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Reminiscent of the days of confederation is this quaint table decoration—a shield emblematic of Canada encased in a transparent jelly. A pair of these molds is to be found at the Clarkson Market Antique Shop, and at 29 Bloor Street East, Toronto

UNUSUAL TABLE DECORATIONS

Formal table decoration is often a far cry from candles and flowers if imagination is exercised

By ANNE ELIZABETH WILSON

WE HAVE become so accustomed to the conventional decoration of tables, that we have lost a good deal of the originality and color which distinguished the fine old boards. State occasions have ever been the high lights of table dressing.

Consider for instance, the banquet table set with Capo di monti, in which the four seasons and their attendants make up the entire scheme. There is no necessity for flowers here, with the luscious overflowing verdure of the brilliant Italian ware, marking off each cover with some symbol or figure.

At court dinners and official feasts where the lavish form is maintained, part of the table decoration is carried out with decorative jellies. Two very interesting old molds for a pair of decorative table jellies, were recently discovered in Toronto, linking up, we believe, with the jubilec year in Canada.

The standards are the enamelled coats of arms of Canada and Great Britain, and are to be used encased in clear jelly or in any color, formed in the metal cap which fits over each of them in the setting process. Through the jelly the imperial and colonial devices may be seen clearly. The Canadian shield boasts six stars—the original number of confederated provinces. On the body of the device are found the beaver, the axe and hack saw, the plow and the sheaf of wheat, symbolic of Canada's resources, while all are centred by the lion rampant of British dominion. We consider these old standards a remarkable find for Confederation year, and quite the most interesting relicof the old haut monde of table decoration. They were very possibly used at some of the official entertainments during the celebrations of 1867.

Of course, there are many variations of the same theme. The suspension of colorful motifs in jelly is familiar to maittes d'hotel and canny chefs the world over. The art is to make them far too beautiful to eat! A modern variant of the flower blooming in suspension, is accomplished with the aid of the "water

flowers" which are to be purchased in the Chinese gift stores in any city. They grow out of little pots and come all dry and tied up. The moment they are steeped in water, however, they open out like a living flower, almost seeming to breathe. In a tall decorative mold of jelly, there is nothing more effective for the formal dinner or reception table. Caterers often supply set pieces like sugar roses and cabbages for the wedding buffet table which might well be replaced by something with a little replaced by something with a little more imagination.

As the older tables were often decorated only with fine plate, porcelain or ornamental dishes, so now in the ultramodern school in which even the interior modern school in which even the interior decorators take a hand—there is a revulsion against the "pretty pretty" type of table, dressed with flowers and candles only. There is an attempt at originality, artistry and style—even the sometimes bizarre but often satisfying suggestion of the new art.

The mirror table top furnishes infinite possibilities for striking effect. Crystal or shell trees reflected in its face make a shimmering loveliness of the setting, while every glass and piece of silver on its surface are doubled in light-catching brilliancy.

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The occasion table is now much in vogue, for instance, the stag dinner of reunion or celebration which requires a treatment of its own. Pewter incidenta's and candlesticks of exquisite'y wrought iron are in keeping. Horse or hunt figures in pottery or porcelain, sturdy glasses in heavily banded color, even the presence of the smart modern steins, and linen in heavy cream or coffee color, create the necessary masculine atmosphere. The man's table is always at its best with a display of as much wood as possible, so that stretchers and place squares are the best linen choice. Either heavily, even crudely embroidered, or fabricated of coarse filet, their rough textures are in the picture.

In the very shape of tables, there is a modernizing note. Have you seen the small oval dining table? It comfortably

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