

HOW-TO-IDENTIFY
OLD-CHINESE
-PORCELAIN-



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HOW TO IDENTIFY
OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

PLATE I

WHITE PORCELAIN "BLANC-DE-CHINE"

PAIR OF BOWLS of pierced fret-work divided by five circular panels or medallions of raised figures in relief, supposed to represent the Pa-Sien or eight Immortals and the God of Longevity.

Height, $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. Diameter, $3\frac{3}{4}$ in.

SEAL in the form of a cube surmounted by the figure of a lion.

Height, $1\frac{1}{8}$ in.

INCENSE BURNER, eight sided and ornamented by moulding in relief with eight feet and four handles. The sides have three bands enclosing scrolls in ancient bronze designs. At each angle of the cover is a knob; it is ornamented with iris and prunus, and by pierced spaces. The stand has eight feet and a knob at each angle; in the centre is a flower surrounded by detached impressed scrolls, round the outside are similar panels to those on the bowl.

Height, $4\frac{3}{4}$ in. Diameter of stand, $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.

THE FIGURE OF A CRAB on a lotus leaf, the stem of which terminates in a flower.

Length, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.

From Sir W. Frank's Collection at the British Museum.



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HOW TO IDENTIFY OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

BY

MRS. WILLOUGHBY HODGSON

AUTHOR OF "HOW TO IDENTIFY OLD CHINA" "OLD ENGLISH
CHINA," "THE BOOK OF OLD CHINA," ETC.

WITH FORTY-SIX ILLUSTRATIONS

FOURTH EDITION, ENLARGED

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TO
MRS. HUGH VERRALL
IN MEMORY OF MANY HAPPY HOURS SPENT
IN THE STUDY AND QUEST
OF OLD CHINA

PREFACE

THERE is doubtless much valuable Chinese porcelain in this country and in America about which its owners know very little ; and at a time when attention has been drawn to it by the high prices realised in London sale-rooms many people desire to know more about their possessions and the subject generally. It has seemed to me therefore that a cheap and simple book may be acceptable.

This little work is not put forth in any sense as a finished history and description of Chinese porcelain, but is written solely to help the amateur to *make a beginning* in the study of the most interesting and difficult branch of Ceramic Art. Whilst there are many exhaustive and expensive works which afford help and pleasure to the connoisseur, there is

at present no book to assist the mere tyro or the ordinary collector who may be the owner of valuable china, and who, even if he be the fortunate possessor of some fine work upon Chinese porcelain, may find considerable difficulty in understanding it.

I think that when the amateur has mastered some of the difficulties presented by Chinese porcelain he will find the subject so engrossing that he will require very little stimulus to make him wish to deepen his knowledge; and if my book has helped him to this happy state I shall not have written in vain.

At the risk of being monotonous I have repeated some items of information more than once, in order that any section of the book may be studied separately.

Whilst writing for the amateur, however, I have thought it well to procure illustrations of really fine specimens of Chinese porcelain in addition to those more generally met with. These should prove interesting to all collectors, of whatever standing. They will also show

the reader the heights to which, if fortune favour him, he may attain.

In preparing my book I have studied the works of Dr. Bushell, the late Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, Mr. Edward Dillon, M. Jacquemart, Mr. Joseph Marryat, the Catalogue of the Franks Collection (now in the British Museum), and the letters of Père D'Entrecolles. To these I owe a deep debt of gratitude.

I would specially thank Mr. Alfred Trapnell for his practical and sympathetic kindness, and for granting me the use of his magnificent Catalogue, from which many of my illustrations and all the "Marks" are taken. To Messrs. Duveen Brothers (of Bond Street) I am indebted for the beautiful photographs from their unique collection which they have given me; and to Mr. R. W. Partridge (St. James's Street) for his kindness in allowing the Prunus Vase of the Huth Collection and specimens of powdered blue to be photographed.

My thanks are also due to the authorities at the British Museum, and at South Kensington,

for the assistance and the facilities they have afforded for the arranging and photographing of specimens; and to H.M. Stationery Office for permission to quote from and copy the marks and symbols in the Catalogue of the late Sir W. Franks' Collection.

To several kind friends I also tender my thanks for their kindness in allowing their valuable porcelain to be photographed.

EXMOUTH, *July*, 1905

PREFACE TO FOURTH EDITION

SINCE this book was first published in 1905 the opening up of tombs during the construction of railways in China has brought to light many interesting specimens of old Chinese pottery and porcelain hitherto unknown to the Western collector. Such discoveries have naturally stimulated research, with the result that a new and highly instructive chapter has been added to the history of the art of the old Chinese potter.

Under these circumstances it has seemed to me that the fourth edition of my little book would be incomplete did it not contain some account of the wares of the Han, T'ang, and Sung dynasties. These chapters are written for the amateur, in conformity with the rest of the book, to help him to make a beginning.

xii PREFACE TO FOURTH EDITION

If he finds them of interest I would cordially recommend to his notice the works of Mr. R. L. Hobson and Mr. Berthold Laufer, to whose writings I owe a debt of gratitude. It is they who have thrown light on much which was shrouded in mystery and whose research has brought these ancient wares into prominence.

My thanks are due to the Editor of the *Pottery and Glass Record* for kind permission to reproduce illustrations from that magazine.

LONDON, *April*, 1920

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN we consider the antiquity of Chinese porcelain and the perfection to which it had been brought long ages before any artistic perception had pierced the darkness of our own land, we must surely have a feeling akin to that of the Queen of Sheba, when she had seen the wonders of King Solomon and his court.

This is perhaps hardly the attitude in which to approach a subject of deep and thrilling interest, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that we are compelled to bow before the superior wisdom and creative power of the Oriental, dating back to a time when the greater part of the world was still wrapped in barbaric gloom.

Native Chinese historians of all ages have written about the invention of porcelain, but a good deal that they have said must be looked upon as purely legendary. Thus, the prehistoric Emperor Huang-ti, who ascended the throne in 2697 B.C., and is said to have reigned

one hundred years, is credited with the invention, and the Emperor Yu-ti-Shun is said to have made it before he commenced to reign, in 2255 B.C.; but the late Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, in his book,¹ points out that from the earliest times the Chinese have given the name Tz'ü (porcelain) to any ware which had a good ring, so that it is more than probable that at first a stone ware or pottery was called by this name. There is, however, better evidence that during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.—220 A.D.) porcelain proper was made at Hsin-p'ing or Hwai-ning-hien, in the province of Honan.² Very little progress, however, seems to have been made till the Wei dynasty, A.D. 220—65, when two manufactories were at work which supplied porcelain for the use of the Imperial households. Under the T'Sin dynasty, which ended in 419 A.D., we first hear of blue porcelain, which was of fine quality and greatly esteemed, and which was made at Wen-tcheon, in the province of Tche-kiang. During the Sui dynasty, green porcelain and a white porcelain, described as being as "bright as jade," are first heard of as being made for the use of the Emperor.

¹ *History and Description of Chinese Porcelain.*

² See page 155.

The industry made considerable progress during the T'ang dynasty (A.D. 618-907). Seven manufactories were in existence, each making a different kind of ware, which bore its name. Whether porcelain was made at each of these factories is open to doubt, but that it had been invented at this time is clearly proved by the evidence of an Arab who travelled in the ninth century. Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse quotes this evidence, translated by M. Reinaud: "There is in China a very fine clay with which they make vases, which are as transparent as bottles; water is seen through them. These vases are made of clay."

We now come to a period which has left its mark upon the history of Chinese porcelain, as showing how the high artistic and poetical instinct of the Oriental was applied to his work. During the reign of the Emperor Chin-Tsung (A.D. 954) a very beautiful porcelain was made in the province of Honan. It is described as being "blue as the sky, thin as paper, shining as a looking-glass, and giving out a sound like a musical instrument when struck"; but it had one defect, the base or feet of the pieces were of a coarse yellow colour. The beautiful blue is said to have been the

outcome of a poetic and artistic fancy of the Emperor, who ordered that in future all porcelain made for the Imperial household should be "the colour of the blue of heaven seen between the clouds after rain." Fragments of this wonderful porcelain were in after years so much treasured that they were used, set in gold, as ornaments on caps and as jewels strung on silk.

During the Sung dynasty, 960-1279, the industry flourished. This was a time of great wealth and prosperity in China. Imperial factories were at work at Pein-liang in Honan, and it was here that the famous "Magistrates' vases" were made, called Kwan-yao. These are described as being of a mauvy blue, thin in texture, and with brown mouths; some were ornamented with veins of crackle, and the base was the colour of iron. A large proportion of the porcelain made during this dynasty was of the Céladon type, the colours being bright red, yellow, blue, purple, brown, and black, often ornamented with crackle decoration, and two artists named Chang became famous—the one for his blue vases, and the other for his fine thin vases of "rice colour."¹ Between the years 1004 and 1007, marks were first

¹ See page 162.

used on porcelain, the Emperor having issued a decree that a mark should be inscribed under all pieces made for the Imperial Palace.

After the Mongol invasion, when the Chinese were driven south, manufactories were established in many places. At Lui-ling, in the district of Kin-gan-fou, two celebrated artists named Chou are said to have earned a great reputation. The elder was surnamed "Venerable," and the other—his daughter—was called "Fair." They excelled in the making of vases, and the daughter is said to have decorated her work with flowers; but whether painted or moulded in relief does not appear. Towards the close of the Sung dynasty the colours most esteemed were "moon-white," pale blue, and dark green, and the famous Imperial factory at King-tê-chên, founded in the King-tê period, 1004-7, was supplying large quantities of porcelain for the Emperor's household. A history of this factory, written by a native magistrate in 1815, was compiled from ancient documents, and has been translated by M. Stanislas Julien.¹ This work has been of the greatest value to writers and collectors, and with that of Dr. Bushell² (late

¹ *Histoire de la Fabrication de la Porcelaine Chinoise.*

² *Oriental Ceramic Art.*

6 OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

physician at the British Legation at Peking) forms the most exhaustive and interesting history of Chinese porcelain in existence, whilst the recent work by Mr. Edward Dillon¹ is a most welcome and useful addition to these.²

The Yuan dynasty (1260–1367) was established by the Mongol prince, Kublai Khan. The Tartar tribes had for centuries harassed the Chinese, who during the T'Sin dynasty had built the Great Wall of China, to guard against their incursions. This wall (surely the greatest wonder of the world) stretched along a frontier of twelve hundred and fifty miles, and seems to have constituted an efficient barrier for centuries. As, however, the Chinese advanced in civilisation, the Tartars made greater efforts to conquer them; and at last, during the latter part of the Sung dynasty, the Chinese appealed for aid to the Mongols, who, having assisted their allies to drive out the common enemy, took possession of the country for themselves. The first action of Kublai Khan was to remove his capital to Peking. This Mongol invader seems to have been a most advanced and en-

¹ *Porcelain*.

