



HARTFORD.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY.

BROOKLYN.

NEW BRITAIN.

A CONTINENT IN SPOONS:

A TRIP THROUGH THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA PICTURED
BY SOUVENIR SPOONS FROM THE PRINCIPAL TOWNS.

BY C. LANG NEIL.

Illustrated from Photographs of a collection in the possession of Mr. Charles Bertram.

ALMOST daily we see evidences of the collecting mania—one of the most prominent features of the times in which we live, and among the newest forms which it takes must be reckoned the spoon-collecting craze. Resembling so many other of our modern hobbies in that it hails from our American cousins, and having many points which strongly recommend it, souvenir spoon-collecting is as yet in its infancy on this side of the Atlantic.

Of course, no form of collecting is entirely free from expense, yet this particular one can, upon the whole, be recommended on the score of cheapness, seeing that its most ardent devotee will never be asked so large sums, for even the very choicest of specimens, as he would be for postage-stamps, butterflies, eggs, or other kindred treasures.

Spoons are easily kept; time does not impair their value, beauty, or interest. Even their intrinsic worth varies but little, for souvenir spoons are almost always manufactured from silver—engraved, gilded, or enamelled.

As has been said, the idea of spoon-collecting originated in the United States, and almost every town in that country produces a goodly assortment of patterned spoons, while enterprising clerks or bartenders in the majority of hotels of standing do a small private trade in them among the hotels' patrons.

Ask the manager of any hotel in London frequented by Americans, and he will bear witness to the fact that his visitors frequently inquire for spoons to take back to their own country. These not always being obtainable,

it is no uncommon thing to hear of their asking whether they cannot purchase one of the ordinary hotel spoons, with a name or crest upon it, in lieu of a specially designed souvenir. Many hotel managers are not unnaturally averse to parting with their plate in this way. This has been known to lead to regrettable occurrences, as the veracious historian—though he would fain close his eyes to the fact—is compelled to admit that that form of surreptitious “borrowing” which is known to affect the collectors of books, china, and other *bric-à-brac*, has not entirely ignored the spoon enthusiast, who occasionally is unable to refrain from adding

excellence in design and ornamentation, together with typicality of the town or district which they represent.

Mr. Charles Bertram, the celebrated sleight-of-hand entertainer, whilst touring in the United States and Canada, became bitten with the spoon-collecting hobby, and brought home a fine collection which he has kindly allowed the writer to utilise as illustrations for the benefit of readers of the WINDSOR MAGAZINE.

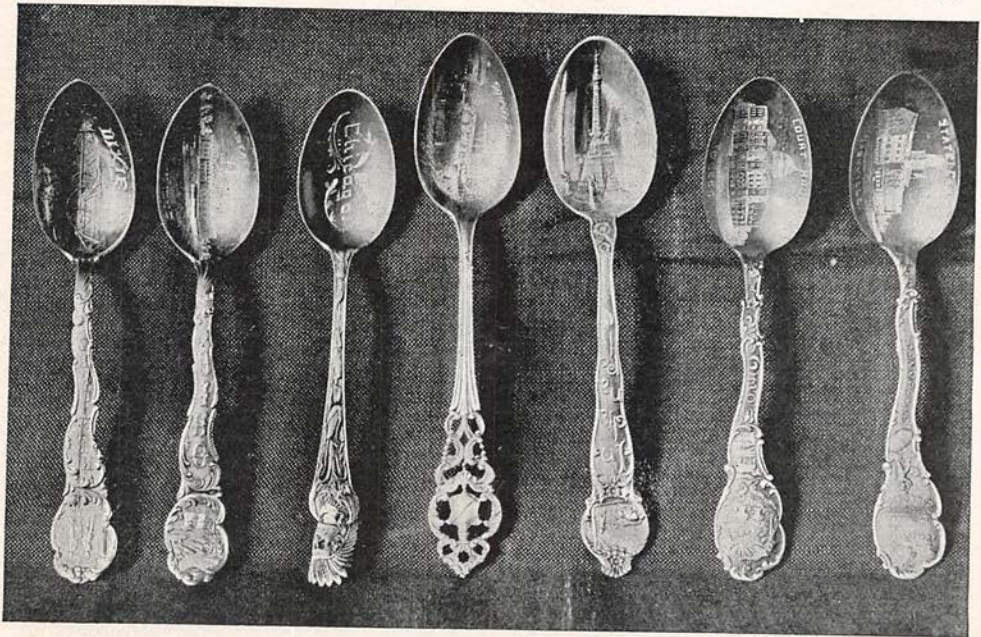
A glance through these will show what degree of perfection is attained. Their cost varies from two to ten dollars apiece, but in Europe it is much less, the best specimens

LEXINGTON.

