

CONCERNING DERBY CHINA.



TRADE-MARK
OF MODERN
"CROWN"
DERBY CHINA.

IN the declining days of December last year (1883) an interesting ceremonial at Hawarden Castle elicited from the Right Honourable William Ewart Gladstone a speech that was more than interesting. The occasion was the presentation of a dessert service of "Crown" Derby china to that illustrious statesman from the native workmen of the town of its manufacture.

The Premier for the nonce escaped from the cares of politics to dilate upon the charms of porcelain. The jocularists said he had "new views upon China." The efforts of the epigrammatists had it that he had forsaken finance for *science*. At any rate, Mr. Gladstone, an authority on many diverse subjects, is an authority on the fictile art. He is as great an enthusiast over old china as was Charles Lamb, who, writing in the *London Magazine* of March, 1823, confided to his readers "an almost feminine impartiality for old china;" and confessed that when he went "to see any great house, he inquired first for the china-closet, and next for the picture-gallery."

The amiable Elia speaks of "a set of extraordinary old blue-china (a recent purchase), which we are for the first time using over our hyson." The service must have been the product of Japan or China, for the European manufacture of porcelain was not known until the eighteenth century, when Böttcher made his discovery in his prison-laboratory in Saxony. The Dresden works were established in 1709. The factories of Derby, Worcester, Berlin, and Sèvres were founded in 1751. Derby and Worcester, of the English works, survive.

What Mr. Gladstone said about both these art-potteries will occupy, at a future time, an interesting chapter in the volume of the Prime Minister's collected addresses. "It was to him," he said, "a matter of singular interest to observe that to England had been allotted a peculiar and a very high office in connection with porcelain manufacture. It was quite true that the countries on the Continent, and Saxony in particular, had preceded us, as the distant East had preceded them, in the production of porcelain. But the porcelain which was produced in Germany and France was produced by dint of royal subventions, by means of pecuniary aid granted, after all, out of the public purse—granted by public authority, and, therefore, proceeding from public sources. . . . It was England that first of all placed the manufacture upon a sound basis. . . . Not a farthing was ever received by Derby in the way of public subvention, nor, unless he was much mistaken, was it so received at Worcester. . . . Standing as it did on that basis, it was remarkable

that, undoubtedly, in the last century England took a very high place in porcelain manufacture; but, in the present century, certainly the relative place of England was higher still, and he did not think he was indulging in arrogance or national vanity when he said that at the present moment England stood at the head of the porcelain-producing countries of the world." The veteran statesman continued in this sympathetic speech to confess that "for very many years he had had a great love of porcelain, and considered they were entirely mistaken who considered its production merely as a branch of industry, or merely as a branch of skilled industry; it was likewise a branch of art in which the principles of the fine arts applied to industrial purpose—an elevation and refinement of labour."

Mr. Gladstone alluded, as we have seen, to State aid. It is instructive in this connection to know that while the great national porcelain manufactory of Sèvres remains one of the glories of France, the only English pottery at all subsidised—namely, that of Chelsea, supported by a grant of £800 a year from a member of the Royal Family (the Duke of Cumberland)—was a pecuniary failure. The Chelsea works (minus the grant) were bought by the proprietor of the Derby China Factory, William Duesbury, in 1769. The same pioneer of English pottery-art purchased the Bow Factory in 1775. The Chelsea-Derby period from 1769 to 1784 forms one of the most remarkable epochs in the history of European ceramics.

Reverting now to the Gladstone Dessert Service, a brief description of it will surely prove interesting to all our readers. The service is characteristic in many ways. The design of Mr. Richard Lunn, it ex-



A COMFORT IN THE GLADSTONE DESSERT SERVICE.

hibits the results of a superlatively successful revival of the manufacture of Derby china. It consists of twenty-six pieces—namely, eighteen plates and eight

comports. A Derbyshire landscape, some "beauty-spot" of the "Peake countrie," occupies the centre of each piece. The picture is framed in gold. The body-colour is that deeply dark, rich blue, that mazarine blue which even the famous *bleu du Roi* does not rival. That incomparable cobalt colour was the tint inseparably associated with all genuine "old Derby." The rim of each plate is enriched with medallions, which frame floral combinations. These, if they were not charming in themselves, would be interesting, because the flowers—simple and old-fashioned—are the work of Mr. James Rouse. He painted these archaic "posies" at the old Derby Factory. In his eighty-third year he is painting flowers at the revived works. Characteristic, too, is the fact that the landscape pictures that enrich this Gladstone ware are vignettes of Chatsworth and Haddon, Hardwick and Wingfield, Dove Dale and the Dales of the Derwent and Derbyshire Wye. They are

from the pencil of Count Holtzendorff. He is a Saxon gentleman, who comes from the land which was the birthplace of the porcelain manufacture in Europe. Illustrations of one of the Gladstone plates and one of the comports are here given; but a black-and-white reproduction, be the engraver never so skilful, must necessarily fail to give an idea of the opulence of colour and the gilding that distinguish the original.