² In more recent times a scholarly work on *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty* has been published by Mr. Berthold Laufer.

lightened prince, and it is recorded of him that he sent an ambassador to the Pope, asking that a hundred missionaries might be sent to preach in his country. During his reign it is certain that Chinese porcelain first became well known in Europe. This may have been largely due to the Crusaders, who would have had opportunities of acquiring Oriental treasures during their wandering in the East; but there is no doubt that Kublai Khan encouraged commerce, and being related to the rulers of other countries in Western Asia, he had every opportunity to do this.

That great Venetian traveller Marco Polo lived twenty-seven years in China during this reign, and from his accounts we may gather that the court of Kublai Khan was most luxurious, magnificent, and artistic in its tastes. On his return to Venice, Marco Polo brought many treasures, one of which—an incense burner, of porcelain—is still in existence. This state of almost modern civilisation, however, did not long survive the death of Kublai Khan, and in 1366 a Chinese claimant ascended the throne.

The long and famous Ming dynasty (1368–1644) was a time of great development in the

manufacture of porcelain. It has been called *par excellence* the "blue and white" period, because not only was blue and white porcelain first heard of during the early part of the dynasty, but the majority of porcelain manufactured was of this kind, although many other colours were used. The Emperor Hung-wu (1368-1398) was the first to order that porcelain for the Imperial use should be marked with four characters under the base. The most celebrated colour of the Ming dynasty was "Mohammedan Blue." This was brought from Persia, or some neighbouring country, as tribute, and pieces decorated with it were highly valued. In the period of Ching-Hwa (1465-88) the blue colour failed, but, nothing daunted, the Chinaman set to work to improve his painting and designs, which he brought to great perfection, and we are told that about the year 1530 two cups of the Ching-Hwa period were valued at £300.

Further supplies of blue were obtained, but these also failed during the Lung-King and Wan-leih periods, 1567-1620, as did also the China clay. This latter misfortune, however, the Oriental overcame by covering the inferior clay with a coloured glaze. The principal

manufactures during the Ming dynasty may roughly be stated thus:—

The Kung-wu period, 1368–99, during which black, blue, and white were the most highly esteemed; but gold decoration on dark blue was first used.

Yung-lo, 1403–25. Painted with birds, fishes, and flowers, also with lions playing with a ball either in clouds or in the waves of the sea. Egg-shell porcelain was invented.

Hsüan-Tê, 1426–36. Vases painted with blue flowers, those of pale blue being much valued. A bright red was introduced, and was used for painting fish, which are found in the decoration, and were moulded as handles for vases. Insects, dragons, and the phoenix were also beautifully and realistically painted, and small cups were finely ornamented on the inside.

Ch'êng-hua, 1465–87. The blue colour having failed, blue and white of this period is inferior, the colour being of a grey tinge; but the drawing and painting were improved.

During the Chêng-Te period, 1506–22, a lovely red colour was introduced; also a new cobalt blue.

In the Chia Ching or Kea-ting period,

1567-1620, remarkably fine flower-painted vases were made; also white cups in imitation of jade.

During the next periods—those of Lung-Ch'ing, 1567-73, and Wan-leih—the blue colour again failed, and also the China clay, which led to the use at that time of a coloured glaze, designed to hide the rough body. During these periods, enamel colours were improved, and the “three colour” and “five colour” pieces were first introduced; also the green known as “famille verte”; but the blue and white porcelain still predominated.

The latter part of the Ming dynasty was so hampered by wars with the Tartars, that the manufacture of porcelain was practically at a standstill.

Before this time, Chinese porcelain had become comparatively well known all over Europe, where it was treasured by kings and nobles. In the year 1447 Mathieu de Coussy, the French historian, speaks of a letter written to the Sultan of Egypt by Charles VII. of France, asking him to assist French enterprise in the sea ports of the Levant; this letter ends with the following request: “Si te mande par le dit Ambassadeur un présent à savoir trois

escuelles de porcelaine de Sinant, deux grands plats, ouvertz de porcelaine, deux touques (oval vessel, or vase) verdes de porcelaine, deux bouquetz (bottle with handles) de porcelaine ouvere." This modest request reveals to us the strong desire of kings at that time to become possessors of the much-coveted porcelain. Francis I. of France was a collector, and had a museum for his curiosities, amongst which were "vases and dishes of porcelain curiously wrought."

In our own country Queen Elizabeth, who expected and demanded valuable gifts from her courtiers, received from Lord Burleigh, on New Year's Day, 1588, a "porringer of white porselyn garnished with gold," and from Mr. Robert Cecil "a cuppe of grene porselyn." These, and doubtless most of the china brought to England at this time, came through Spain and Portugal, but it was still somewhat of a rarity, and was most highly valued. Authors of the sixteenth century, writing about it seriously, affirmed that porcelain remained buried in the ground a hundred years before the body and glaze came to perfection, and, as we know, that learned man, Lord Bacon, wrote about "mines of porselyn."

The great Ch'ing dynasty (1644 to the present time)¹ has been the most prolific. Immense quantities of beautiful designs and colours have been introduced, and all old varieties copied. It is more than probable that the greater part of the porcelain to be met with in private collections to-day has been made during this dynasty, even though it bear some earlier mark, for with the Chinese to copy meant that even the smallest detail should be reproduced, and so entirely did they succeed that the connoisseur finds it almost impossible in some cases to distinguish between the two.

The Emperor K'ang-Hsi (1662-1722), who reigned peacefully for sixty years, did all in his power to encourage ceramic art. His viceroy, Lang-Ting-tso, a most cultured and artistic man, made a great name as the inventor of two new coloured glazes, the one a brilliant pure red called "Sang-de-bœuf," and the other the pale apple-green called after him, "Lang-yao."

It was towards the end of this period that the French Jesuit missionary, Père D'Entrecolles, first began to write his now famous letters.² The first of these was written in 1712 from

¹ Since this book was written the Ch'ing dynasty has come to an end, and China has become a Republic.

² *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses.*

Jao-chan to the head of the Jesuit Order in Paris. These letters formed the earliest and most valuable information received in Western Europe as to the methods employed in the manufacture of porcelain, as well as supplying a striking history of Chinese life and manners at that time. There is little doubt that it was to them that Cookworthy, of Plymouth, owed the information which led to his discovery of the ingredients of true porcelain. It seems also more than probable that the potters at Dresden and St. Cloud were in like manner indebted to Père D'Entrecolles.

In one of his letters the Father describes King-tê-Chên, with its long street and population of a million souls, its magnificent temple, dedicated to the Queen of Heaven, and built by a Chinese merchant who had amassed a large fortune in "The Indies," and the gleam and glare from three thousand furnaces. We can picture the weird scene which these burning kilns must have presented at night, the account of which inspired Longfellow's lines:—

A burning town or seeming so,
Three thousand furnaces that glow
Incessantly, and fill the air
With smoke uprising, gyre on gyre,
And painted by the lurid glare
Of jets and flashes of red fire,

The letters of Père D'Entrecolles are most thrilling and interesting reading. He describes the process of manufacture very minutely, tells how the painters were no better than common workmen, and speaks of them as "guex" (poor beggars); he also states that some pieces of porcelain passed through the hands of seventy workmen before they were complete. In his day the forger seems to have been as great an institution as he is to-day, and the Father gives a most entertaining account of the methods of a great mandarin who honoured him with his friendship. This worthy was the Viceroy of King-tê-Chên. He procured a special kind of clay to make vases and other vessels, which he copied from valuable old specimens and baked in a special way. When completed, these were boiled in a utensil containing "very greasy soup," in which they remained for a month, after which they were transferred to "the most foul drain in the neighbourhood," and, having been thus well seasoned, were found to be so admirable as to warrant their being presented to noble persons as valuable antiques.

During the Yung-chên period (1722-35) the rose family (Famille rose), so called from

the beautiful rose colour, obtained from gold, with which it was decorated, is said by some authorities to have been invented, whilst others assign it to the K'ang-hsi period. Old forms and pieces of single glaze decoration were largely copied; indeed, the principal manufactures of this reign were copies of ancient works.

Under the Emperor Ch'ien-lung (1735-96), who reigned sixty years, a great impetus was given to the manufacture of porcelain. Very large quantities were made, which were remarkable for their excellence and decoration, whilst that which was designed for the Imperial households was specially beautiful. From this time, however, a decadence set in, and during the Tai-ping rebellion much valuable porcelain was destroyed, and the celebrated factories at King-tê-Chên came to an end. Since that time to the present day porcelain has continued to be made; but as far as the collector is concerned his interest in later varieties is not great, though specimens made during the reign of the Emperor Tao-Kwang (1821-50) have of late years been much sought after by the collector on account of their beauty in design and decoration,

Having discovered the commercial value of porcelain made for domestic use, and the large demand for antiques, both in their own and in other countries, the Chinese set themselves to work to make and copy these, losing thereby much of the poetic individuality which gives such a unique charm to genuine old examples.

One reason why the collecting of porcelain is so deeply interesting to the collector is its history, or, rather, one might say the histories of the lives of men which are written upon it. In our own country the story in its beginnings is a sad one, when we remember the number of lives which were spent in finding out such elementary secrets as those of body and glaze, secrets which long ages before had been revealed to the Oriental. Indeed, our greatest triumphs in ceramic art are as child's play when compared with those of the Chinese. A study of the methods of these inscrutable people, as applied to the art they loved, cannot fail to be elevating, taking us, as it does, right into the heart of a most cultured nation.

All that was best in poetry, in painting, and in literature, seems to have been used as inspiration, and all that was precious, dignified, and stately in religious ceremonies finds ex-

pression here. Indeed, it seems almost impossible to realise that these beautiful works of art, signed, it may be, "Scholarship, lofty as the hills and the Great Bear," "Riches, honour, and enduring spring," or "A gem amongst precious vessels of rare jade," were made and decorated by paid workpeople. They would seem rather to be surrounded by such an atmosphere of dignity and veneration as to suggest works of love, which the workmen felt honoured in performing.

We are apt in these days to look upon the Chinese as the cheap labourers of the world, and as a people standing still, upon whom the door is closed. This may be so, but it is not possible that the long ages of culture which lie behind are lost. The nation may be sleeping, to awake some day like a giant refreshed, when she will show us once more her wonderful creative power, and make us feel again the poetry and beauty which underlie her works of art.