CHICAGO.

INDIANAPOLIS.

NASHVILLE.



COLUMBUS.

ROCHESTER.

TOLEDO.

even forbidden fruit to his store. Indeed, strange though it seems, the writer has it as a positive fact from a certain London hotel-keeper that he has a stock of special cheap spoons for use during the American season.

In most large Continental cities good typical specimens are already to be obtained, and in this country the idea is rapidly on the increase, the better-class jewellers in many of our leading towns keeping a very creditable stock, while India, China, and Japan all supply the collector with many charming varieties.

The chief *desideratum* in souvenir spoons is not, as might be supposed, rarity, but

usually being obtainable for about twelve shillings.

Some twelve of our illustrations deal with souvenirs from New York and the neighbouring States, and the handle of each shows, in one form or another, the golden grain. Some years back a ballot of American Sunday-school children was taken for the purpose of choosing a favourite flower as an emblem, and the golden grain received an almost unanimous vote.

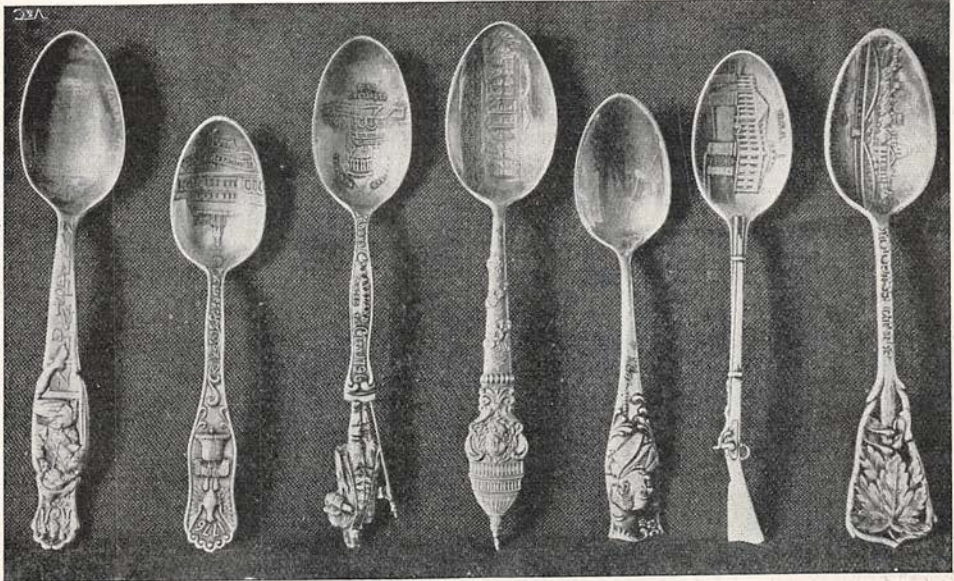
The first illustration is that of a spoon from Hartford, the home of two of the—to Englishmen—best known American authors, Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe. It

NEW AMSTERDAM
(ALBANY).

CLEVELAND.

BRIDGEPORT.

OGDENSBURG.



PENNSYLVANIA.

WASHINGTON.

SPRINGFIELD.

is, however, too severe to be returned one of the gems of the collection.

The building depicted on the Worcester spoon (No. 2) is the great hall of that town; the bowl of the Cornell souvenir shows the library of the University.

Troy is represented by a specimen of

singular beauty. The golden grain stands out from a white background on the exquisitely enamelled handle, whilst the gilt hollow is engraved with a picture of the monument erected to those brave soldiers who fell in the Civil War.

