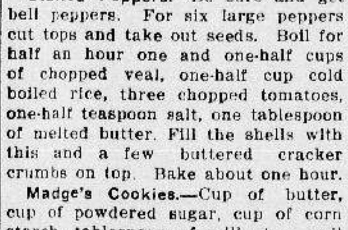
Pond Lily Salad.—On separate salad plates arrange some nice white lettuce leaves. Boil eggs hard, one and one-half for each person. Cut whites in long strips, placing these in center of lettuce. Then chop yolks fine, adding finely chopped celery, parsley and olives. Mix well with mayonnaise dressing, season with salt and pepper and place in middle of dish.

Veal Croquettes.—Use beef or chicken or any kind of leftover meat. Put the meat through the chopper, season with salt and pepper, moisten with cream sauce or soup; add well beaten egg; cracker crumbs to make stiff enough to mold in balls and fry sauce for same. Fry a small onion in butter for the flavor only, take out and brown some flour; then add either soup stock or water and then season with salt, pepper and catsup. Cream sauce may be poured over them instead.

Stuffed Peppers.—Be sure and get bell peppers. For six large peppers cut tops and take out seeds. Boil for half an hour one and one-half cups of chopped veal, one-half cup cold boiled rice, three chopped tomatoes, one-half teaspoon salt, one tablespoon of melted butter. Fill the shells with this and a few buttered cracker crumbs on top. Bake about one hour.

Madge's Cookies.—Cup of butter, cup of powdered sugar, cup of corn starch, tablespoon of milk, two well beaten eggs, small glass of sherry and teaspoon baking powder. Flour to make stiff enough to roll; roll thin and cut, then brush over with milk; sprinkle cinnamon, granulated sugar and chopped nuts.

Good Pie Crust.—Six heaping tablespoons of flour; about half teaspoon of baking powder, tablespoon lard and a little salt. Mix with milk instead of water.



Kerosene will make boots or shoes hardened by water soft and pliable as new.

Place a deep skillet over irons when they are heating. They will retain the heat longer.

Boiled starch is made smooth and effective by the introduction of sperm, salt or gum arabic dissolved.

Old paint stains may be removed from cloth by covering the spot with olive oil or butter, then applying chloroform.

If dirt seems to settle under the nails rub pulverized pumice stone under them with an orange stick and wash with warm water.

Parsley may be kept fresh and green for several days if it is put in a covered earthen jar in a cool place. It will last longer than in water.

To scald milk put the milk in a pan or double boiler, stand in a pan of boiling water over the fire. When the milk begins to steam it is scalded.

To clean and renew shine of leather chairs, brush off first all dust. Then rub well with a mixture of three parts benzine and one of sweet oil.

Steel, when rusty, may be cleaned by giving the article a good coating of sweet oil, leaving it for a few days and then rubbing it with unslaked lime.

It's a good scheme to keep a long crochet needle in the bathroom to draw out threads or hairs from the waste pipes, which stop the outflow of water.

To Bottle Peas.

Green peas that are to be bottled should be gathered on a dry day and only peas that are perfectly sound should be used. Shell them carefully and dip them in boiling water in which a spray of mint has been soaked. After blanching, dry the peas and put them into wide necked bottles with mint and salted boiling water. Cover the bottles and put them, wrapped in hay, in a pan of water. Bring the water slowly to the boil and allow the peas to cook gently for an hour and a half. Set the pan aside till the peas are quite cold, then lift the bottles out and lay them on a damp cloth in a warm place. Hermetically seal the bottles, dry them carefully and store till required.