HOW TO IDENTIFY OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

WHITE

THREE kinds of white porcelain were made by the Chinese, namely, that which had been prepared, glazed, and fired in the ordinary way, and which was intended to be decorated in colours over the glaze; secondly, that which was known as "biscuit," and which was unglazed porcelain, with a dull surface; and thirdly, the beautiful white glazed porcelain which was not intended for decoration in colours. The first of these three was largely imported into Europe in the eighteenth century, and much of it came to our own country, where it was painted at Chelsea and other factories. It also formed the body of the so-called Oriental "Lowestoft," to which I shall refer later on.

The white "biscuit" porcelain, which is rare and valuable, is generally carved and pierced

with fretwork. It is exceedingly thin, and has the appearance of having been pared down by the lathe. Some pieces are decorated entirely in open fretwork, and in other glazed pieces the fretwork is divided by raised medallions ornamented with figures in biscuit in high relief and with sprays of flowers; such pieces will be seen illustrated on Plate I. This pair of bowls is in the late Sir W. Franks's collection at the British Museum, and are described in the catalogue as having "five medallions with figures in biscuit in high relief; in one of them, the god of Longevity; in each of the others, two figures standing—probably the Pa-Sien or eight immortals; between the medallions is pierced fretwork." Sometimes this white biscuit porcelain was decorated by a simple design of lines incised in the paste. Boxes were made of it for the vermilion used by the Chinese in writing, and small biscuit porcelain receptacles which were designed to carry about fighting crickets, also pencil-holders, and little screens with landscapes in relief; these latter somewhat resemble those white glass or porcelain pictures which can be bought in Switzerland, and which we sometimes see hanging in windows, or used as lamp shades

and candle screens, the landscape showing up when the light shines through them.

The kind of white porcelain, however, most usually met with in collections is the beautiful creamy white, with a glaze like satin. This was most highly estimated in France in the seventeenth century, where it earned the sobriquet "Blanc-de-Chine." It was largely copied at St. Cloud, and, in fact, by all early European manufactories. At Dresden and Buen Retiro pieces ornamented with the raised white hawthorn pattern were made in exact imitation of the Oriental, and the latter factory copied the cream tinge and satiny glaze of the Chinese original with wonderful accuracy. In our own country the Blanc-de-Chine was closely imitated at Bow and Chelsea; indeed, at the former white porcelain with raised hawthorn pattern became famous as characteristic of that factory. Later on a feature of the Plymouth manufactory was the white porcelain figures in exact imitation of Oriental deities; some of these are exceedingly clever, but owing to the fact that they show all the imperfections of glaze and firing characteristic of Plymouth, they cannot be easily mistaken.

Of the "Blanc-de-Chine" now in existence,

the greater part came from Te-Hoa in the province of Fuchien, but I fancy most of the specimens in private collections to-day date from a time subsequent to the Ming dynasty, which closed in 1644. There are, however, authentic specimens made during this period, and even earlier; in fact, Chinese historians speak of beautiful white porcelain made as early as the Tang dynasty, 618-907 A.D.; and during the Sung period, which ended in 1279, it became famous as the white Ting porcelain, named after Ting-Yao of that dynasty, and this name was associated with all white wares for many years.¹ The Ting porcelain was thin as egg-shell, and was generally engraved with designs incised in the body under the glaze, which could hardly be seen till held up to the light. In the Franks Collection at the British Museum are two bowls which are described in the catalogue as "Thin ivory-white Chinese porcelain. Very small base and wide rim, in which are six indentations. Inside are two five-clawed dragons, very faintly engraved in the paste and glazed over. In the centre an inscription, also engraved under the glaze in an ancient Seal character, being the mark of the Emperor Yung-lo, 1403-1424."

¹ See page 170.

Perhaps the best-known pieces of Blanc-de-Chine are the statuettes of Buddhist deities ; of these, the goddess Kwan-yin (Plate II.) is most frequently met with. She is sometimes represented as seated upon a rock with dragons at her feet, or more often upon a lotus flower ; on either side are boy attendants, and in her lap or upon her arm is a child ; sometimes she carries a peach. This figure, of which there are several varieties, has a Madonna-like appearance, and I know of a lady who kept one on a table in her bedroom with her religious books, under the impression that it represented the Madonna and Child, and who was horrified when I pointed out her mistake.

The figure of Kuan-Ti, the god of War, is also well known. The original of this god was one Kuan-Yü, a hero who distinguished himself in the Civil Wars of the third century. He was deified more than a thousand years ago, and is still worshipped. Kuan-Ti is represented as seated on a carved wooden chair ; he has a haughty bearing, frowning features, and flowing moustache and beard ; his cloak covers a coat of mail, and his girdle is studded with precious jade.

Figures of animals, generally of the fabulous

description, cocks, and other birds, were also made in white porcelain, and also little seals (see Plate I.) in the form of a cube, on which a tiny animal is seated; on the seal, inscriptions are engraved in relief. Two such seals were found in an Irish bog many years ago, and there has been much speculation as to their previous history.

Of the animals, the fabulous lion is perhaps the best known (Plate II.). He is represented as seated on a rectangular base with a tube at the side for joss-sticks; his tail and mane are curled and twisted and tied with ribbon; his mouth is open, showing rows of teeth, and from it falls a thick strand of silk, ending in a ball under one paw. Statuettes of kylins (strange animals—a mixture of deer, rhinoceros, and dragon), elephants, dragons, and cocks, are not so often met with, and the figure of a crab resting on a lotus leaf with a flower at the termination of the stem is a rare example of this white porcelain. Libation cups (Plate II.) were also made for use in religious ceremonies; these are a thicker and heavier porcelain, and are generally oval in shape, but are sometimes octagonal; the latter are decorated with raised figures, and impressed ornaments of horses and



PLATE II

WHITE. "BLANC DE CHINE"

1. OVAL LIBATION CUP of ivory white Chinese porcelain ornamented with moulded branches and standing on a base composed of stems.

Height, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Diameter, 4 by $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.

2. STATUETTE OF THE GODDESS KWAN-YIN. Seated upon a lotus flower. In her lap is a child, and at the base are dragons moulded in relief and boy attendants.

Height, 12 in.

3. FIGURE OF A LION, with twisted mane and tail, one paw resting upon a ball, and a tube at the side for joss sticks

Height, $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.

other animals, very faintly outlined under the glaze. The oval cups are supported by feet, or a base formed of the moulded stems of prunus (hawthorn), or of magnolia branches. They are decorated with these flowers in relief, and with moulded ornaments, consisting of fish, kylins, storks, and dragons; and in some cases the name of the maker or owner will be found pricked in Chinese characters in the paste.

Of the Statuettes and Libation cups, those which have a fine creamy tint are the most valuable; the glaze is very soft, and seems to be one with the paste, and when looked through in a strong light it has a milky appearance. Another kind of Blanc-de-Chine is of a cold blue-white tinge, and is not so valuable; but in the *History of King-tê-Chên*, translated by M. Stanislas Julien,¹ three whites are described, namely, "of the snow," "of the moon," and of "flour."

Of course, other articles than those described were made in white porcelain, such as vases and beakers, which were generally decorated with ornaments incised in the paste, or with moulded devices of fish, flowers, and fabulous animals; also delicate cups and saucers, de-

¹ *Histoire de la Fabrication de la Porcelain Chinoise.*

signed to represent the petals of an open flower by lines and veining incised in the paste under the glaze, and sometimes veined with gold, and having a tiny gold centre.

Two famous pieces of white porcelain of great antiquity still exist, the one an incense-burner, brought to Venice in the thirteenth century by that great traveller, Marco Polo, when he returned from China, where he had probably visited the factory at King-tê-Chên, in the province of Fuchien. This piece (Plate I.) has been frequently copied by the Chinese, and in the Franks Collection at the British Museum such a copy may be seen. It is described as a "basin" (it looks more like a casket with cover and stand), "eight-sided, with ornaments moulded in relief. Ivory-white Chinese porcelain. The basin has eight feet and four handles; each side is ornamented with three bands, inclosing scrolls and other devices of an ancient bronze style; the cover has a knob at each angle, and is ornamented with an iris surrounded by prunus; the spaces between are pierced; the central knob is wanting. The stand has a raised knob at each angle, and eight low feet; in the centre is a large flower surrounded by small detached

scrolls, all impressed ; on the outside are panels like those on the bowl."

The second historical specimen is to be seen in the Dresden Gallery, where there is a particularly fine collection of Oriental porcelain, of which this is the oldest piece. It is said to have been brought by a Crusader from Palestine, and is a plate set with uncut rubies and emeralds in gold filigree, and is marked with the word "Fuh" (happiness) in Chinese characters. These two pieces bear striking testimony to the skill of the Oriental, and to the high state of perfection to which he had brought his art many centuries ago.

A special kind of white porcelain from King-tê-chên was made for the Imperial household, to be used in times of mourning. It was exceedingly fine in texture, and the shapes used were delicate and graceful. The decoration consisted of five clawed dragons incised in the paste under the glaze, which could hardly be seen till held up to the light.

In contrast to the blue and white porcelain and that decorated in enamels over the glaze, the Blanc-de-Chine will generally be found to be unglazed on the under side, with the biscuit body exposed to view.

In the Franks Collection at the British Museum may be seen two bricks of white porcelain taken from the wonderful "porcelain" tower built by the Emperor Yung-lo (1403-24). This building was nine storeys high, and the bricks were of five colours; but while the white ones were of true porcelain, the others were only of glazed pottery.

SINGLE COLOURED GLAZES

POTTERY covered with a single coloured glaze has been made in China from the earliest days ; indeed, it seems practically certain that the wonderful Ch'ai, or "blue as the sky after rain," was of this description ; and even earlier—in the fifth century of our era—we read of specimens in imitation of jade, of red, and of green porcelain, which were, most probably, pottery covered over with coloured glazes. Later on, translucent porcelain was treated in the same manner, though undoubtedly some specimens are of inferior porcelain, or of a kind of stone-ware which would probably have been used at a time when the China clay failed.

The colouring matter used in these glazes was derived from oxides of iron, copper, and in later times gold. At first the colours used were blue, red, and brown only, as these alone would bear the heat of the kiln. These colours are now spoken of as "grand feu" colours.

Later on it was discovered that other colours could be used if baked in a cooler part of the kiln; these were turquoise blue, yellow, and purple, and are termed "Demi grand feu," whilst the vitreous enamels used in overglaze decoration, namely, green, crimson, pink, cobalt blue, pale yellow, coral red, black, and white, were baked in the muffle kiln and called "petit feu."

Three methods of glazing were employed. In the first, the body, which had been thoroughly dried, but not baked, was dipped into the glaze; and, in the second, it was painted on with a brush. The third method was to blow the glaze on to the body by means of a tube covered at the end with silk gauze, through which it was forced in minute particles on to the body.