The process by which art-pottery is produced has been already described in the pages of CASSELL'S MAGAZINE (*vide* paper on the Worcester works). Modern "Crown" Derby is, perhaps, marked by richer schemes of colour and more Oriental art (as in the raised gold Persian patterns) than any other English factory. But the *modus operandi* of manufacture is, apart from certain technical secrets of body-colour, much the same as at the before-mentioned famous fictile factory. In fact, the initial stages of the processes of the potter—the thrower at the potter's wheel—have not advanced since the days of the Pharaohs. The fashioning of the clay is identical with that alluded to in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah.

More to our present purpose is it, however, to afford the fortunate possessors of "old Derby" some facts concerning the history of their ware. The record of Derby china divides itself into periods. The first factory was established by William Duesbury in 1751.

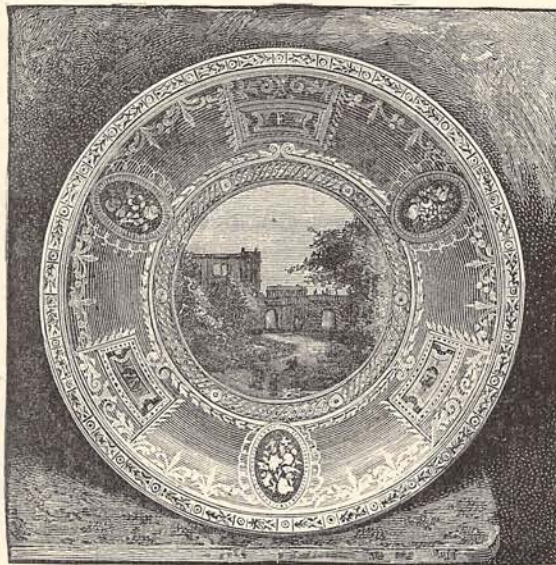
It occupied extensive premises on the Nottingham Road, which are now no more. In 1769 the famous factory at Chelsea became insolvent. It was absorbed by Duesbury. The first period was, therefore, from 1751 to 1769. The second period, known as the Chelsea-Derby period, dates from 1769 to 1784. The work then produced became classic. During this time Doctor Samuel Johnson went out of his way to visit

the Derby Factory (1777). James Boswell, Esq., writes:—"The china was beautiful, but Dr. Johnson justly observed that it was too dear; for that he could have vessels of silver, of the same size, as cheap as what were made here of porcelain."

William Duesbury died in 1786. His son succeeded him. He took a clever Irishman, one Michael Kean, into partnership. The third period—that of Duesbury and Kean—may be placed as from 1786 to 1811. The ware was then denominated "Crown" Derby. The long and commercially exasperating French war

would appear to have had something to do with the decadence of the Derby works. The products of the fourth period, known as the "Bloor" régime, occupying from 1811 to 1849, were not characterised by the artistic perfection of those of the preceding dynasties. Robert Bloor bought the works in 1811, and carried them on until the day of their close in 1849. From 1849 to 1877 marks a fifth era, under Messrs. Locker and Co., anon Sharp, Hancock, and Stevenson, and then solely Mr. Sampson Hancock, an old factory artist. Locker removed from the dismantled Nottingham Road factory to smaller premises, still in active operation, under Mr. Hancock, on the Duffield Road, Derby. He brought with him not a few of the old workmen. But in 1877 the manufacture of Derby "Crown" porcelain entered on a newer and more vigorous life. The sixth period—that of modern "Crown" Derby—is greater, both in substance and artistic merit of development, than any of the previous ones. It revived an almost dying manufacture. The *renaissance* is greater than what it sought to restore. Although many of the famous old Derby patterns are reproduced, the new work is not a mere replica of the old. Some of the designs by Mr. Richard Lunn, the present art director, are as original in conception as they are daring in decorative effect.

