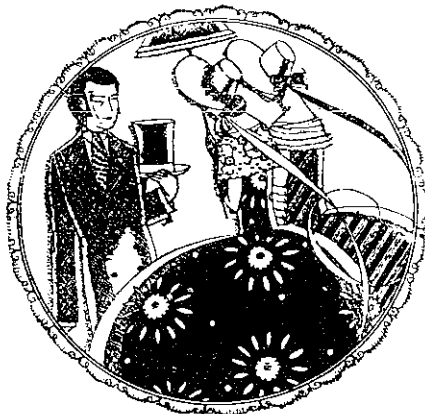


OLD SILVER

THE ROMANCE OF THREAD

THERE is a touch of sadness in the romance of old silver and old lace—as also in old jewellery, furniture, pictures, books and many other kindred objects that go towards making a most fascinating quest, after the not easily obtainable. There have been several sales lately in the far South of our Dominion that have caused a great deal of interest. The Snodgrass collection, containing many old and beautiful works of art, Georgian silver, verge watches, patch boxes, and many very beautiful things that do not often come our way, but which we are only too pleased to acquire when they do, not counting too closely the cost, for to a collector the great pleasure of possession far outweighs the cash in the pocket. Then the beautiful lifetime collection of the late Mr. MacKinnon caused much enthusiastic interest, and the romance of many of these things was that they had been in the possession of only his own family for so many years the beautiful Georgian silver had never rubbed shoulders with other silver in dealers' shops, or been from house to house. No, this silver of 1779 and 1792 etc. bears the MacKinnon crest and had been continuously in that distinguished family. There have been many distinguished officers of the Navy and Army in this family—perhaps some gay young



By "GRANDMA."

officer of Nelson's or another off to the Peninsula may have used this very silver at a farewell dinner party in the days of ruffles and powdered hair, and again when young Victoria first came to the Throne it may have been used in the loyal celebrations. If one could only jump into the past and see every assemblage at which this silver has figured, what a romantic vista would be unfolded! Then there is the romance of old lace, and there is very much more of it in New Zealand than many imagine. I saw a young bride lately, at a little village church, wearing lace that had been the collar and cuffs of the famous Duke of Wellington—a relative of her family. Again, I know of two lace flounces that were worn at the time of Queen Victoria's Coronation, and were not new then, and which were also worn at the old Government House, Auckland, when the Duke of Edinburgh visited New Zealand in the '60's, and still again at a ball given for the Prince of Wales, and

and OLD LACE

HISTORY IN and METAL

at very many weddings. Lace seems to have more gaiety in its romance than silver, perhaps, for it is not usually in evidence at partings or sad times. There is one beautiful—and now almost priceless—lace cape I know very well; it belonged to the wife of the famous sculptor who designed the magnificent Sarcophagus in Westminster Abbey, immediately opposite the "Unknown Warrior's" resting place. She gave it to a daughter-in-law, who, during a short residence in New Zealand, offered it to the daughter of a dear friend as a wedding present, or, if the bride preferred, a handsome piece of furniture instead, but in those days of "love in a cottage" and more romance, the young bride never hesitated, but chose the lovely lace, though she had for a dressing table boxes draped with spotted muslin, and many other similar makeshifts, but she preferred the joy of being able to take out her lovely lace and gaze upon it. That was before the era of bungalows and slippery porcelain baths, high-backed oak chairs, but happy, happy days—creepers round the verandahs, tin tubs to bath in, no electric light—nor what the advertisements call "h. and c."; but I think more romance and idealism in young couples starting out with their most treasured possessions being their share of the old family lace and old silver.

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