This kind of porcelain, namely, that in which the decoration takes the form of a covering of coloured glaze, is often classed under one head and spoken of as *Céladon*, the term being used to signify all pieces so decorated, regardless of colour. This is puzzling and misleading to the amateur when he hears the same term applied to one special coloured glaze, namely, the pale grey-green,

generally called "sea green"; but if he bears in mind that the term is also used in the general way that I have indicated, he will not be misled by it.

Green.—The term Céladon, as applied to "sea green" porcelain, was first used in France—where it was greatly prized—in the seventeenth century. That colour had become fashionable owing to the popularity of the play, adapted from Honoré D'Urfé's celebrated novel, in which Céladon, the shepherd courtier, appeared on the stage clad entirely in sea green.

The oldest example of Chinese porcelain brought to this country before the Reformation is the basin or cup of thick Céladon (sea green) at New College, Oxford, which belonged to Archbishop Warham (1504–32), and is called his cup. I think we may also take it that the "cuppe of grene pурсselyne" given to Queen Elizabeth by Mr. Robert Cecil on New Year's Day, 1588, was of the same type, and no doubt most of the earliest specimens which found their way to Europe belonged to the class of single coloured glazes, green being one of the earliest; and the many specimens which remain to us of this colour undoubtedly owe

their preservation to their extreme thickness. When any variation was required, the decoration took the form of moulded or impressed ornaments, or of designs incised in the paste and afterwards glazed over.¹

Although Céladon is the best-known green, other shades were used. During the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) green was the Imperial colour. The darkest shade was called “gros vert,” and another which is called “snakeskin” was invented about the year 1683 by Ts’ang Ying-hsüan, the then celebrated superintendent of the great porcelain factory at King-tê-Chên; this is very glossy, and shows rainbow colours like the skin of a snake when seen in the sun. Other greens are known as “emerald,” “cucumber,” and “pea green,” but the rarest is a lovely pale apple green called Lang-yao, which was invented by the great Viceroy of King-tê-Chên Lang-Ting-tso (1654–68). Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse describes this as being “mottled and crackled,” and as having “a white line round the foot, at which the colour stops dead.”

Yellow.—Yellow is much sought after by collectors. It is not so often met with as Céladon, and was at one time the colour of the

¹ See page 162.



PLATE III

POWDERED BLUE

SAUCER-SHAPED PLATE of very fine quality powdered blue, with white reserves containing wreaths of flowers and leaves in brilliant enamel colours. These encircle beautifully painted fish in various colours.

Diameter, 11 in.

BOTTLE-SHAPED VASE in brilliant powdered blue with two white indented panels. "Famille Verte" decoration, chrysanthemums, prunus blossom, and foliage in bright enamel colours, growing downward from green rocks. On the neck are two oblong panels indented at the corners, containing peach blossom and other flowers. One of a pair.

Height, 18 in.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Mr. R. W. Partridge's Galleries.

reigning dynasty. There are various shades ; that made for the Emperor has been described by Mr. Monkhouse as resembling "the yolk of an egg." Specimens of this will sometimes be found to bear the mark of the Ming dynasty, during which the Imperial colour was green, and they are no doubt copies of older pieces. Another well-known yellow, called "eel-skin," shades from olive green to brown, and was also invented by Ts'ang Ying-hsüan. "Mustard," "straw colour," "orange," "sulphur," "canary," and "lemon," are all shades that may be met with, the lighter ones being brought out during the Yung-chên period (1723-36).

Blue.—A wide range of shades will be found in the blue glazes. This colour is the earliest mentioned by Chinese historians, and is said to have been used for vases during the T'Sin dynasty (265-419), whilst we know it was the favourite colour of that artistic soul, the Emperor Chin-tsung (954-9), who ordered that all the porcelain made for the use of his household should be the colour of the "blue of the sky seen between the clouds after rain." These many shades gave rise to as many poetical and appropriate names, such as "moonlight

blue," the "liquid dawn," the "blue of the prune skin," and others. The shades most usually met with are dark or "gros bleu" and "mazarine" or "powder blue," which is the shade so successfully copied as a ground colour by Worcester and other English factories. It has an almost granular appearance, and will often be found used as a ground colour with white panels decorated in blue underglaze or in colours over glaze; also as an entire ground on which may be found designs in gold (Plate III.) Other shades of blue are "sky," "peacock," and "turquoise," the latter being often met with on statuettes, not infrequently in association with purple; a dark slaty blue called "sapphire" was invented during the Ch'ien-lung period, 1736-95.

Purple.—Purple seems to have been one of the earliest colours, for we find it mentioned as being used during the Sung dynasty (960-1279).¹

Brown.—The brown glazes form a numerous class, and will generally be found in association with other decoration. "Chocolate," "café-au-lait," "old gold," and "chamois," are some of the principal shades, and these may be found on vases on which are white panels painted

¹ See page 171.



PLATE IV

“SLIP” DECORATION AND CRACKLED

1. BOTTLE-SHAPED VASE of Chinese Porcelain covered with a rich deep blue glaze on which are moulded two branches of prunus blossom in white slip in low relief.

Height, $12\frac{1}{2}$ in.

2. BOTTLE of greenish Chinese Crackled Porcelain; the handles take the form of monsters' heads, and with the raised bands of Fooe-head and other designs are coloured brown to represent bronze.

Height, 7 in.

From the Frank's Collection at the British Museum.

with flowers or other devices. Sometimes the decoration takes the form of designs in white slip over the glaze, portions of the white slip being occasionally painted over in colours, which heightens the effect. Cups, saucers, and bowls decorated in colours on the inside, and covered with brown glaze on the outside, are fairly common, and pieces which are painted in underglaze blue are frequently ornamented with bands of a pale shade of brown.

Red.—The red glazes are a most important class, which may be divided into three, namely, the reds which came from copper, those which came from iron, and those which were derived from gold. From copper the most prized is the beautiful “Sang-de-bœuf,” said to be another invention of Lang-Ting-tso, the famous Governor or Viceroy of King-tê-Chên. Like the apple green, it is called after him, Lang-yao. As the name indicates, this is a blood red, of which there are many shades, but the term is often used to denote pieces which are not true “Sang-de-bœuf.” A genuine piece of this kind can always be identified by the shading. If looked at carefully in a good light, a bottle or vase of old “Sang-de-bœuf” will be found to shade at the neck to a yellow red ;

lower down the red becomes a ruby tinge, and at the foot brownish red. The glaze is crackled, and round the rim and base there is always a line of pure white. The glaze in a genuine piece is never run, as in the case of more modern specimens (where it will sometimes be found to have formed tears), and the base is glazed over either in apple green, grey, or pure white.

Other copper reds are known as "Sang-de - pigeon," "Sang - de - poulet," "crimson," "crushed strawberry," and "liver." In the first two of these the ground appears to have been stippled; there is a minute, granular, rather dull appearance. Next to the "Sang-de - bœuf," the variety most prized is the "peach bloom" or "peach blow." This colour was first used early in the eighteenth century, being invented either in the reign of K'ang-hsi, 1661-1722, or of his successor, Yung-chên, 1723-36. The name is somewhat misleading, suggesting as it does an entirely pink ground. In reality there are two colours, green and pink, and the Chinese, who set great value upon this variety, call it "apple red and green." The apple green appears in clouds, blots, and minute dots through the pale pink, in some

pieces as a mere suggestion, and in others it almost predominates over the pink, forming a complete range of shades. The idea seems to have been the colour of the peach blossom from the time that it was a tiny bud bursting through the green calyx till it became a full-blown blossom, with little or no green to be seen. Besides being collected and highly prized by the Chinese themselves, "peach bloom" is much sought after in England and America, where enormous prices are given for specimens. My first introduction to this colour in glazed porcelain opened my eyes to its value. A tiny vase about an inch and a half high, of a greeny pink hue, was put into my hands, and I was about to replace it as something quite insignificant, when the owner remarked, "That little thing cost me fifty pounds."

The dark crimson red was probably the colour used for vases during the Sung dynasty (960-1279), which are described as "chiselled red jade." It was subsequently principally used to cover statuettes of animals, figures, and clumps of fungus, and is known to have been one of the colours used by the great Lang-Ting-tso.

From iron the principal reds are "tomato," "coral," and "vermilion." They all vary, from the lightest to the darkest shades, and were greatly used during the reign of Ch'ien-lung, 1736-95.

Of the reds derived from gold, the rose pinks found on pieces of porcelain of the "famille rose" class are the most famous. They vary from quite a deep crimson to the palest rose-colour, and are found as single glazes on bottles and vases; but the best-known use to which they were put is seen in the beautiful egg-shell china, the back of which is covered with ruby glaze; this is known as "Ruby-backed china."

Black.—Of single glaze black there are two kinds—common black and "mirror black." The first of these is dull and heavy, and is generally covered by a very thin green glaze, through which it can be seen; it is often met with on vases, and was used as early as the Sung dynasty.¹ "Mirror black" is not so old, dating from the reign of K'ang-hsi (1660-1722); it is very brilliant in appearance, and is generally used like the brown glazes in association with other decoration; and some pieces are ornamented with gold.

¹ See page 171.

Grey.—The last single glaze is grey. Of this kind the best known is termed “rice colour”; it is generally used as the body colour of vases, entirely covered with crackle decoration.

VARIEGATED GLAZES

IN addition to the single glazes there is a large class of variegated glazes. Père D'Entrecolles speaks of "Transmutation vases," called by the Chinese "Yao-pien," which were originally the result of accident in the firing, by which the glaze became mottled, streaked, or splashed. At first such pieces were put aside as defective, but later on they were much sought after, which led to their being copied in the reign of Yung-chên, 1723-35. To produce these variations the heat of the oven was controlled, being made greater or less, according to the degree of oxidation which was required, the same silicate of copper giving different results, according to the heat to which it was subjected. Sometimes the smoke was excluded from the oven, and at others it was drawn in, producing wonderful effects upon the glaze of the specimens which were being baked. To rightly understand "transmutation," or Flambé pieces, quite a deep study of these methods should be made.



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PLATE V

VARIEGATED GLAZES

1. VASE WITH VARIEGATED GLAZE, crackled, colours—crimson to magenta and liver, brown-green shading to yellow. The glaze has run down in tears. Called Lo-Kan-yeou.

19th Century.

2. STONE WARE VASE covered with a glaze in pale shades of green, mauve and brown pink.

Mark, Koh Ming Tsiang chi (made by Koh Ming Tsiang).

17th Century.

From the Frank's Collection in the British Museum.

The works of Dr. Bushell, M. Jacquemart, and Mr. Dillon, give very interesting accounts of the processes, but a visit to the British Museum or South Kensington will be of the greatest help to the right understanding of the colours and combinations described.