It is interesting to note that artist-workmen con-



A PLATE IN THE GLADSTONE DESSERT SERVICE.

nected with the old classic factory are still alive to supply a living link between the Derby porcelain of the past and the present. One of these is Mr. James Rouse, the octogenarian flower-painter before alluded to; another is the retired artist, Mr. James Haslem, a royal miniature-painter; Mr. Sampson Hancock supplies a third; while a famous potter, apprenticed at the old works, Mr. John Mountford, who introduced to the trade the composition known as "parian," or imitation of marble, "which has done more to increase that branch of the potter's art than anything invented in the present century," is still on the staff at Mr. Hancock's works; and while Mr. James Rouse is the oldest painter, Mr. Mountford is the oldest potter from the original works.

From men to marks. Collectors of old and new "Derby" can readily distinguish the foregoing periods by their representative marks. The following list is perhaps, though not exhaustive, and therefore imperfect, reliable in a general way. The sole mark of

new "Crown" Derby is a monogram consisting of two "D's" intersected, surmounted by a crown. The old Derby marks vary according to the periods of production. The elder Duesbury's device was simply a crown, surmounted by the words "Duesbury, Derby." The Derby-Chelsea marks are various, the letter "D," crown and anchor, and "D" and anchor, being introduced. The ware produced during the Duesbury and Kean partnership was marked "D.K." surmounted by crossed swords and a crown; that of W. Duesbury the younger, crossed swords and a crown. The Bloor period is marked by Bloor's name and the word "Derby" circling a crown; "Locker and Co., late Bloor," surrounding the word "Derby" followed. Mr. Sampson Hancock's mark comprises crossed swords, a crown, the letter "D," and his initials, "S.H." But the subject of marks and monograms is an intricate one, and would require a special chapter. The trademark of modern "Crown" Derby forms the initial to this paper.

EDWARD BRADBURY.

REMUNERATIVE EMPLOYMENTS FOR GENTLEMEN.



HERE is nothing, perhaps, that so much enhances the pleasure we naturally experience in visiting new and unfamiliar scenes as the power of bringing away with us pictorial presentments, more or less accurate, of their most striking features. For thereby the delight which they first imparted to our gratified senses can be renewed at will and, to a certain extent, even shared by our friends. A verbal description of the places we have visited may be very well in its way, and in some cases be extremely vivid and intelligible, but who does not know how greatly the production of a sketch-book adds to the interest of such a description, however crude and imperfect the drawings may be? When the views presented for examination, however, possess the truthfulness and exactness of photography, the interest is oftentimes still greater, and our friends' ideas of the scenes represented will be rendered almost as accurate as though they had been with us in person and seen the various objects for themselves with their own eyes.

If, however, we are dependent on the local tradesman for our supply of photographic views, we shall in all probability have little to aid our recollection in the case of much that was beautiful in our travels. The only remedy for this defect is to become our own photographer, and thus to bring it within our power to carry away with us whatever views we most desire, and, if necessary, to multiply copies at a future time to any desired extent.

Many gentlemen have recently acquired a knowledge of photography simply for this purpose, and to any one possessing a fair amount of artistic taste we can scarcely imagine a more interesting and delightful amusement. But there is no reason whatever why it should not be rendered something more than this—why, in fact, it should not be brought, in the case of those who find it necessary to add to their limited incomes, under the category of Remunerative Employments. To those who have a fair knowledge of the art and a tolerable amount of skill, there are ample opportunities of turning their talents in this direction to practical account. Photography is becoming more and more utilised, as time goes on, for purposes of pictorial illustration, not only in connection with literature, but also in many departments of trade; and no doubt, as improvements are made in the processes employed, and the advantages of its use become more apparent, it will become even far more general than at present.

Just now, however, we are thinking of the more popular uses to which it has already long been put, and which are capable even yet of considerable extension, such as the taking of portraits of persons and animals, views of buildings, landscapes, &c.

There will always be a greater or less demand for these things, but dependent, as usual, on the facility with which the articles can be obtained. In town districts, photography in all its branches is, of course, very largely and very generally patronised; but in the more remote villages and hamlets it has yet, as a rule, made comparatively but little way. And it is just in such districts as these that one finds in greater abundance than almost anywhere else subjects worthy of photographic reproduction. Should an itinerant