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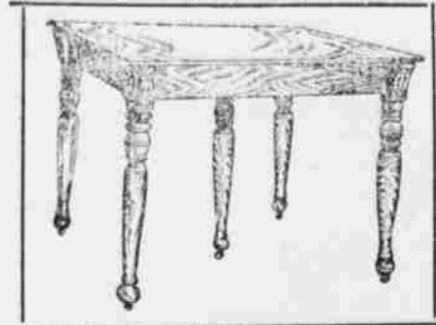
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American Have Tattoo Craze

London—Americans have gone tattoo mad. Such is the inference to be drawn from the conversation I have just had with Alfred South, a famous English and continental tattooist. According to the artist, the rich have stolen the thunder of the poor. The practice of covering the body with elaborate designs, which was supposed to be the special weakness of the sailor, has ascended the society ladder and is not the amusement of the aristocracy.

Certain well-known Americans, if we are to believe South, would present the appearance of animated picture galleries could we see them in the nude. Their backs, chests, legs and arms are covered with crouching tigers, poised snakes and more or less beautiful women. The son of one of the largest watch manufacturers in the United States, who is many times a millionaire, had a facsimile of his father's particular brand of time-piece tattooed on his chest by South. He had the hands showing the hour to be exactly 12 and remarked that no matter where he was he could refer to it at exactly that time of day and correct his infallible timepiece.

Many Americans have commissioned South to tattoo copies of pictures of their favorite artists on their shoulders, chests or backs. In this respect Charles Dana Gibson easily leads the field as the most popular American draughtsman. No less a personage than Walter Winans, the American millionaire, crack rifle shot and premier horse owner, is the proud possessor of a "Gibson Girl" on his left shoulder. That is not the only tattooing on the body of Winans, for his form is said to be a thing of exquisite beauty from the standpoint of the devotees of the craze.

It seems that many Americans have had their full names tattooed on their wrists and forearms. South says he has many American women as customers. They are more sentimental than the sterner sex, according to the artist, and they run to names, or the private crests of their sweethearts. The work is usually done on the legs, but many of the fairer sex are having elaborate designs executed on their backs. In this, as in other walks of life, fair woman has lived up to her reputation for a chameleon-like state of mind, for the artist declares he has several times changed the name of a

sweetheart for women customers. The tattooing craze seems to be more advanced in England and on the continent than in the United States. Here it seems to have touched even the highest rung of the social ladder. The Prince of Wales himself is said to have some artistic work on his arm, while the Crown Princess of Denmark, Lady Cornwallis West and member of the royal family of Russia are said to be devotees of the craze. Some of them are even said to have become adept at the art itself.

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