Some of these Flambé pieces are more wonderful than beautiful; few are really artistic, though many are undoubtedly handsome. During the Sung dynasty a well-known transmutation was red, splashed and streaked with a deep shade of blue; another is described as "a bluish grey with purple and crimson flecks." In the Franks Collection at the British Museum is a specimen called "mule's liver," or "horse's lung," in which a bewildering combination of blue, red, violet, and greenish-yellow, will be seen. Turquoise blue and purple are often found together; also a grey shade of black with yellow spots.

When the Flambé decoration became popular, new variations were made by blowing the soft glazes of the "petit feu" on to the body by means of a tube covered with gauze; in this way many new effects were obtained, and some of these are exceedingly beautiful. This was called "soufflé." It is older than the Yung-

chên period, and can be identified by the minute circles which are formed by the process, and which are signs of soufflé. Of these glazes the best known are called "Robin's egg," "iron rust," and "tea-dust." The first somewhat resembles the egg of a robin, but on different specimens the tints vary, from a bluish-grey to a pale greeny blue with red-brown specks. "Iron rust" is a most descriptive name, the ground colour being a rusty yellow with black spots. "Tea-dust" is a combination of dark-green ground colour with speckles of light green.

Still another kind of decoration is that in which biscuit porcelain is covered with patches of various-coloured glazes. These are laid on in wonderful disorder in some cases, whilst in others they are separated by raised outlines and ornaments of slip, a very ancient form of decoration, whereby a semi-liquid glaze or enamel was poured on through a pipe, in the same way that iced cakes are decorated to-day. A different process was adopted in glazing these pieces, as the body was fired before the glaze was applied. This kind of decoration, in which several coloured glazes are used in patches, dates from early times, and

is generally met with on statuettes of animals and birds, on vases, bowls, and saucer-shaped dishes. Ornaments in relief and designs scratched in the paste under the glaze will be found on such specimens.

CRACKLED PORCELAIN

CRACKLE decoration is peculiar and interesting; it consists of a complete network of cracks, covering in many cases the entire surface, and giving to the piece the appearance of having been broken to atoms which have not fallen apart. Sometimes it constitutes the sole decoration, whilst at others only part of the surface is so treated. This form of ornamentation has been copied in European factories, and there are in the Hanley Museum two vases made by Josiah Wedgwood of white ware crackled in exact imitation of the Chinese originals.

At first it is supposed that crackle was the result of accident, but afterwards it became a recognised form of decoration, and methods were employed by which the size of the cracks could be regulated. During the Sung dynasty (960-1279), vases are spoken of as being crackled, and the works of these two famous potters — the brothers Chang — are distin-

guished, the one as being crackled, and the other plain. The pale blue "clair de lune" of this dynasty was often covered with cracks, and the ancient name for vases of this description was Ko-yao, or "The ware of the Elder Brother."¹

Chinese writers mention two methods by which the crackle was produced and the size of it regulated. The first is as follows: "After covering the vases with glaze they are exposed to a very hot sun, and when they have become hot they are plunged into cold water for a moment. On being baked they appear covered with innumerable cracks." The other—mentioned in the history of King-tê-Chên—says the size of the cracks depended on the materials of the glaze, which were to be "finely or coarsely washed" according to the size of the crackle required. Later writers, however, have pointed out that the effect was no doubt obtained by a larger or smaller proportion of silica to the alumina contained in the glaze. The effect of the crackle was heightened sometimes by an application of Indian ink or red colour, which were rubbed into them.

The crackle varies in size from the most minute, which can hardly be distinguished with-

¹ See page 162

out a glass, and which is called "fish roe" or "truité," from its resemblance to the scales of the trout, to the large irregular kind called "crabs' claws." Turquoise-blue glazed porcelain will generally be found to be finely crackled; Sang-de-bœuf, the only red on which it is found, has a broad crackle; Céladon is frequently, though not always, decorated in this manner, and the size varies. Yellow, green, purple, and, indeed, excepting the reds, all single coloured glazes, will be found to be sometimes crackled, but the colours most frequently met with are a greyish white, pale Céladon, and a pale buff grey or fawn colour. These are generally entirely covered with crackle, which forms the sole decoration. The vases are archaic in shape, heavy and thick, the handles taking the form of rough masks of animals' heads. A well-known form of ornamentation applied to some of these vases are motifs and bands in imitation of ancient bronze work, with mask handles from which hang rings, also in bronze colour. Sometimes they are ornamented with patches of white slip, on which are painted designs in a pale shade of cobalt blue, a favourite design being weird-looking horses, possibly meant to represent

the famous teams of the Emperor Muh-wang. These, more than any other kind of crackled ware, have been copied of late years, and the amateur will do well to be on his guard against them. The modern ones generally take the form of large bottle-shaped vases and sets of five or seven vases and beakers, and the bands round these resemble bamboo wood-work, painted iron colour to resemble old bronze.

In the Franks Collection at the British Museum are some pieces of crackle described in the catalogue as "Three fragments of saucers of Chinese crackle porcelain, found in the ruins of the palace of Bijapur, India, which was destroyed in 1689." If examined, these fragments will show very clearly the thickness of this kind of porcelain and the coarseness of the paste, which varies in shade from red to buff. It is thickly covered on both sides with glaze, and it will be noticed that the crackles do not penetrate through this into the body.

Perhaps the most highly prized specimens in this class of decoration are small pieces of the single coloured glaze orders covered with "truité" crackle, the pale apple green or "cucumber" of the Chinese being specially

desirable ; but all genuine old specimens are sought after and valued by collectors ; the “crabs’ claws” crackle, however, and those pieces which owe their sole ornamentation to it, are probably of very considerable antiquity.



PLATE VI

OVIFORM VASE AND COVER of finest quality, with branches of white prunus blossom on a ground of brilliant marbled blue. An account of this unique vase will be found on page 71.

Height, 10 in.

Bought in the sale of the Huth Collection for 5,500 guineas by Mr. R. W. Partridge.

from Mr. R. W. Partridge's Galleries.

HOW TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ENGLISH AND CHINESE UNDERGLAZE BLUE

THERE are few collections of old china which do not include some specimens of Chinese porcelain, and there are many which contain some really beautiful and valuable pieces, of whose origin and history their owners are ignorant.

When recently I talked about old china at afternoon parties in London, I was surprised to find that the majority of my hearers brought Oriental china to me for identification, of which a large proportion was valuable and interesting; and, needless to say, some brought specimens of English porcelain, decorated in Oriental taste, which they firmly believed to be Chinese.

Now to be able to distinguish between these two is of the first and highest importance, and it is a lesson which must be learnt by every would-be collector. It is exceedingly difficult

to describe to a beginner, in writing, the difference between English and Chinese porcelain, and it is perhaps even more difficult for the beginner to understand the difference from a written description. I propose, therefore, to help him to teach himself.

To begin with, he must provide himself with a magnifying glass. This is absolutely necessary for the thorough examination of body, glaze, and decoration, if the differences are to be properly appreciated. Any authentic specimen of English porcelain can be used at first, but as the pieces which most frequently puzzle the amateur are those decorated in blue with Oriental designs, I would suggest a piece of blue and white Worcester or Salopian china, and for the Chinese a specimen of armorial "Lowestoft" (Plate XXXVI.), or of the well-known "Nankin" (Plate XIV.) china, familiar to most people in the dinner and tea services for which it was used. I recommend either of these two kinds of Chinese porcelain, not because of any special interest attaching to them, but because they are well known to the amateur, who might, by mistake, use a piece of English porcelain, and so his comparisons would be of no avail; but of course, any other

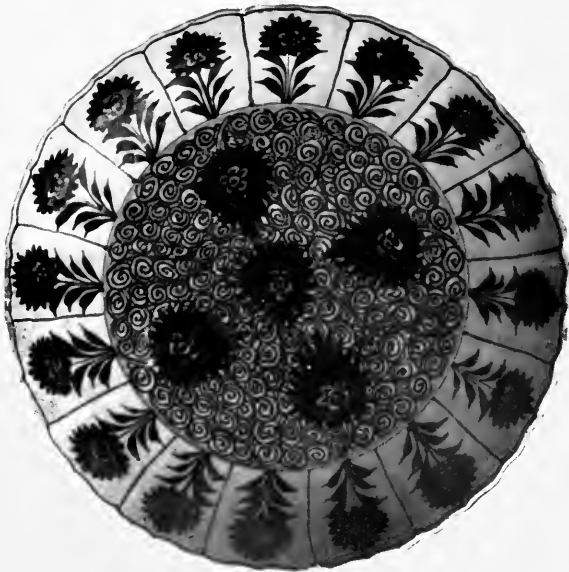


PLATE VII

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

SAUCER-SHAPED PLATE with Aster design in a deep sapphire shade of underglaze blue. The edge waved, in the centre are five asters in a background of scrolled design. Sixteen asters and leaves radiating up the rim both on the inside and outside.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Mrs. Anthony Hutton's Collection.

blue and white Chinese porcelain would do equally well.

Having found two such specimens as I have described, one of English and the other of Chinese origin, they should be examined with the magnifying glass on the under side, where there is no decoration. For this purpose plates, dishes, or saucers are of course the best pieces to use. They should then be held in front of a strong light, when, on looking through them, the colours of the bodies can be compared. If the pieces under examination are perfect, the sound should be tested by tapping with the finger-nails till the ring of each becomes familiar, and the sense of feel should be brought into play by passing the hands first over one piece and then the other, with the eyes shut. All this should be done repeatedly for at least a week, and notes should be taken of any difference, however slight, which may have been seen, heard, or felt.

Here I would suggest that my book should be laid aside till the period of probation is over, when I fully believe the student will find himself better able to tell me the difference between English and Chinese porcelain than I have been able to write it. He will, more-

over, have discovered that some of these differences are of so subtle a character that they are not easy to express in words, but they will be abundantly apparent to him once they are found, and will never again be lost sight of.

The first characteristic of the Chinese is seen in the "pin-points" or minute holes found under the base. These are deeper and more clearly defined than the little bubbles and specks met with in the glaze of English porcelain; they pierce the body, and are seldom, if ever, absent, though they are more abundant on some pieces than on others. The English body was fired, then glazed and re-fired; the Chinese fired body and glaze together, consequently it is not possible to see through the glaze on a piece of Chinese porcelain—as, for instance, we can see through the soft, glassy glaze used at Chelsea. The Oriental applied his glaze more carefully, and in the blue and white we do not find it accumulated round the rings at the bottom of plates, dishes, and cups. The edge of the ring is unglazed, whereas in the English the glaze will generally be found to cover it almost completely, with here and there, it may be, a little of the biscuit body exposed to view; and the Oriental ring is fre-

quently coloured pale brown at the edge. A large majority of Chinese porcelain is "ringed"; that is to say, under the base will be found faint but distinct marks of the lathe or potter's wheel. These marks must not be confounded with the ridges which are characteristic of Plymouth and Bristol porcelain, and which are *spiral*; they are a series of complete circles.

