

QUAINT BEDSTEDS AND OTHER FURNISHINGS

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HISTORIC STUDIES IN HOME FURNISHING

BY MARGARET AINSLEE.

Unlike the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans, our English forefathers were indebted to the luxury of the bedroom. Their makeshifts during the troublous times of the Middle Ages should not have been dignified by the name of "bed," which is primarily an outcome of peace and prosperity. As the country became less turbulent, the warrior did not find it necessary to sleep armed for attack upon the rude board table or upon the long chest on top of which bags of straw had been thrown, so that as early as the 13th century permanent recesses covered with sacks of straw and curtained off from the main room were constructed in the great halls. Even these primitive contrivances were considered the luxuries of the nobility, and the "bed rears" and curtains were handed down from generation to generation as treasured legacies. Although after the Norman conquest their resting places presented a less shell-like appearance, in some antiquated places they are in use at this day. Frederick Litchfield, in speaking of a recessed visit to a farmhouse in Brittany, alludes to the curious beds which he saw there, "consisting of shelves for parents and children, which form a cupboard in the wall and are shut in during the day by a pair of lattice doors of Moorish design." He furthermore states that these shelves are reached by means of an oddly carved Moorish chest, which serves as a step. This quaint furniture was doubtless made in the middle of the 13th century, and has been many times handed down from father to son. These rudimentary beds were also a feature of colonial furnishings, and a veritable one is described by Alice Morse Earle in her "China Collecting in America," as a part of the appointments of an old New England farmhouse. Such a bed was called a "slow bunk" which term, says the author, "is a corruption of 'sloop hunker,' or sleeping bench, and the slow bunk was the great-grandfather of our modern cabinet folding bed. At one end of the room are doors apparently belonging to cupboards, which, upon being swung wide open, disclose the oblong frame of a bed with a network of ropes to serve as springs. This bed frame is fastened at one end to the wall with heavy hinges, and was hooked up against the wall in the daytime and at night was lowered to a horizontal position and supported on heavy wooden turned legs, which fitted into sockets in the frame." For many centuries bedsteads were used only by Kings and Queens, and were stately affairs, richly carved, unwieldy and of enormous size. A typical royal bed of the time of the French renaissance was taken from the chateau of Fougères, where it was the property of Jeanne d'Albret, mother of Henry IV. This huge oak affair is carved with the date 1622, and, judging from the proportion of space occupied by the figure reclining upon it, must really have been an openwork wooden room or box, or else must have exercised a most dwarfing effect upon its inmates. Possibly like its contemporary, the Great Bed of Ware, it was intended to accommodate eight persons. Shakespeare alludes in "Twelfth Night" to the inordinate size of this bed when he makes Sir Toby Belch say: "And as many lies as shall lie in thy sheet of paper, altho' the sheet were big enough for the Bed of Ware in England, set 'em down, go about it!" These huge constructions were generally made with less woodwork at the sides and with broad, heavy corners, which in time evolved into the lighter, old-fashioned four-poster, with its padded tester and draped canopy, known as the "canopy bed." For this style of bed

able part of his own life, the noblest of his son's inheritance, a kind of private prison, may, the possession there of an inner pocket, which will serve to Philadelphia would lose \$300,000. This is a low estimate of the sum left by the former royal dentist, Dr. Thomas W. Evans, for the building of a museum and dental institute in this native city. Mr. Clement was the special commissioner of the Orphans' Court, which sent him in order to have two signatures to the will proved. The witness whose signatures are to be proved live in Paris and will not come to this country. Hence it became necessary to send the will to France to secure the necessary legal proof before the will can be probated here. The court enjoined Mr. Clement not to permit the will at any time to leave his hands, and there is no man who would be more conscientious about holding the injunction. Here is what Mr. Clement took: Original will in a rubber waterproof case, tightly sealed. Photograph of the original will. Certified copy of the original will. These three will sleep, eat and ride with the commission for a month, as he will keep them by his side throughout the trip, and will have them with him when he retires for the night, he having had special pockets made for the purpose. The object of incasing the will in a waterproof envelope is to prevent it, in the event of disaster, from becoming lost by obliteration from washing of the water. It was deemed advisable to have the original envelope put in a safe, as in case of accident there might be some doubt as to its whereabouts. While the photograph and certified copy might not be of great legal value were the original lost, it was thought the part of wisdom to have them in reserve. They will be specially valuable after the proof of the signatures is obtained, and might be used to effect in court. The necessity for extreme care is apparent. The vast estate of Dr. Evans is in litigation, and the heirs would not weep if the will devolving funds for a great museum happened to be lost, as there then would be \$500,000 to divide. The step taken in this case could not be avoided, as in order to strengthen the city in its position the proof of the signatures had to be secured. Mr. Clement, who is accompanied by Mrs. Clement, will return within a month. His trip is about the fifth made necessary to Paris by an official representative of the city since the litigation began.



THE "SPANGLE" BEDROOM AT KNOLE. (The furniture of this room was presented by James I to the Earl of Middlesex.)

