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ALL USED WOODEN TRENCHERS.

Substitutes for Crockery Ware Nearly Two Hundred Years Ago.

Our readers may like to be reminded of how comparatively late in our history the absence of cheap crockery kept the wooden trencher in use. In the eighteenth century, silver in the dining room and pewter below stairs were abundant for all dinner table use in large and wealthy households.

But that the number of metal plates and dishes was insufficient to meet the requirements of extraordinary occasions is seen in a description of a dinner given by Lord Malton to his tenants in 1733.

It was at Woodhouse that the feast takes place at which we hear that "tis an out of the way thing, the people are to dine upon wooden dishes; they cut down wood on purpose to make them of."

One of the company describes the affair in a letter to the Lord Stratford of the time, Lord Malton's neighbor at Wentworth castle.

"There was in the prayer hall six tables made of deals with benches, such as in the tents at Boughton fair. At four of them there might be about 32 people, the other two something above half the number, the tables being less.

"Our dishes stood single, the table allowing no more; first dish, roast pork; 2nd, turkey; 3rd, venison pasty; 4th, cold beefe, roast; 5th, fruit pudding; 6th, a goose; 7th, apple pie; 8th, a hog's head in sauce; so then the course began again, and kept in this forme to every table.

"We ate upon trenchers and wood dishes, and drunk in horns; my lord did the same. The horns held near pints and the punch was made strong, and the common people drunk full horns just after dinner that 2 or 3 horns would make them drunk or sick."

It is noticeable that ale was drunk at my lord's table, but as he was reputed not to keep "any great stock of malt drink," punch was served at all other tables as being "the cheapest liquor to make treat of."

"A treat" meant taking too much and this was so successfully accomplished that "there was one man found dead, supposed to be choaked with punch."—Country Life.

Trees Planted by Insects.

The uses of worms in wood and field have been discovered by G. A. Andrews. It has long been known that squirrels aid the forester by burying nuts, of which some sprout and ultimately develop into trees, but that also he is indebted to earth worms for like services is knowledge new. It appears that the dry flat fruits of the silver maple are frequently used by worms to plug the apertures of their burrows in the fashion long since described by Darwin. In districts too dry for them to germinate under ordinary conditions a certain proportion of maple seeds thus drawn into their holes by the worms were found to sprout and grow into seedlings, and, although these ultimately perished under the influence of the late summer drought, Mr. Andrews thinks that under less unfavorable conditions a certain number would survive. He believes that by planting trees worms more than amend the damage with which they are credited through destroying seedlings in the gardens.

Exterminating Head Hunters.

All efforts to subdue the "head hunters" of Formosa having been unsuccessful, a campaign of extermination has been entered upon, and now when a company of head hunters is located the place is surrounded by a wire fence. The wires are charged with electricity. The soldiers begin to shoot; the savages stampede, and then the deadly wires get those that the bullets miss. There are about 100,000 of these head hunters infesting the eastern coast of the island, and all efforts to make them desirable citizens have failed. They recently lured a party of 300 Japanese and Chinese into an ambush and killed them all but three, for the mere pleasure of killing.

Talented German Empress.

Empress Augusta Victoria is a thoroughly womanly woman, but she is by no means the mere hausfrau that she is often supposed to be. In fact, she has decidedly artistic tastes and is a sculptor and painter of no mean ability. In her husband's study at Potsdam there is a lifelike bust of the emperor in bronze and several of her sons have been portrayed by her in marble. Her majesty is very fond of beautiful fans and she has some valuable specimens of them. Many were gifts from the emperor, and one was made of feathers of the grouse that fell to his gun. Some others, beautifully painted, bear the signatures of great artists.

Russian Woman Novelist.

The new Russian novelist who writes under the name of Ivan Stranik is in private life Mme. Anitchkoff, her husband being a professor in the University of Kiev. She writes in French entirely, because, as she explains, she liked to say freely what she thought, a thing impossible up to this year in Russia. It was Mme. Anitchkoff who introduced Gorky to the west by translating a collection of his tales into French. Her own books, which number about half a dozen, are designed to give an idea of life in Russia among the upper middle class and of the Russians outside of Russia.

A SNAP

—400 Suits and Overcoats to be closed out in a hurry—your choice of these at

\$8.50

—some of them worth twice the price we ask—by all means come in and see them.