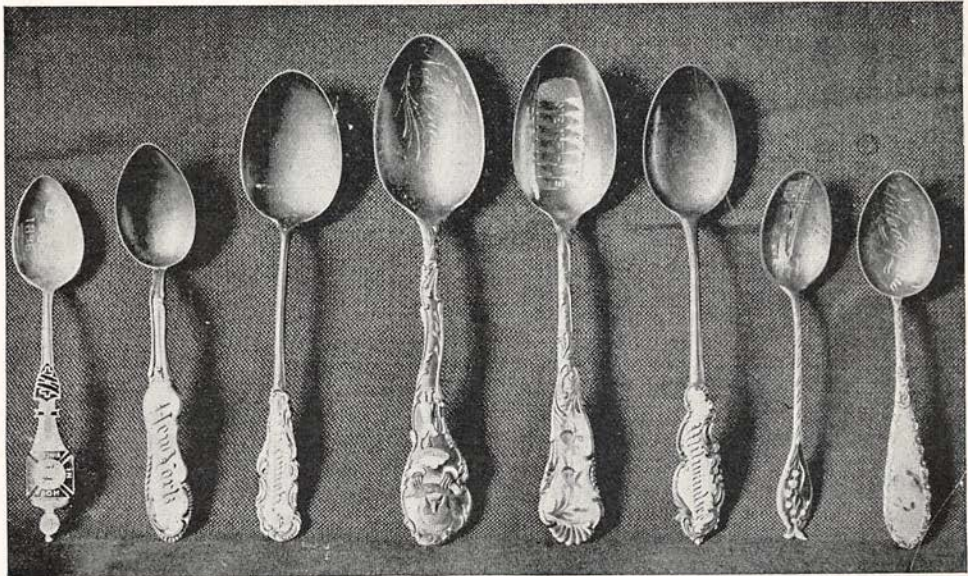
Apart from the dainty elegance of its

UTICA.

CINCINNATI.

MEMPHIS.

ST. LOUIS.



NEW YORK.

NEW ORLEANS.

MILWAUKEE.

PHILADELPHIA.

tapering handle and the embossed portrait of the famous bridge, the Brooklyn spoon is of great value and likely to become rarer owing to the merging of that town with New York City.

The sixth comes from Orange, in New Jersey. This place bears the unenviable distinction of being the home of the mosquito, hence the decoration on the bowl of the Orange spoon.

The seventh and last spoon of the golden grain series is that of New Britain, a picture

alternating massacres of the Indians and the fast encroaching Pale-face.

Toledo, in Ohio, is very proud of its magnificent court-house, and it is a presentment of this which decorates the token from that place.

The fantastically shaped handle to the spoon from Nashville, the principal town in the State of Tennessee, is beautified by a finely executed representation of the Capitol.

We now come to a series of seven which are without doubt among the best in the collection (Nos. 15-21).

Of these the first comes from Albany, the capital of New York State. Albany is here alluded to as "New Amsterdam," and the handle of the spoon shown in the accompanying illustration presents a picturesque Dutchman smoking his long pipe. The Capitol, which adorns the bowl, cost no less than a million pounds, and the court-house and town buildings were erected for some four millions!

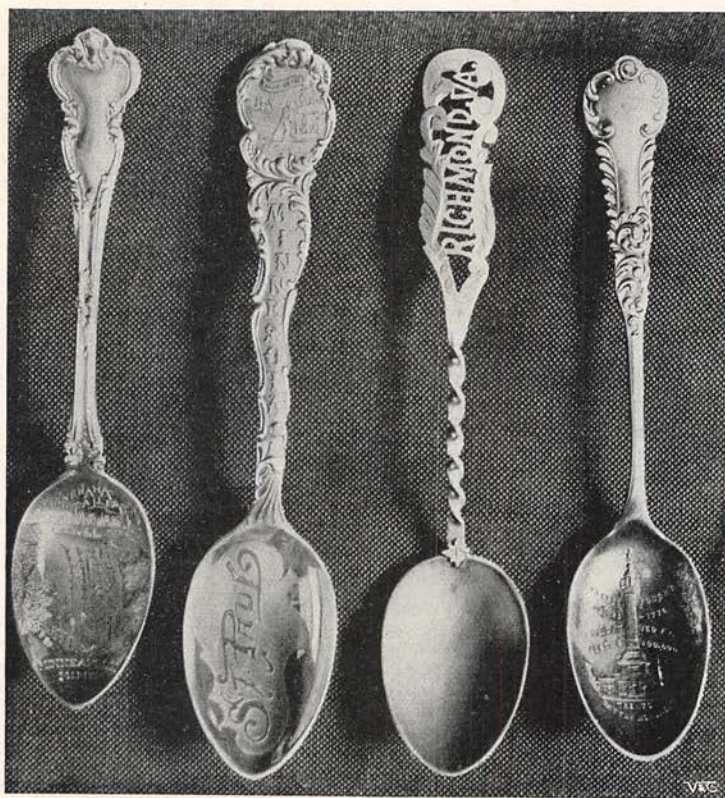
No. 16 is of a different type to our former specimens in that it represents not a city, but the State of Pennsylvania—Pennsylvania, the cradle of America's liberty, founded and governed by that great English Quaker, William Penn. The handle bears an embossed design of the Cracked Bell of Liberty, which formerly

hung in the tower of the Independence Hall, the Hall itself being shown in the bowl of the spoon.