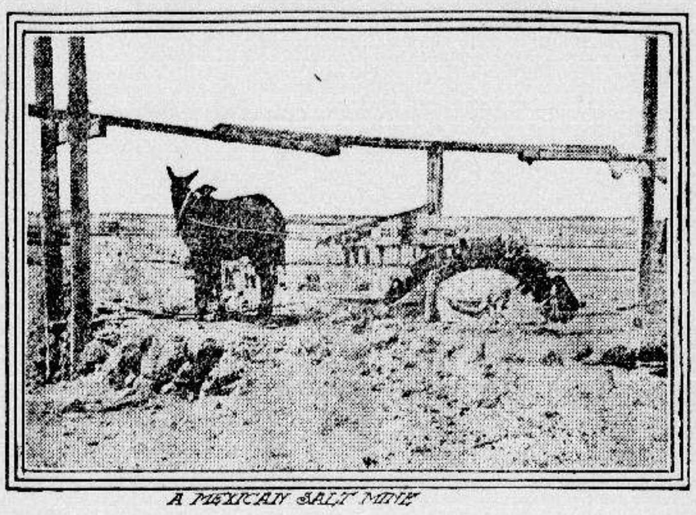
Fricaseed Beefsteak.

Take a round steak and cut it into small pieces about two inches square; roll each piece in flour, sprinkle salt and pepper over all and put into frying pan with plenty of lard or butter. Put into oven and brown as you would a roast, turning pieces a few times. Then add water and cook either in oven or on stove for an hour and a half or two hours. Thicken the gravy and serve.

Spiced Salmon.

Place in the dish the liquor from a can of salmon, two tablespoons butter, two tablespoons lemon juice, four of water, one-half teaspoon cloves, pinch of cayenne. When it begins to boil add the salmon, salt to taste and boil a few minutes. Serve on toast or crackers.

SHREWD PROMOTERS FLEECE THE 'GRINGO'



A MEXICAN SALT MINE

MEXICO savors of romance, mescal, chili, guitar thumpings and gold. It has about it the lure of easy money and swinging hammocks, and there is a popular feeling that fortunes wait for the hustling American who ventures into the land of the Montezumas.

Americans look upon the Mexican as an untutored and childlike individual who cannot compete with Yankee shrewdness. Sooner or later the adventurous financier of the northern republic ventures across the line into the southern republic and invests in a banana plantation, a dye wood concession or a mine of ineffable richness.

Fleecing the "gringo" has become an established business in those arid lands that lie to the west and the south of the Rio Grande del Norte. A stream of good American dollars is poured across the line into the "land of tomorrow." The Mexican has taken a leaf from the book of the dead and gone boomers of the old boom towns of the prairies. The recent insurrection has stimulated business of this sort, but it has been well established for the last decade.

Fakers Looking for Victims.

You can buy anything you may happen to desire among these transient promoters of the resources of Old Mexico. They have aped the advertising of the legitimate concerns that are honestly endeavoring to open up certain rich sections of the backward republic. The fact that many colonists well placed and carefully instructed have made money in the new lands has made business good for the faker and the swindler who have followed in the steps of the honest promoter.

Many of the plausible tongued gentlemen who come up out of Old Mexico to sell plantations are Americans, sun tanned, saturnine men, with a gift of tongues. The great majority of them, however, are gentlemen with saddle colored complexions and Castilian accents. They let it be known that for reasons not unconnected with the disturbed conditions of their homeland they must sell. Their descriptions of their very great plantations roll from practiced tongues.

They will sell you anything from a sugar beet plantation to a salt mine or a gold mine. They prefer to deal in those "lost mines," of which all trace vanished before the revolution of 1838. Some old Indian in their group of family retainers has, so the story goes, recently rediscovered this place of fabulous richness. The plausible gentleman cannot return, and work this mine. He will be thrown into jail or he will be persecuted by his political enemies. Alas, he needs money now, at once. He must sell, and he usually does sell. The gold brick has always been a weakness of the American.

Banana plantations are one of the main standbys of the dark skinned promoter. He always has many pictures. They are photographs of beautiful banana groves, with himself standing well in the foreground. Big bunches of the fruit are dropping over his shoulder, and around him are a number of white clad halfbreeds, to whom he refers as his "peons."

His language rises to iridescent heights as he describes the "so grand hacienda," and the vast acres that surround his home. His tongue fairly drips gold as he describes the fertile land, the glorious climate and the certainty of a fortune to the lucky man who grasps the providential opportunity.