Mayer Bros

THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE LABOR QUESTION

VII. CHAPLAINS FOR ORGANIZED LABOR.

Recently I attended a meeting of a bartenders' union. The group of men assembled in the lodge room were intelligent and alert—rather above the average in the trades unions of our country. But the thing that most startled me was the fact that this was the first local labor union meeting that I had ever attended which was opened and closed with prayer, by a regularly elected chaplain. The chaplain in this case was a bartender. I was later informed that this was the custom in Jere Sullivan's organization, throughout the entire country.

There is, of course, pretty good precedent for this office. Practically every benevolent order, as, for instance, the Odd Fellows, Woodmen, Masons, Legion of Honor, Royal Arcanum, etc., have such officials. The United States congress, the Senate and the State Legislatures have their chaplains. Every man-of-war and every regiment has its chaplain. Even a circus recently appointed a minister as its chaplain, who will hereafter travel about with the group of a thousand employees.

A number of Central Labor bodies have appointed such officers electing the Ministerial Fraternal Delegates to the position. Several state bodies during the past few years have requested local ministers to open their meetings with prayer, and the last two national conventions of the American Federation of Labor were similarly opened. I recall that, at the conclusion of the prayer offered at the Minneapolis convention, President Gompers remarked that he was glad that the day had arrived when a minister of the gospel could ask for God's blessing on a labor convention. And why not? It's far more consistent with the fitness of things to ask God to bless a labor meeting which is working for peace and prosperity, than to pray for the success of an army which bent upon a mission of murder.

Why not extend and elaborate the plan? Why not have every Central Body appoint as chaplain the fraternal delegate from the Ministerial Association? The moment or two engaged in quiet when we should pray

for the Almighty's blessing on the proceedings of the session will help more materially in the betterment of conditions than some other preliminaries in some labor bodies. This chaplain might be enlisted in many other ways. There are special occasions when his presence will help decidedly in promoting more harmonious relationships both among the men themselves and as between the local trades unionists and the general public. He might assist in the obligation of new members. He could preach an annual sermon, to trades unionists and their friends, particular on "Labor's Memorial Sunday," on the second Sunday in May, as suggested by the last American Federation of Labor convention. He could be secured to give special lectures on labor subjects.

Why not, then have a chaplain in every Central Body? The office might be passed on from man to man. There are few ministers who would not feel honored to occupy such a position in the great labor movement which is coming to mean so much for the welfare of the people.—Rev. Charles Stelzle.

WANTED—The wife of every printer in Lincoln, in order to live up to the ancient customs of leap year, to bring her "hubby" to the Twenty-fifth Anniversary, February 26, Fraternity Hall.

BUILDING TRADES.

National Organization Completed and Will Affiliate.

Washington, February 15.—It was decided at yesterday's session of the convention of delegates representing the building trades unions from all parts of the country called here for the purpose of forming an organization called "The Building Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor."

The new organization comprises the national and international unions engaged in the building industry affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Much of the time yesterday was devoted to a discussion of the constitution and by-laws presented to

the convention. The article governing the chartering of state and local bodies, which provides that these bodies be chartered if it is shown that they confine their work to the building trades only, was adopted. Work on the constitution will be resumed today.

PRISON-MADE GOODS.

Convicts Produce Annually \$35,000,000 Worth of Manufactures.

Products to the amount of \$35,000,000 annually are manufactured by the convicts of this country. In New York the furniture used in the public schools is made at Sing Sing and Auburn prisons, and other articles, such as whips, lashes, etc., are convict-made. Missouri, however, furnishes a greater output of convict-made goods than any other of the states, and in all the states about 50,000 convicts in 296 penal and reformatory institutions are employed at productive labor.

Quite one-half of the prison-made articles are manufactured under contract, a single contractor owning and controlling, it is claimed, the clothing output of eight prisons in six different states. In the states of Mississippi, Virginia, Alabama and Florida the convicts are a source of profit to the states, while the contractors pay for their prison labor about 57 per cent, a little over half what is paid free labor for the same class of work. Ninety per cent of the frames or trees for riding saddles, practically all of the wood-bound cooperage used by the great western packers and scrubbing and shoe brushes in great variety are supplied by prison contractors.

In some states, New York, for instance, convict-made products are not sold outside the state. The average annual cost of a convict's board is \$51.37, the average annual cost for guarding and attendance is \$56.55, and the average annual productivity under the contract system is \$984. To produce with free labor an equal output with that represented by convict labor would require an annual outlay in wages of \$14,925,439, and it has been estimated that in productive efficiency three free laborers, on an average will equal that of five convict laborers.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Ice Trust Inquiry.

Attorney General Jackson's investigation of the American Ice Company was formally opened before the grand jury in New York.