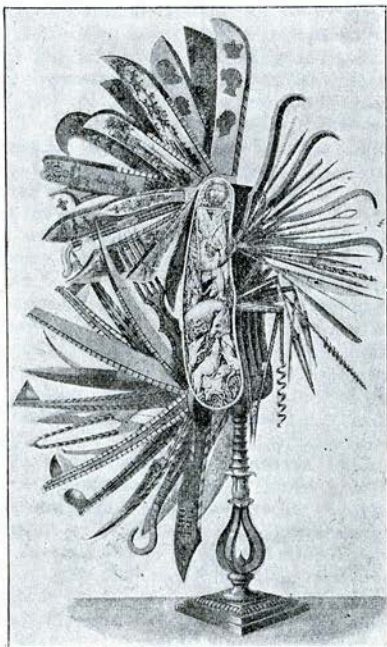


## THE CUNNING OF THE CUTLER.

QUEER THINGS "MADE IN SHEFFIELD."

CUTLERY and Sheffield are synonymous terms; think of one, and your thoughts immediately travel towards the other. Some of the specimens of cutlery to be seen in Sheffield astonish those unacquainted with the cunning of the cutler. On entering



A KNIFE WORTH £920.

Messrs. Rodgers' premises the visitor is attracted towards five magnificent tusks of elephants, from which the handles of knives are made; and the value of the five is £721. One, which is the largest Messrs. Rodgers have ever purchased, is worth £156. It weighs 166 lbs., and is in length 9 ft. 4½ ins., its girth being 22½ ins. It was estimated at one period that Sheffield, in some years used the tusks of 20,000 elephants in the manufacture of cutlery.

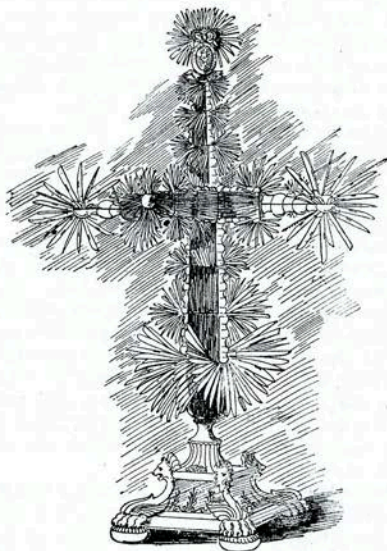
In one department visitors see ivory valued at thousands of pounds, waiting to be cut up for knives and forks. The cutlers employed here, use on an average annually the tusks of 1,280 elephants, calculating each tusk to weigh 23 lbs.

Passing from elephants' tusks to the showroom, one observes in a corner a pair of carvers which would make an ordinary joint of meat look very small; they are nearly five feet in length. Lying on the counter in a glass case is another pair of carvers half an inch long, and also twelve pairs of scissors "warranted to cut," each weighing half a grain. On all sides are wonderful examples of the cutler's art, but the most beautiful, and one of the finest specimens of cutlery in the world is the "Norfolk Sportsman's Knife," of which an illustration is here given. It occupied nearly two years in making, and is valued at £920. There are seventy-five steel blades con-

tained in one handle. On a large number of the blades are etchings of the Queen, the late Prince Consort, a former President of the United States, views of Windsor Castle, Osborne House, and other Royal residences, White House, America, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire, Haddon Hall, and other places of interest. The handle is a splendid work of art, being of carved pearl. A boar hunt is represented on one side, and a stag hunt on the other.

As a curiosity the knife with 1,895 blades is equally attractive. It is usually referred to as a knife, but to be accurate it should be described as a piece of cutlery. The illustration affords a good idea of what it is like. It is in the shape of a Maltese cross, and resembles in appearance a tree yielding blades in all directions. It was made in the year 1822, a blade being inserted for every year of the Christian era. At the end of the present century five additional blades will be added, bringing the total number up to 1,900.

Art has not been closely associated with the manufacture of cutlery in Sheffield. Artistic work has been done in the city, as the specimens already referred to tend to show, and even now a cutler may be seen occasionally filing the handle of a pocket knife with scales of gold. But the demand to-day is not for artistic works of cutlery. The Sheffield cutler has made his reputation by turning out useful articles of the best quality. Every year competition in the industry becomes keener, and foreign rivals flood the market with



A KNIFE WITH 1895 BLADES.

inferior wares at lower prices. But so long as quality is the first consideration in connection with the manufacture of cutlery, the Sheffield workman will be in the foremost rank of cutlers.

J. H. V.