

stolen the club of Hercules. In the Capitoline Museum there is still another, like the present in all respects, but of very inferior execution. The occurrence of so many of these statuette, so nearly resembling one another, certainly suggests the existence of some celebrated original, of which, so far as I know, we have no other knowledge. Such a statue would be a natural companion-piece to the "Hercules bowed down by the might of love and despoiled of his weapons," which is alluded to in an epigram in the Greek Anthology, and which has been preserved for us in gems. The present statuette is also interesting as representing, in addition to the club, another of the attributes of Hercules, which is not very common in statues, the bow together with its case. "Love playing with the arms of Hercules" has been a favorite subject for ancient comic art.

Sometimes he bears upon his shoulders the massive club, which bends him down beneath its weight, and a lamp at Naples with this design has the inscription "Help, comrades!" More common still are representations of "Love bending the bow of Hercules," of which numerous examples occur, that have been made the subject of a special study by Friederichs. The combination, however, of the two attributes is, I think, unique, and seems to militate against Welcker's interpretation of the lovely statuette at Vicuna.

Hoping the intrinsic excellence of this new art gem may warrant this long note, which seeks to secure for it the rightful appellation of "Love Disguised with the Attributes of Hercules,"

I remain, very truly yours,
HENRY W. HAYNES.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

Decoration of the Dinner-table.

It is quite impossible for the average female mind to confront unmoved the delightful possibilities to-day afforded by the service of a dinner-table. Times have changed since the mistress of a household thought it necessary to set before her guests a feast like the day-dream of Ichabod Crane, where "the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese swimming in their own gravy, and the ducks pairing cozily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce." The now universal *dîner à la Russe*, with its airy hints, suggestions, and innuendoes of ministry to the coarser needs of human nature, has limited each course to the one dish offered at a time, with its companion sauce or vegetable.

"Giving a dinner-party" in the Virginia days gone by, for instance, meant a good deal of hard work for the housewife and her coadjutors, generally the daughters or sisters of the family; it meant hours of seclusion in a light pantry, with curls tucked up, and ribbons obscured by a gingham apron, weighing, measuring, egg-beating, almond-blanching, icing, garnishing, seasoning, tasting and gossiping!—all this, and much more, till the lavish banquet "stood confest" before the eyes of twenty hungry guests, who had jolted over ten miles of unspeakably bad roads to be punctual to the hour of half-past two P. M.

The march of civilization and modern degeneracy have materially lessened the labors of dinner-giving in the present. As a mere matter of contrast, it might be well to picture the dame-chatelaine of latter days, who, after having bidden her guests and consulted with her cook, abandons all concern until an hour before the coming of the guests. Then may you see a sylph, in trailing Watteau gown of palest blue, with saucy little bows, glide into her dining-room and hover round the board. The absolute work of arranging cloth, silver, crystal and steel, has been done by a well-trained servant; but there are graceful last touches which no hand but hers may give. There are wreaths of smilax to be trailed over piles of rosy fruit, and flowers to be grouped in studied carelessness beside each plate. Dinner-cards, and the mighty question of places, must be

settled now; bon-bons, little cakes, and crystallized fruits must be arranged. Lamps and candles must be passed in review, the temperature of the room regulated, screens set, and portières drawn for the comfort of the company. A word of admonition is to be given to the servant about the warmth of the soup and the chill of the oysters before the mistress vanishes into her dressing-room, soon to re-appear and take her place, watchful, gracious, yet unconscious, as hostess of the feast!

The somewhat rigid forms of Eastlake's Jacobean-table are common now, despite the remonstrance of old dinner-givers, who say that there is no shape so comfortable, so sociable, or so effective as the perfect round.

Until recently, table-cloths have been restricted to an ornament arising merely from the gloss obtained by various distributions of the warp and woof in weaving. The specimens of British and Saxony table-damask are almost satin-like in texture. From Dresden has lately come a table-cloth quite new in conception, representing a dance of cupids amid garlands of flowers, encircling the center-piece. But the profluent tide of color has invaded even this stainless snow. In Germany, in 1872, some table-cloths were made, imitating the Renaissance linen, and bearing a familiar design of the Royal Meissen china—the "Zwiebelmuster" or "onion-pattern" in colored borders. Since then, scarlet and blue re-appear in monogram and crest, and in other tracteries wrought by hand upon the damask.

We use Macramé lace under the fond impression that it is "something new," but the drapery of the table in Paul Veronese's picture of "Jesus in Simon's House" has identically this trimming, and in one or two other old paintings the table-cloth is bordered with the cut-work we are all learning to make to-day. I have seen a side-board cover, table-cloth, and napkins, decorated to match, with broidery of scarlet, and a handful of scarlet poppies dropped upon one side, with interwoven texts wrought in German characters.

