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PICTURE THIEVES.

A DEALER WHO SAYS THERE ARE ARTISTIC KLEPTOMANIACS.

Theft of a Murillo and of Gainsborough's "Duchess of Devonshire"—Story of a Kiss Given For a Vote—Sharpers and Counterfeit Etchings.

"Did you ever hear of the artistic kleptomaniac?" asked a well known dealer in etchings during an after-lunch harmony a few days ago. "Well, there is such a person. The artistic kleptomaniac is insanely fond of valuable art in the form of etchings or paintings. He steals through the admiration and love of art. There are many famous instances where old and almost priceless masterpieces of the painter's art have been taken by persons of this kind, and it is odd that in almost every instance the stolen pieces of art could not be traced.

"The most famous artistic theft of modern days was the stealing of the figure of St. Anthony from the celebrated picture by Murillo. The painting, which was on exhibition in the cathedral at Seville, represented St. Anthony surrounded by angels. One morning about seven years ago it was discovered that the figure of St. Anthony had been cut from the canvas.

"All Europe was notified of the theft, but the police never found the thief. About two years afterward a Spaniard from the West Indies called in at the establishment of Mr. Schaus, the well known picture dealer of this city. The Spaniard told Mr. Schaus that he would like to sell him an unsigned painting by Murillo. Mr. Schaus, being a man of large intelligence regarding works of the masters, recognized immediately the figure of St. Anthony cut from the painting in the cathedral at Seville.

"The man was seized, and Mr. Schaus had the honor of returning the painting to Spain.

"The theft of the celebrated portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire, by Gainsborough, 15 years ago was doubtless the work of an artistic kleptomaniac, for the picture can do the thief no good but excite his admiration. The portrait was in the possession of the Messrs. Agnew, the picture dealers of London. It had been on exhibition, and the Agnew galleries had been crowded. One morning the frame stood empty. The painting had been cut out, and no one knows to this day where Gainsborough's Duchess of Devonshire is.

"Some dishonest lover of art is gloating over the picture in private. The portrait is valued at \$50,000.

"That painting by Gainsborough, besides being an artistic relic, is also historic, as the painting was made just when the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire had been the means of turning the political tide of England. Pitt and Fox were rival candidates for parliament. It was demonstrated that the election would be narrowed down to the vote of an elderly fat butcher. The Duke of Devonshire tried every means, including a bribe, to influence the fat butcher to vote for Fox, but the butcher was obstinate. Then the beautiful duchess said to him:

"Is there anything I can do for you if you will vote for Fox?"

"Yes," answered the butcher. "If you will kiss me, I will vote for Fox."

"The duchess kissed the fat butcher. Fox was elected, and the political complexion of England was changed. It is related that the Duchess of Devonshire told the story to Gainsborough when she was posing for her picture.

The collector of valuable etchings or engravings must be as constantly on the alert for counterfeiters as is the bank cashier for forged checks or counterfeit bills or the jeweler for false diamonds. Some dealers have suffered heavy losses because of their inability to distinguish between an original and a counterfeit etching or engraving. Quick wit and a wide knowledge of the history of etchings recently saved Frederick Keppel, the art dealer of this city and Paris, nearly 1,000 marks in Berlin. The collection of etchings of the late Baron Opperman was sold at auction, and dealers from all over the world attended the sale at Berlin.

Mr. Keppel bought an impression of Rembrandt's Christ before Pilate, entitled the "Great Ecce Homo," paying 1,400 marks, or \$350, for the etching. Just after the sale a well dressed gentleman said in French to Mr. Keppel:

"Sir, I presume you are a stranger in Berlin. I am a native of the city, and I am mortified to see you so badly cheated today. I wish to make you all the restitution I can. You paid 1,400 marks for that etching. The price is far too high, but to compensate you for your loss I will sell you a genuine etching for 1,000 marks."

Mr. Keppel knew his etching to be genuine. Mr. Keppel saw that the man was playing a game of high comedy, but he said he would like to see the etching. When Mr. Keppel reviewed the etching, he said:

"I will give you 5 marks for the etching." "When the man found he had been caught in his game, he simply said: "Prenez le," and Mr. Keppel took the counterfeit, which he afterward gave to the purchaser of his genuine etching. The counterfeit, which was made by Solomon Savry, can only be told from the original by the difference in the drawing of one of the hands in the etching.

The only difference between the original and the counterfeit of Albert Durer's celebrated etching "Melancholia" is the form of a ward on one of several keys hanging from a figure's girdle. Though smaller than a pinhead, the flaw represents a difference in price of several hundred dollars.—New York Sun.

A Long Island girl who had been deaf and dumb for eight years had her speech restored by an electric shock, which struck the house in which she was during a storm.

MAXIMUS.

I hold him great who, for love's sake,
Can give, with generous earnest will,
Yet he who takes for love's sweet sake
I think I hold more generous still.

I bow before the noble mind
That freely some great wrong forgives,
Yet nobler is the one forgiven
Who bears that burden well and lives.

It may be hard to gain and still
To keep a lowly, steadfast heart,
Yet he who loses has to fill
A harder and a truer part.

Glorious it is to wear the crown
Of a deserved and pure success,
But who knows how to fall has won
A crown whose luster is not less.

Great may he be who can command
And rule with just and tender sway,
Yet is diviner wisdom taught
Better by him who can obey.

Blessed are they who die for God
And earn the martyr's crown of light,
Yet he who lives for God may be
A greater conqueror in his sight.
—Adelaide Procter.

A NEGLECTED WONDER.

The Spanish Escorial a Marvelous Specimen of Ancient Architecture.

The Escorial, the palace of the Spanish king, an architectural marvel, formerly described as the "eighth wonder of the world," is now seldom spoken of, even by those who are ready to go wild over much less pretentious structures. The cornerstone of this "Spanish St. Peter's" was laid by Philip II in 1563, but it was 302 years (1865) before the monstrous building was pronounced finished. It was built by Philip in fulfillment of a vow to "erect the finest monastery in the world" should his forces be successful in their great battle with the French. That battle was fought at St. Quentin on Aug. 10, 1557, St. Lawrence day, and in order to honor that saint as well as to fulfill his vow the king had the foundation of his great memorial laid off in the shape of a gridiron, the implement of torture upon which the goodly Lawrence is reputed to have suffered martyrdom.

To those who have never visited the Escorial the size of the gigantic structure is beyond comprehension. It is 740 feet from north to south and 580½ feet from east to west, the square towers at each corner rising to a height of over 200 feet. Within this monstrous building is the king's palace, a cathedral, a monastery of 209 cells, two colleges, three chapter houses, three library buildings, five large halls, six dormitories, three hospitals and over 3,000 other rooms. In order to make St. Lawrence's gridiron complete, the building is built in quadrangular form, with 17 rows or ranges of monstrous stone structures crossing each other at right angles, these forming the gridiron's ribs, the handle being a wing 470 feet in length. The church, which is a part of this vast pile of masonry, is 304 feet long, 230 feet wide, with a dome 330 feet in height. It is estimated that the building cost \$50,000,000.—St. Louis Republic.

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