

A Magnificent Stuart Charger in Pewter



Fig. 6—A superb Stuart charger, struck on the back with one of the earliest touches on the existing London Touchplates—that of Nicholas Hunton, with the date 1662. It measures 2 ft. 2½ ins. in diameter and is from the Navarro collection.

It was my privilege to "discover" this fine piece and to ensure its remaining in this country by bringing it to the notice of Mr. de Navarro, its present proud possessor.

These then, represent the decorative principles permitted to the English pewterer, and even of these the use was very far from general. The innate love

for plainness was such that it was proof against the lure of all side issues, and though to-day one can admire a finely engraved plate or tankard, it is the plainer pieces which hold our greatest affection and which have won for English pewter the high place it has occupied throughout the ages.

the Editor

To the Editor of the ANTIQUE COLLECTOR

THE GREAT BED OF WARE

Sir,—The Great Bed of Ware continues to be as much talked about to-day as it was in the time of Shakespeare, but we seem to be still as ignorant as ever of its original purpose. I see that the following ideas of the purpose of huge beds have been advanced :—

(a) To house guests who might not be able to find their way home after a feast. (Presumably the " drunks " were slung into the bed in a heap, and left to disentangle themselves the next morning).

(b) To provide sleeping accommodation for travelling parties in coaching days.

(c) To imitate Eastern beds without regard to the different mode of life in Western Europe.

Another point which arises, and has yet to be settled is: What was the original object of the canopy? The word comes from the Greek, and denotes a mosquito curtain; we use it to describe the wood supporting the curtain. But, obviously, the canopy served a useful purpose in keeping damp off sleepers which might leak through ceilings and roofs. Perhaps some expert at the Victoria and Albert Museum will settle these points, now that the Great Bed of Ware is to find its resting-place there.

(Mrs.) E. NOON.

10, Clifford's Inn, E.C.4.