The subject of our next illustration has its origin in Cleveland, Ohio, a city founded in 1796 by General Morris Cleveland. On the assassination of President Garfield, who was shot on the platform of Washington railway station, his remains were conveyed to Cleveland for interment, and a monument, known as the Garfield Memorial, erected to his memory. And it is this monument

ST. PAUL.

TRENTON.



MINNEAPOLIS.

RICHMOND.

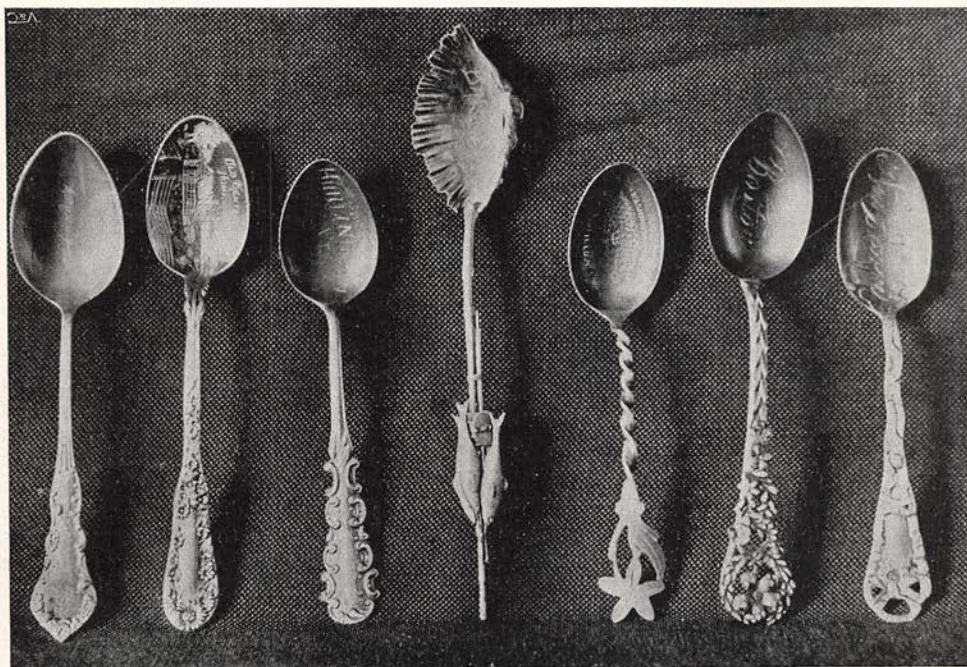
of the famous Normal School building filling its hollow.

That the decorative quality of the spoons is in no sense dependent upon the towns from which they come, is evident from seeing that one of the smaller and less ornamental specimens represents Chicago, that home of business enterprise. The Indian's head which adorns the end of the handle serves to remind one that in its early days the city we now associate with all the products of the most advanced civilisation was the scene of

LOUISVILLE.

BALTIMORE.

BOSTON.



SCHENECTADY.

BURLINGTON.

PLAINFIELD.

NEW HAVEN.

which we see embossed in the handsome Cleveland spoon.

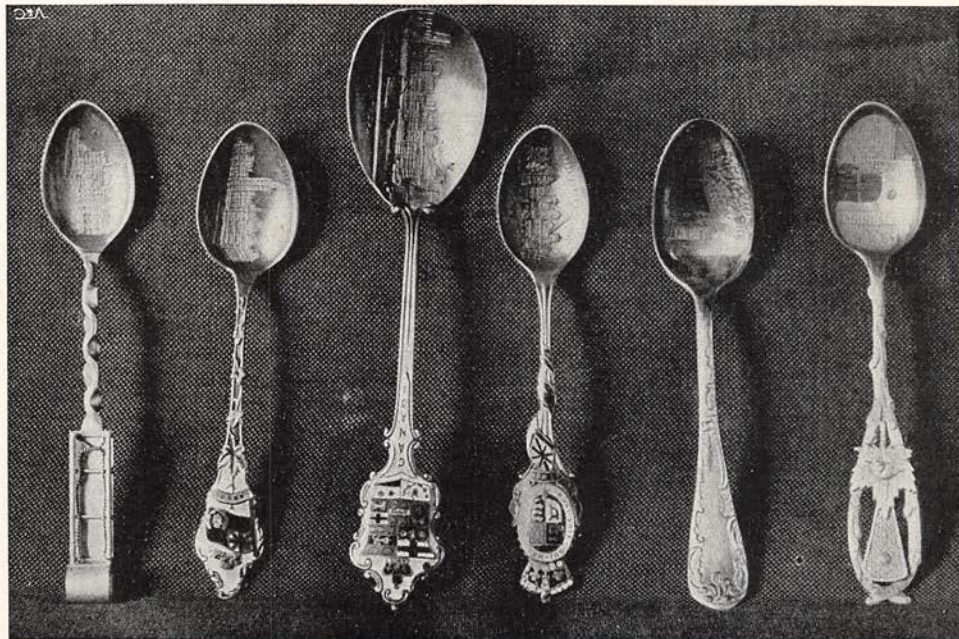
The next specimen hails from Washington,

and, as might be anticipated, bears representations of the famous Capitol and White House.