These gentlemen with the smooth and versatile manners invade American cities. They work very cautiously and very quietly among the sort of people who dream of getting rich over night by some lucky speculative turn. They stop at the little out of the way hotels and tell a tale of persecution that accounts for their secretive movements.

Talk for the Investor.

As a rule the swarthy coloring, the Castilian accent and the photographs of the plantations, concessions, rubber groves and banana forests are all that the promoter needs in order to convince his victims.

"Ah, but see, senor," he exclaims, "here is the station of the railway that is located quite near the hacienda." As he talks he rifles through a bunch of Mexican photographs, selecting one now and then with much to edify his listener.

"You will see that there is transportation for the minerals, the fruits and the dry stuffs from the plantation. Then, too, senor, the labor is the cheapest. Do you see in this picture the mozos who work for me? Ah, but they are contented folk, who will work and work hard if properly handled. It is the Senor American who would know how to handle these patient workers. Dangerous? Not at all, and very temperate."

In the southwest they cut their eye teeth on such tales and pictures long since. The business of marketing imaginary banana plantations and arid wastes of sand for sugar beet fields has languished there for years. It has forced the promoter to penetrate farther northward with his thrilling, entrancing and iridescent stories of wealth to be had for the asking. Popular ignorance of Mexico has aided them. Our estimate of the Mexican shrewdness has made the task of the promoter easy. We think that because he cannot speak English fluently he is already delivered into our hands.

For years the rubber forests were the sweetest song sung by the singers that came up out of Mexico with luring tales of fortune. The present high price of rubber that has followed the development of the automobile industry will doubtless revive interest in the rubber areas of Old Mexico. The promoter with his photographs and his heavily stamped credentials, with the red and blue seals will again invade the United States.

The Mexican insurrection has helped him in his campaign against the timid American dollar. It has aroused an almost forgotten interest in the country of the snake and eagle banner. Every one expects development as soon as the muddled situation over the country begins to clear up. People are thinking Mexico and talking Mexico. Their knowledge of what is going on there is at the best half knowledge, and the promoter finds the ground already broken in which he is to sow the seeds of the lure of easy wealth.

The recent troubles make good his story of reverses because of political conditions. He is a sort of a hero among the suckers whose names are on his list. They listen open mouthed to his tales of guerrilla warfare and appear to sympathize as he describes his arrest and deportation for political reasons.

They decide to buy. "Speculation" they call it among their friends and the immediate members of their families. Some of the lands that they buy have been sold scores of times to different purchasers. Some of the Mexican rubber plantations sold to American investors have been surveyed and found to be out in the gulf somewhere to the north of the Yucatan peninsula.

The legitimate exploiters of Mexico have made the presence of this horde of smooth tongued adventurers possible. They are fattening in the publicity given the real schemes of Mexican development.

When He Wants Grapes.

"Champ Clark is rather leery about giving an opinion nowadays," said one of his friends in the house press gallery. "He is running for president. He is much given to saying that he will not discuss a subject that everybody else is discussing.

"Mr. Clark reminds me of a young lawyer out west. The legal light would not commit himself on any subject. Two of his friends, Tom and John, undertook to make him take a stand. They went to his office and incidentally commenced a debate whether or not a buffalo ate grapes.

"'Of course, he eats grapes,' said Tom. I saw one climb twenty feet into a tree to get a bunch of grapes.'

"'What! A buffalo climb a tree?'

"'Yes.'

"'What do you think of that proposition—a buffalo climbing a tree to get grapes—judge?' said John to the lawyer, who had remained silent up to that time.

"'Why, I don't know, but there's no telling what a buffalo will do when he wants grapes,' was the reply."—New York World.

A Quaint Thought.

Miss Geraldine Farrar, seated in her deck chair on the George Washington, regarded a half dozen urchins playing on the sunny deck, and then said, with a pensive smile:

"I often wonder, considering what charming things children are, where all the queer old men come from!"