I have suggested to my readers the advisability of using a piece of Worcester or Salopian porcelain decorated in underglaze blue with Oriental designs for their comparison, as I consider this is the class of decoration which may be a stumbling-block to the amateur. To the casual observer there is little to choose between the original and the copy, but a closer examination will reveal widely marked differences. It is necessary, however, to bear in mind the methods of firing to which I have already alluded. The Chinese body, being unfired when it was decorated, absorbed the colour more than the already fired English body could do, consequently the Chinese decoration looks deeper and softer. Having been absorbed into the body, it seems as if it were part of the body, and lacks the painted-on appearance of the English decoration. The

Chinese colour, too, is drier ; we do not find it run, nor do we see the specks and spots of this colour disfiguring the undecorated parts—and these are the invariable accompaniment of English porcelain decorated in underglaze blue. Again, the Oriental shades and paints in the darker lines with a precision and exactitude which gives them the appearance of having been executed with a fine pencil. We may take it then that a piece of porcelain decorated in underglaze blue, of which the design is run, or which is disfigured by blue spots and specks, did not have its beginnings in China, even if the design is identical with those of the Chinese. The varieties in the shades of the white body used by the Chinese are also numerous, whereas the English body varies little ; the lovely blue-white of the Chinese is never seen in English porcelain, and the Oriental varied his blue decoration in tones to suit its background, whereas there is very little appreciable difference to be noticed in the cobalt blue used by manufacturers in this country.

In both our own country and in China gold was sparingly used in the decoration of specimens of underglaze blue. When it does occur on English porcelain of this description, it is



PLATE VIII

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

1. SAUCER-SHAPED DISH painted in underglaze blue with a high-handled basket of flowers; border of quatrefoil pattern divided by oblong panels containing flowers. On the outside of the rim are branches of fruit. A seal mark.

Diameter, $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.

2. PLATE decorated in blue underglaze with an old fir tree, on a branch of which is a bird; a pot of flowers stands on a rock. Two borders of quatrefoil pattern.

Diameter, $10\frac{1}{4}$ in.

From the Frank's Collection at the British Museum.

generally used as an edging and will be found to be thick and solid, duller than the Chinese, and often worn away. If the fingers are passed over a specimen of each, it will be more easy to detect the gold on the surface of the English porcelain. A peculiarity of the gold used on the Nankin service is that it is very thin and a wash of pale brown under-colour can be distinctly seen through it.

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

I HAVE already endeavoured to help the reader to identify Chinese porcelain decorated in blue under the glaze, and I have also pointed out that blue was one of the earliest colours used by the Chinese. At one period it was known as the "prohibited colour," as it was reserved entirely for the use of the Emperor. Under the Sung dynasty (960-1279) the Imperial porcelain was peacock blue, and a large proportion of the earliest glazed porcelain was of this colour; but it was not till the Yuan dynasty (1260-1367) that we first hear of blue and white, and it is at this time that we first read of blue dragon china. Old Chinese official documents still exist which contain lists of the Imperial porcelain from very early times, and amongst these is one which describes the porcelain supplied to the Mongol Emperor of the Yuan dynasty. In it the following are mentioned:—"31,000 dishes with flowers; 16,000 white plates with blue dragons; 18,400

cups for flowers or wine, with two dragons in the midst of clouds; 11,250 dishes, white ground with blue flowers and dragons holding in their claws the two words 'Fuh' (happiness), and 'Shou' (long life)." Whether any specimens of this dynasty still exist is more than doubtful, for pieces of the early periods of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) are in these days rarely seen in private collections, and very few are found even in our national collections, though specimens of the Chia-Ching period (1522-1566) are less rare.

Various blues were employed, obtained at first from the cobalt oxides of manganese; but during part of the Ming dynasty the celebrated "Mohammedan blue" was imported from Persia or some neighbouring country. One peculiarity of the Chinese underglaze blue is the many shades to be met with, and these may be the results of the heat of the kiln upon the various kinds of cobalt which were used. The painting being applied to the unbaked surface before it was glazed, it seems as though the action of the kiln caused the decoration to sink into the body and the pigment to tinge the glaze, giving a depth and unity only to be met with in Chinese underglaze blue and white. This may

also account for the many shades of the body, which are almost as numerous as those of the blue; and whatever may be the shade used, it will always be found that the white of the body will be in perfect harmony. This is one of the chief characteristics of Chinese blue and white which gives to it such a charm; whether it is the result of design or not I cannot say, but the same effect is not seen in European porcelain, in which the body was first fired, then painted, glazed, and re-fired.

People are apt to speak of specimens of the "best blue," but there are so many beautiful shades, beautifully painted, on equally beautiful porcelain, that it is impossible to say which is really the best. The blue should be clear and free from impurities, whatever its shade; the painting should be spirited and delicate, the glaze should melt into a fine body, and the shape should be perfect. Given these qualities, it would be difficult to find any product of the potter's art which can approach the Chinese blue and white.

The collector should choose his own shade for himself because it pleases him, not because it is fashionable or happens to be sought after at the moment. He will find Fashion an even



PLATE IX

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

BEAKER-SHAPED VASE, with bulbous body, the neck expanding at the base. The body and neck decorated in brilliant cobalt, with a broad band of formal fringed ornament with suspended musical plaques, the symbols of good luck. Below the fringed bands a formal leaf pattern with pæony blossom; above and below this a formal vertical ornament divided on the shoulder of the vase by narrow encircling bands of Joee-head and triangle-work.

Height, 14½ in.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

BLUE AND WHITE BEAKER, with bulbous centre and spreading mouth. The body decorated in brilliant cobalt with three bands of foliated panels in slight relief, outlined with blue. The panels decorated alternately with Chinese ladies, with children and emblems (Long Eliza), and sprays of flowers arranged in pots on stands.

Height, 18 in.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Messrs. Duveen Brothers' Galleries.

more fickle dame where china-collecting is concerned than he may suppose, and he will do well to please himself and aim at a high standard of excellence. The Chinese are said to place the greatest value upon a pale silver-grey shade of blue, of which they have always been ardent collectors; but of recent years, in our own country, the brilliant lapis lazuli shades are most sought after.

Such large quantities of blue and white porcelain were manufactured, and so much of it was imported to Europe during the latter part of the seventeenth and during the eighteenth century, that almost any one who owns old family china may be the possessor of some really fine and valuable specimens,¹ and it is still possible to pick up good pieces at a reasonable price, though since the sale of the Huth Collection (May, 1905), when the vase (Plate VI.) was sold for 5,900 guineas, and other pieces realised almost equally high prices, I fancy Chinese porcelain will be more sought after by the ordinary collector in this country. It is to be regretted that so much blue and white was brought to Europe at a time when its beauties were not appreciated, which led, during part of the eighteenth century, to

its being daubed over with colours to make it more attractive and in keeping with the taste of the day. These colours were unfortunately baked in, and therefore cannot be removed. The trade term for china which has been so treated is "clobbered," and it has entirely lost its value from a collector's point of view. The colours generally applied were red and a brilliant green, under which the blue decoration can sometimes be faintly distinguished, whilst at others it is allowed to show between the other colours in the scheme of decoration.

Date marks alone are not to be relied on in blue and white porcelain, as the old marks were as much copied as the old shapes and designs. During the earliest Ming periods the potting was rougher and the painting not so delicate; the glaze was blued, and the paste shows tiny indentations, the shapes being generally irregular. It also lacks the fine finish of later periods. The decoration is free and bold—one might almost say barbaric—and the rich Mohammedan blue, sometimes of a deep full shade and at others quite pale, is characteristic of these periods; but this blue lacks the gradation of shades which are so noticeable in the other blues at later periods—it is either dark or



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PLATE X

1 & 2. A SMALL BOWL of very fine quality underglaze blue with brilliant glaze, ornamented with a four-clawed dragon (Lung, of the Sky) chasing a ball through clouds. The body coils round the outside and over the inside of the bowl. Mark, in six characters of Yung-Chên, within a double circle.

From Mrs. Hugh Verrall's Collection.

3 & 4. SAUCER of fine quality in "five colours." Five-clawed dragon (Li. of the sea) outlined in blue underglaze and enamelled red over glaze. Surrounded by shells and sea-weed all outlined in blue underglaze and enamelled red, green, yellow, and mauvy brown over glaze. On the back are waves in green enamel over glaze and blue underglaze and five red bats. Six Mark, within a double circle.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

pale, with no intermediate shading. During the Ch'êng-hua period Mohammedan blue failed, and for some time, although an inferior native colour was employed, the quality of the decoration improved. The amateur, however, need not trouble himself much about this early blue and white, which is now very rarely met with.

The production of immense quantities of blue and white porcelain during the later periods of the Ming dynasty is no doubt one reason why so much of it remains to this day. Dr. Bushell tells us¹ that in the official statistics of the Province of Chiang-hsi "no less than 105,770 pairs of things in porcelain were ordered for the use of the palace during one year," and he adds, "Such wholesale production accounts for the abundance of porcelain of this date in Peking, where the street hawker may be seen with sweetmeats piled on dishes over a yard in diameter, or ladling iced syrup out of Ming bowls, and there is hardly a butcher's shop without a large Ming jar, generally broken it is true, on the counter for throwing in scraps of meat."

In 1369 a second factory had been established

¹ *Oriental Ceramic Art.*

at King-tê-Chên, at which porcelain, for the use of the Imperial household only, was made. To the productions of this factory was given the name "Kwan-tse," which means for the use of mandarins. Lists of the porcelain manufactured here still exist, and these show some forms of blue and white which were made. They include "blue flower jars, painted, with two dragons sporting among the clouds; large blue jars, with two dragons and flowers of the nymphæa lotus; jars of white porcelain, with blue flowers; large jars, ornamented with four blue dragons, arranged in an arch, sporting in the waves of the rising tide; jars, with blue flowers, for containing fish," etc.

Speaking of the porcelain made at this time the late Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse says: "During this period it is said that the vases were exposed for a year to dry, and then reduced in thickness by a process on the potter's wheel, which must have been equivalent to turning on the lathe. On them were inscribed the date mark of the period by order of the Emperor. This date mark is of four or six characters. . . ."

During the Yung-lo period (1403-25) egg-shell porcelain was invented; this also is said to have been pared down on the lathe to such

a remarkable thinness that it was known as the "To-t'ai," or "bodiless," porcelain. Small bowls of this egg-shell china, with flanges to the rims, and painted inside, generally with a bird at the bottom, and with insects and flowers finely and naturalistically treated, are supposed to date back to the reign of Yung-lo. They are, however, rare specimens, but may even now be met with and purchased.