QUEBEC.

MONTREAL.

NIAGARA.



OTTAWA.

TORONTO.

KINGSTON (CANADA).

Bridgeport, Connecticut, is next on our list. The place of birth and headquarters of Phineas T. Barnum, its souvenir is decorated with a raised portrait of the great showman, who in his native place is remembered first and foremost as philanthropist.

That Springfield is the arsenal and rifle factory of the United States, its spoon plainly shows. Its capacity for turning out munitions of war may be gauged from the fact that during the Civil War the town was responsible for 800,000 guns. It is interesting to note that it was the sight of the Springfield Arsenal which called forth from Longfellow the well-known lines :—

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals nor forts.

Ogdensburg, the maple city, and first town over the border from Canada, has the leaves of its principal tree carved on the handle of its spoon, with a view of the city in relief on the bowl.

Utica has a very small spoon, with the city arms exquisitely enamelled on the handle, while that of New York, which comes next, is perhaps the plainest of all, and bears out the theory that the most important towns generally happen to possess the less ambitious souvenirs.

The specimen from Cincinnati, again, is very plain, but that representing New Orleans possesses the finest handle in the whole collection. A nigger's head, the mouth biting into a slice of melon, and a girl carrying a basket of cotton-seed upon her head, are worked out in brilliant colours.

Memphis, only divided from New Orleans by a canal, possesses a spoon which, for its delicacy and beauty, rivals that of the twin city, a bale of cotton being the most notable object. Milwaukee, the lager-beer town, and Philadelphia contribute to the collection spoons of a less pretentious character, but that from St. Louis possesses a unique handle-top in the form of a lily-of-the-valley.

The next five are chiefly noticeable for their bulk. Trenton has a handle of a very ordinary pattern, but possesses a well-engraved representation of the battle monument, the original of which is 150 ft. high, and was erected at a cost of over £100,000. The name "Richmond" stands out boldly on the handle of its spoon, which, except in this respect, is not a particularly distinguished specimen. The souvenir from St. Paul, Minnesota, without bearing any very charac-

teristic design, yet gives a well-finished combination of embossing and engraving.

Minneapolis, appropriately enough, has its representation engraved with a picture of the far-famed Minnehaha Falls, while Schenectady, one of the most unprogressive towns in the States, though the birthplace of Edison, sends a spoon of extreme severity.

A daisy pattern handle and a bowl engraved with "An Old Kentucky Homestead" represents Louisville, the home of the coon song, which has recently had such a vogue in this country.

Burlington, Vermont, contributes a severe spoon, innocent of even the smallest emblematic decoration. The town is one of the centres of the Liquor Prohibition Act, no store being allowed to sell any alcoholic liquors. Burlington is a favourite town for tourists, owing to the magnificent view which it affords of the Adirondack Mountains, visitors being willing to pay even the taxes—which positively extend to being taxed for one's very watch and chain—rather than miss so striking a prospect.

Baltimore, the Grimsby and Whitstable of America, has a thoroughly typical souvenir, the bowl being fashioned in the form of an oyster-shell, and the handle of a fishing-rod, with fishes hanging from it. A Star of Bethlehem handle and the Washington Rock in its hollow adorns the spoon from Plainfield.

New Haven, Connecticut, boasts a curious spoon, with a motto setting forth the fact that this spot was chosen by the Pilgrim Fathers for the establishment of their first church in their new land of religious freedom.

It is always gratifying to the Briton to find his country to the fore in any sphere, and it is therefore with considerable pleasure that we find that the very pick of Mr. Bertram's interesting collection comes from a Canadian town. Montreal is responsible for a souvenir which must be awarded the palm, as much for elegance as for finish of detail. The bowl, of a somewhat singular shape, contains a picture of the Cathedral, while the handle bears in enamel the arms of the city.

Quebec—half French, half English—takes a toboggan as its emblem, while Kingston—owing to its cadet college, a centre of sport—utilises a lacrosse raquet and ball.

Ottawa, still following the principle of a plain spoon for an important town, has the smallest of the Canadian set, containing a fine engraving of the Parliament Houses and the royal arms on its handle.