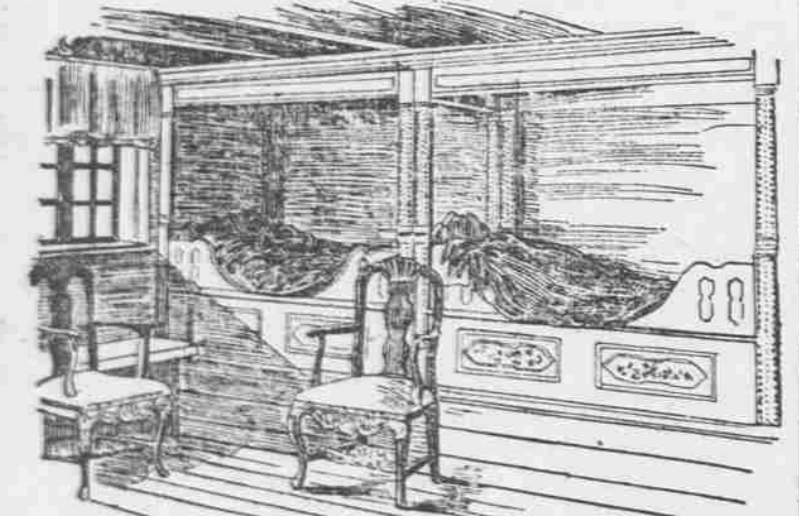
Carved oak bedstead of Jeanne d'Albret. top, was modified by the elaborate carving of the Elizabethan renaissance, developed into the writing-table and eschertoire in the days of Marie Antoinette and became light and comfortable in construction in the days of the blue-hole table designed by Sheraton. These latter were invariably made of mahogany. Sheraton depending mainly upon his marquetry for decoration. Mahogany came into general use early in the 18th century, owing to the persistence of a Dr. Gibbon, who wished to convert some mahogany planks and him by his brother, a West Indian captain, into a candle box for his wife. The joiner found this foreign wood too hard for his tools, but the undaunted doctor insisted upon the use of harder-tempered tools, which succeeded in turning out eventually a most admirable box. The doctor, delighted with the peculiar grain, toughness and susceptibility of mahogany, and because of the fact that it had the expression, "putting one's knees under a friend's mahogany," probably originated about this time. Note—This study will be concluded next Thursday.



Bedstead of Marie Antoinette.

Chippendale in the latter part of the 18th century devised many forms of pillars. His sketches for a state bed, as well as Sheraton's for a canopy bed and the tapestried bed of Marie Antoinette, all bespeak staidness rather than comfort. In fact, designs for state beds are interesting merely as the originals from which our modern beds have been modified. Possibly they may have lost something in dignity, exquisite carving and luxurious

Fortunes in Yearling Horses. London Mail. It is no exaggeration to say that the



INTERIOR OF A HORSE COTTAGE.

haunters, but on the other hand we have gained in cleanliness, lightness and freedom from dust. Strangely enough in feudal days the bedstead was considered a most suitable furnishing for the parlor. The "parlor" or "talking-room" was the first offshoot from the common hall or "house-chamber." It was then furnished with carved oak settles, the ubiquitous chest and the heavy cupboards for drinking vessels and unused vessels which had formerly stood on the dais and was not otherwise encumbered with the thousand-and-one unnecessary additions, which transform our modern living rooms into a combination of conservatory and curl shop. The next division of house room (about the time of the Reformation) was the "private parlor," an outcome of the passing of feudalism, and the days of religious persecution when masters of the

his blood being up, he knocked all precedents into a cocked hat by paying 10,000 guineas for a filly by Persimmon; while later he supplemented these purchases by taking the filly by Trenton, from Sandway, at 5500. He had previously expended the trifle of 700 for a colt by Orme. These results in themselves would have been sufficient to make the sale memorable for all time, but in addition the colt by Orme, from Klasing Cup, was knocked down to the young Duke for 200, after his opponent had retired at a hundred less. For Flying Fox's brother, the commoner, reconsidering his determination, made no bid, and so the Duke got him for 500 guineas, which was a sad blow for those who had prophesied his fetching five figures.

VERY CAREFUL OF A WILL.

Extraordinary Precautions to Preserve a Millionaire's Testament. Philadelphia Bulletin. Few men have sailed the sea with \$3,000,000 or its equivalent in their pocket. This responsible office fell upon Sheriff

Fatherless. There's something about the little black dress that touches a man in a very tender spot. He puts the little one on the head, puts some pennies in her hand, swallows hard and then—starts out to make his own children fatherless. There is no doubt that many a man is taken from his family by neglect of simple precautions which would preserve his health. Disease generally begins nowadays in "stomach trouble" because the meals are hasty and the food not digested. From that beginning come disorders of the blood, liver, kidneys, heart or nerves. The use of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery, for disease of the organs of digestion and nutrition will avert the catastrophe of more serious disease. It strengthens the stomach, purifies the blood, nourishes the nerves, and builds men up in both brain and body. "I can say to you, one bottle of your 'Golden Medical Discovery' has cured me sound and well, after suffering two long years with stomach disease," writes W. H. Donnell, of McAdester, Geiton Co., N. C. "My health is worth all the world to me. I will praise you as long as I live."

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