The products of the periods of Hsüan-Tê (1426-36) and Ch'êng-hua (1465-88) were the most highly esteemed, and this has led the Chinese in later years to place the marks of these periods on a large proportion of the blue and white of later date. The first of these periods was remarkable for its beautiful blue; whilst during the second, the blue having failed, the excellence of the painting and design made it desirable. Now it will often be found that the mark of Hsüan-Tê occurs on a specimen in which the colour is poor, and equally the mark of Ch'êng-hua may be met with on a piece in which the blue is pure and good, and the painting and design are bad. By these signs the collector may detect the imitation, but it does not follow that the maker intended to deceive: to the Chinese (as I have said before) a copy

must be a faithful copy, even to the smallest detail.

Dr. Bushell has also translated some of the lists of porcelain made for the Emperors Chia-Ching, Lung-Ch'ing, and Wan-li. From these we learn that in 1529 the "blue and white," which was supplied to the palace, comprised "wine-cups, tea-cups, bowls, tall cups, wine-jars, jars with covers, dishes, boxes, bowls for fish, wine-vessels." The designs used as borders were copied from old brocades and embroidery, and the decoration consisted of dragons in almost every form, of the earth, amongst clouds, of the sea, coiled round lotus flowers, and flying with phœnixes and cranes; also lions playing with brocaded balls, the horses of the Emperor Muh-wang, waterfalls, children, peacocks, and fishes. Flowers were represented by the "flowers of the four seasons," the lotus and bamboo. On some pieces the scheme of decoration included the "precious emblems," and the characters and diagrams for "happiness," "longevity," "health," "peace," etc.

Another list of the Emperor Wan-li includes: "Saucer-shaped plates, censers, vases with spouts, vinegar-bottles, chess-boards, oil-lamps, candlesticks, screens, pencil-handles,



PLATE XI

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

1. OCTAGONAL PLATE of fine quality painted with a landscape in brilliant sapphire blue, underglaze, surrounded by a diaper border with four W-shaped panels of prunus blossoms. Round the edge of the plate is a scroll of rice diaper rolled away to reveal eight small leaf-shaped landscape panels, and held in place by butterflies and tassels.

Diameter, 6 in.

2. SAUCER-SHAPED FLUTED DISH with waved edge. Painted in the centre with "The Love Chase," a lady and gentleman on horseback with bows and arrows chasing a hare, the arrow in mid-air. Conventional flower border with eight symbols in the spaces. On the outside a flower on each flute. Mark, of the Ching-hwa period, 1465-1488, though probably of much later date.

Diameter, $7\frac{3}{4}$ in.

The second from the Frank's Collection at the British Museum.

perfume-boxes, fan-boxes, hat-boxes, handkerchief-boxes, pallet water-bottles, and garden-seats." The decoration of these pieces was very elaborate: bowls are described as being decorated both inside and out—dragons, clouds, boys, fish, lotus flowers, lions with embroidered balls, phœnixes, cranes, symbols, etc., were used. Later on, historical scenes, landscapes, and interiors were introduced, fir and peach trees, animals, fabulous and real—such as the tiger, deer, sea-horses, and elephants—were also used, whilst flowers of both water and land varieties, and fruit, including grapes and pomegranates, are spoken of. Some pieces, which, though quaint, cannot be called beautiful, were entirely ornamented with Buddhist inscriptions in blue characters on the white ground.

Towards the end of the Ming dynasty large quantities of blue and white porcelain were exported to other Eastern countries from China; of these the largest trade seems to have been with Persia, and a great deal of it has found its way to our country. This can readily be distinguished from other classes of underglaze blue by the shade which was used; it is a dull slaty blue of a decided grey tinge. The painting, instead of being fine and delicate,

resembles that of the early Ming periods, and is bold and vigorous; on some pieces it has been described as "rough and sketchy." The colour at darkest is almost black, and varies to a pale slate-grey. Some saucer-shaped plates and dishes have impressed panels, which can be seen both on the outside and the inside; in these are painted symbols and conventional flowers, and under the base coarse sand will be found in the glaze. This Persian-Chinese porcelain, with its distinctive characteristics, is beginning to be sought after by the collector. It is often to be found in houses whose owners were collectors during the eighteenth century, and has the additional recommendation that at present it has not attracted the attention of the forger, and I believe the Chinese themselves have not copied it, so that its genuine antiquity need not be questioned.

The Emperor Wan-li died in 1619, and from that time till the commencement of the Ch'ing dynasty the manufacture of porcelain declined. Constant wars with the Tartars occupied the attention of Emperor and people alike, and the factories fell into decay. With the accession of the Tartar Emperor K'ang-hsi, however, the industry revived, though the



PLATE XII

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

A WINE-POT AND COVER, with four perforated panels, through which are seen flowers in blue on a white ground. Round the base stiffly-pointed leaves. Between the perforated panels, on the spout and round the neck, are sprays of conventional flowers

Height, 8 in.

SAUCER-SHAPED DISH of beautiful translucent blue divided into six ornamental panels, each decorated with birds, trees, and animals; the centre circular panel is of similar decoration.

Diameter, 9 in.

PAIR OF SACRIFICIAL CUPS, handles formed as bifurcated lizards; decorated with three pierced panels of diaper and floral bands of "emblems" in blue above and below.

Height, 4 in.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Mr. Trapnill's Collection

early years of his reign were occupied in settling the country. K'ang-hsi, who reigned from 1661 to 1722, appointed Ts'ang-Ying-hsüan superintendent of the porcelain works at King-tê-Chên, and it is to this man that the credit of the revival and improvement of the industry was due.

To the collector of blue and white the K'ang-hsi (or Kang-he, as it is sometimes spelt) period is of the greatest importance, for during it every kind of this particular class of porcelain was made, early patterns, shapes, and designs were copied, and new ones were invented, and there is no shade of cobalt blue which was not used. It was the best period in every sense—the only advantage which specimens of the earlier periods possess is that of age; but, when we think of it, a piece of delicate porcelain which has survived since the middle or end of the seventeenth century should be sufficiently old to command respect.

During the reign of K'ang-hsi, it was brought to the knowledge of the Governor of King-tê-Chên that broken fragments of porcelain bearing the sacred name of the Emperor were found trampled under foot, or thrown on one side, and were thus being treated with dis-

respect. On this becoming known, an order was issued that for the future the name of the Emperor should not be used. Hitherto this mark had been enclosed in a double ring of blue. After the prohibition the ring was used alone, or sometimes enclosed a leaf, hare, or some symbol or emblem. When, therefore, the empty double ring is found, it is a certain sign that the piece was made during the reign of K'ang-hsi. The absence of any mark is also characteristic of this reign. How long the prohibition lasted is unknown, but the mark of K'ang-hsi enclosed in the double ring is met with (see Plate X.), and these pieces may date to the early part of his reign, or may have been made at a time when the injunction was withdrawn.

Every kind of blue was employed during this period, and two or three shades were generally used together; a light one would be employed on a figure for the face and lighter drapery, a darker may be seen shading the drapery, and a still deeper one may be met with in the hair, or on the woodwork if the scene depicted be an interior. The same shading will be noticed in flower and other designs. Technical skill, as applied to the



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PLATE XIII

BLUE AND OTHER COLOURS UNDERGLAZE

1. GOURD-SHAPED BOTTLE contracted in the centre, Chinese porcelain; the upper part decorated with flowers, vases and bands in blue underglaze; the lower portion covered with a broad band of deep nankin yellow.

Height, $6\frac{1}{4}$ in.

2. BOWL ornamented with two branches of prunus on which are perched birds, the latter and the stems in underglaze blue, the flowers in white in relief. The bird and branches touched in with liver colour under the glaze; inside a fungus.

Height, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. Diameter, $7\frac{1}{4}$ in.

3. BOTTLE of Chinese porcelain, painted with three monsters in liver colour with blue eyes. All under the glaze.

Height, $7\frac{1}{4}$ in.

From the Frank's Collection at the British Museum.

shapes employed, has never been equalled, and the body and the glaze of this time are also specially beautiful.

Amongst well-known flower designs in underglaze blue, the aster is perhaps the most easily recognised. (Plate VII.) The blue used is of a deep sapphire shading to black, the pattern is treated conventionally, and the number of asters varies. Generally there are five in the centre, upon a background of small designs in dark blue, with sixteen or eighteen flowers and leaves radiating up the rim on the inside and outside of the dish or plate; but the pattern varies as to the number of the flowers and arrangement, according to the shape of the piece. The lotus is also generally painted in a grey shade of blue; this can best be noticed when it is compared with the iris, which will usually be found to be of a brighter, deeper hue. The lotus can be recognised by its seed vessel seen in the centre of the flower, and which resembles that of the poppy. There are several variations of this flower, one of which is spoken of in the trade as the "tiger lily." Sometimes the lotus, with its leaves and stem, is used alone, but it is more often met with in association with the chrysanthemum,

pæony, prunus, rose, cherry- and peach-blossom. Flowers are, as a rule, treated conventionally, and are rarely met with painted naturally, but on some fine specimens they are found painted in this way with grasses, dragon-flies, and butterflies. When treated conventionally, they are often found in panels, the alternative ones being occupied with figures or devices. One might almost say that thousands of flower designs are found upon blue and white porcelain, and there seems no end to the variety of ways in which a single flower may be treated, so great was the artistic sense and inventive genius of the artist. A pretty design, met with generally on porcelain of very good quality, is a basket, with high handle, containing flowers, or flowers and fruit (Plate VIII.) in the centre of a dish, plate, or panel, surrounded by a conventional or diaper border.

The flower, however, which is most often met with, is the "hawthorn" or "prunus blossom," and it is seen on pieces of every description, but the pattern is most generally associated in the mind of the collector with the celebrated hawthorn "ginger jars." To these, particular attention has been attracted by the sale of the Huth Collection (May, 1905),

PLATE XVII



PLATE XIV

UNDERGLAZE BLUE

PART OF A "NANKIN" TEA SERVICE, underglaze blue. Slightly fluted with gilt edges, the twisted handles terminate in flowers and leaves moulded in relief and gilt. The landscape designs are surrounded by elaborate borders in diaper and other patterns, and the cup and saucer have an inner border of tassel design.

Late 18th century.

when the jar or oviform vase (Plate VI.) was sold for the large sum of 5,900 guineas. This, it is said, had been bought some years previously by a gentleman, who discovered it in a bric-à-brac shop, and purchased it for 12s. 6d., the new owner in turn selling it to Mr. Huth for £25.¹ According to expert opinion, expressed *before* the sale, it was expected to realise £2,000. It is almost impossible to express in writing the beauties of this vase; it has all the subtle charm of the very finest Chinese porcelain; the lovely lapis lazuli blue of the ground, with its soft melting glaze, gives it the appearance of having just been taken out of water. The pattern of prunus blossoms which covers it are reserves of brilliant white, which stand out with wonderful clearness on a background resembling cracked blue ice, the effect being produced by darker lines on the blue ground, giving a wonderful depth, the beauty of which is indescribable.