Variety, thus laid upon the foundation stones of your dinner-table, appears throughout. The changes of plates are kaleidoscopic. You take your soup in Sèvres, your entrées in England, and so on, till you come to fruit and coffee in China or Japan. It is quite *en règle* to turn your plate over, with the

sapient air of a connoisseur, and study the marks thereon inscribed. But it is well to avoid the catastrophe which befell an absent-minded man, not long ago, who, forgetting that he had just helped himself, reversed his plate and bestowed one of Delmonico's *bouchées à la reine* upon his neighbor's satin petticoat.

The use of heavy silver pieces has been very generally superseded by exquisite bits of porcelain or glass, bearing tribute of fruit and flowers. This is in reality an economy, as well as a pretty fashion, for a lady may select from her cabinet or shelf a Venice glass, an iridescent vase or two, and group her own flowers, without resorting to the costly structures sent in by her florist. A new fancy is to use but one kind of flower upon the table, as for instance, Jacqueminot, Maréchal Neil, or Gloire de Paris roses. For bouquets offered at each plate, there are lovely horn-shaped holders in Italian straw, flat baskets to hang with ribbons to the waist, and horse-shoes to be made of violets, and used in similar fashion.

One phase of the dessert at a recent dinner may prove suggestive, especially as the general effect resulted more from an harmonious assembling of colors than from a lavish display of wealth. The centerpiece was a glowing pyramid of scarlet poinsettia leaves, and white camellias, cut with long stems, and having glossy dark-green foliage. The shell-shaped dessert dishes, finger-bowls, and ice-cream plates, were all of ruby Bohemian glass. The doyleys were etched with red silk, in tiny Japanese designs. The candelabra used were of clear crystal, the *bobèches* of ruby glass, and the red wax candles had each one a little jaunty cap, or shade, of scarlet silk. The sparkle of fire-light and candle-light over all recalled the impression produced upon Jane Eyre by the drawing-room of Thornfield—"a general blending of snow and fire."

It ought to be quite a consolation to our country friends who have so long been sighing for the luxury of gas, that candles again play a prominent part in decoration. Sideboard, mantel-shelf and wall sconces glow with a subdued luster. Then the French moderator, or the familiar student's lamp, burning soft under a shade of antique lace, lined with crimson silk, makes so becoming a *chiaro-oscuro*, that it is doubtful whether they will ever be allowed to go out of vogue again.

Among dinner-table adornments, I know of nothing more beautiful and seductive to the housekeeper than the modern glass, now imported in quantities, and at prices within the reach of a moderate purse. What variety of form and tint in the Salvati or modern Venice glass! Amber, topaz, opal, sea blue, ruby, and bottle-green, make a beautiful radiance on a snowy cloth. In the Bombay striped glass, introduced into England by the Prince of Wales, after his visit to India, and since largely reproduced, there are beautiful specimens of fruit-dishes, flower-vases, and ice-cream plates. Bohemian and English enameled glass appear in such beautiful guise that it seems impossible for them to be excelled; and the ware from the Stourbridge

factory is a revelation of the refined art attained by skilled engravers upon crystal.

SACHARISSA.

The Boys of the Family. IV.

A MILITARY EDUCATION AT WEST POINT.

THERE are probably few parents who, in discussing what they may do with their boys, give much consideration to West Point, unless some other member of the family is, or has been, in the army; yet here is an opening for a spirited lad of intelligence to a profession, which, if it can never yield riches, at least belongs to gentlemen and leads to honor. It has some manifest advantages over other occupations; a moderate income is insured to its members for life, and a definite social status. Entering the church, or the professions of law or medicine, a youth needs such a university education as can only be acquired by large expenditures of time and money; the preparatory period is one of continuous outlay; while in entering the army as a cadet at West Point, he is provided with an education of a higher standard than that attainable in most colleges, and is paid a liberal salary during the course. He needs no more capital than his railway fare to the Academy; no other equipment than the few inexpensive articles hereinafter specified, and when he is graduated and is enlisted as a second lieutenant, an amount is paid to him sufficient to purchase the new outfit necessary. Instead of being aristocratic or in any degree exclusive, the Academy is open to all, regardless of birth or station, who are capable of passing its preliminary examinations, and the poorest boy may avail himself of the same education given to the richest without ever perceiving or being reminded of any difference in the eyes of the officials between himself and them.

The two essential things in successful candidates are robust physical health and a taste for mathematics. In awarding marks the greatest weight is given to mathematics—the maximum being three hundred; three hundred is also the maximum for natural and experimental philosophy and civil and military engineering; one hundred and fifty for law; one hundred for drawing; one hundred for French, and two hundred for discipline. From these estimates it is evident what abilities are most acceptable to the authorities. Without cleverness in mathematics, without self-control and subordination, a boy stands little chance of being graduated or being long continued on the rolls; unless he is physically strong, the somewhat Spartan manner of life would soon compel his retirement.

Each Congressional district and territory—also the District of Columbia—is entitled to have a cadet at the Academy on an appointment made by the Secretary of War, in accordance with the nomination made by the representative or delegate. Ten other appointments are conferred at large by the President of the United States. The appointees are usually selected by the Congressman of the district in which a vacancy occurs, at a competitive examination, announced in local newspapers; they must be not younger than seventeen nor older than twenty-two;