This particular vase is considered to be the finest specimen of blue and white ever produced, which is saying a good deal, for these so-called "ginger jars" have been the admiration and ambition of collectors for many years,

¹ An interesting account of this transaction will be found in *The Connoisseur* for July, 1905, p. 200.

owing to their great beauty. In an address to the Pekin Oriental Society in 1886, Dr. Bushell mentions "four Ginger Pots" of the so-called Hawthorn pattern, which were sold for 2,000 guineas. The pattern is said to derive its origin from the fact that in some parts of China, in the beginning of the year, fallen prunus blossom (which, like our blackthorn, is a herald of spring) may be found lying on the frozen surface of rivers and streams. This is an example of the way in which the Chinese looked to nature for designs to decorate their porcelain.

Hawthorn "ginger jars" were made to contain gifts for the New Year. Needless to say, they have been much copied in recent years. Concerning the copies Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse says: "In the later imitations of this wonderful blue, the colour has a violet tinge, due, no doubt, to the imperfect separation of the cobalt from the manganese." And he adds: "One of the 'points' of the best of the 'hawthorn jars' of the K'ang-hsi period is that the lip is unglazed on the outer, and only partially glazed on the inner, side."

The prunus blossom and other flowers are not always carried out as blue upon white;

indeed, in the "ginger jars" it is generally white upon blue; the ground is often blue, with white flowers as reserves or enamelled upon it, and this may equally be found in other patterns, where a background of white will have a pattern in blue; sometimes a darker shade will be used upon this, making a combination of blue upon blue. Another variation is obtained by painting on a white background a design in dark blue, upon which another is executed in white. Sometimes the petals and stalks of flowers are accentuated by being moulded in slight relief against a blue background.

A well-known pattern found in underglaze blue is called the "Long Elizas," a name derived from the Dutch "Lange Eleizen." (Plate IX.) This consists of tall, graceful female figures, which are often found on large vases in panels outlined with lines of blue, every alternate panel being occupied with a vase containing flowering plants on a stand. "Long Elizas" are also met with on plates, dishes, bowls, and cups and saucers, both in underglaze blue and enamelled in colours over the glaze. Some pieces so ornamented in underglaze blue, especially small plates, will be

found to have a design on the back of the rim, of emblems and symbols.¹ These are generally very desirable pieces, the body and the colour of the blue both being of excellent quality. These graceful ladies are also depicted as accompanied by children, and are seen engaged in domestic pursuits and gathering and watering flowers.

Other figures found on blue and white porcelain are those of the Emperor and Empress seated on thrones, with attendants and horses waiting at the door; figures of mandarins and warriors, with background of landscape or interior; figures also of horsemen, hunters on horseback engaged in the chase, battle scenes, fishermen, musicians, writers, ladies, and children. A well-known hunting design is the "Love Chase," being a lady and gentleman on horseback, with bows and arrows and a ball on a string, chasing a hare; sometimes the arrow has hit the hare; the lady has a hawk on her wrist. The pattern varies somewhat, and pieces so decorated are generally desirable. (Plate XI.)

Of animals, the spotted deer, squirrels (generally found on grape vines), monkeys (climbing

¹ See "Marks."

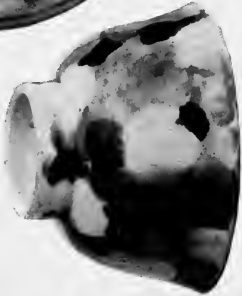
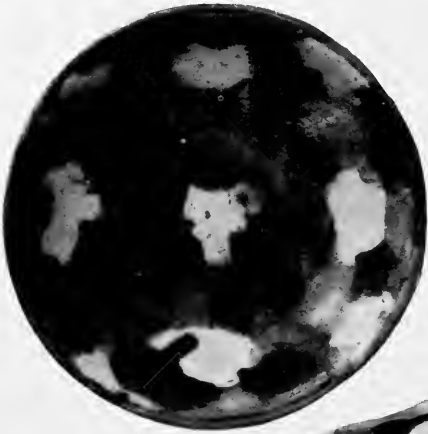


PLATE XV

FAMILLE VERTE "THREE" COLOUR

CUP AND SAUCER, decorated in blotches of brilliant enamel in green, yellow, and mauve brown, with white reserves, called "Tiger Spotted."⁹ Inside the cup is a landscape design in underglaze blue.

Period, K'ang-hsi

CUP OF "FAMILLE VERTE," having a ground of brilliant green lined with black. Waves and five petal flowers as white reserves outlined with black. The "Pearl," the "Leaf," and a lozenge-shaped symbol in yellow with mauve brown fillets.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

trees), the elephant (often seen with a man on his back), tigers, hares, and dogs are most frequently met with. Of birds, the feng-huang or phoenix, cranes, storks, crested pheasant, quail, and small birds, are often seen; whilst amongst insects, bees, flies, dragon-flies, butterflies, and grasshoppers are found.

Of fabulous animals, the horses of King Muh-wang,¹ the sea-serpent, the kylin, and the dragon, are most frequently seen, the last of these being the oldest and best-known design found on Chinese blue and white. This weird and dreadful-looking monster is found on bowls, where the body and lower part is coiled round the outside and the head and shoulders decorate the inside; it is found in pairs, or as several forming an arch; he may be seen chasing a ball through the clouds (as in Plate No. XX.) or standing on the floor of the sea, surrounded by shells, rocks, and seaweed; of which the border frequently represents crested waves. (See Illustration No. 2, Plate X.)

The blue dragon porcelain of the K'ang-hsi period is most desirable; it can be distinguished by the clear blue of the dragon, sometimes almost sapphire in shade, and at other times

¹ See "Fabulous Animals."

lighter, but always pure. The paste is whiter than the Ming body, the glaze has a beautifully soft appearance, and the details—such as scales and claws—are much more finished. The amateur who cannot distinguish between the English and Chinese body must not confound this blue dragon porcelain with the Salopian (or Broseley) and Worcester dragon china; the colour is generally quite different from that used in our English factories for this particular design, which is a periwinkle blue—a shade not met with in Chinese blue and white; but at Worcester the deep blue of the Chinese was exactly copied in some tea services; and these can only be identified by the paste and glaze.

Of fish, the salmon and carp are most frequently met with; sometimes the salmon is represented fighting with a dragon. Crabs, eels, and other marine animals, shells, and seaweed, will often be seen together, and these, as I said before, are sometimes arranged to represent the floor of the sea.

All the fabulous animals, mystic personages, and ceremonial scenes, are found on blue and white porcelain, and can easily be recognised by the collector who has studied the chapter on "Mythical Personages." These scenes are

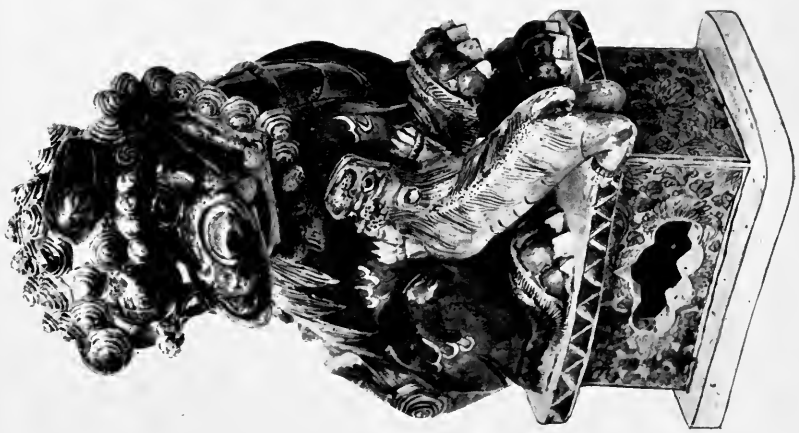


PLATE XVI

THREE COLOUR

LIONESS OF KOREA (Dog of Fo). Head and body of brilliant green enamel, with gray mane and tail and yellow protuberances. On the thigh, side, and shoulder, conventional white flame forms. The kindly beast, seated on a rectangular, perforated stand, is playing with its yellow cub. The vertical sides of the stand decorated with a formal green and gray chrysanthemum pattern on a yellow ground. Encircling the top triangle, draper in green and black. In the middle of the forehead the sacred axe—the emblem of happiness.

Height, 11 in.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

SIMILAR FIGURE, representing the Lion of Korea, a perforated yellow ball substituted for the cub.

From Messrs. Duveen Brothers' Galleries.

said to have been copied by the porcelain painters from old and valuable pictures, the work of celebrated artists, and form some of the best subjects on blue and white.

Interiors and domestic scenes are, however, the most interesting; they seem to take us right into the life of the people, or rather perhaps into a fairyland peopled with graceful ladies and happy children, flowering trees and tempting rocks, a land of sunlight and blue atmosphere, that "land before perspective" of Charles Lamb, whose charm will never fail. Landscapes are equally charming, with their mountains, seas and islands, rivers, with boats and fisherfolk, rocks and bridges, on which may be seen mandarins or other figures, trees, flowering shrubs, and bamboos in endless and interesting variety. Sometimes landscapes form the background in figure pieces, and at others they are the sole design. Another form of decoration is that in which trees alone are used; the fir tree will be frequently found as the centre *motif* in some fine plates with little other decoration except a border. (Plate VIII.)

A conventional design known as the "Ogre" pattern was copied from old bronzes; it forms patches of blue on a white ground, and in the

centre of the design can be seen hideous faces and the eye of the "ogre." Very beautiful vases have arabesque designs as sole ornament, which are arranged to point downwards from the neck and upwards from the base, and are sometimes shaped like a leaf, whilst at others they are of Jooe-head outline. These designs of conventional flowers, arabesques, and many others, are too numerous to mention, and they seem to have generally been applied to fine pieces of porcelain. Borders also, with their thousands of minute diapers, vandykes, daggers, arabesques, their conventional flowers and symbols, are too profuse to specify. Some fine plates, however, will be found, in which emblems¹ appear in the border. The butterfly also, naturally or conventionally treated, is often seen in the border of a specially choice example of fine blue and white.

Another variety of underglaze blue is the powdered blue. (Plate III.) In this particular form of decoration the colour was blown on to the white body through a tube covered with gauze, and it formed a granular-looking covering of minute particles in a steel shade of blue.

¹ By this I mean those emblems which may also be found as marks, and which may be seen amongst "Marks."

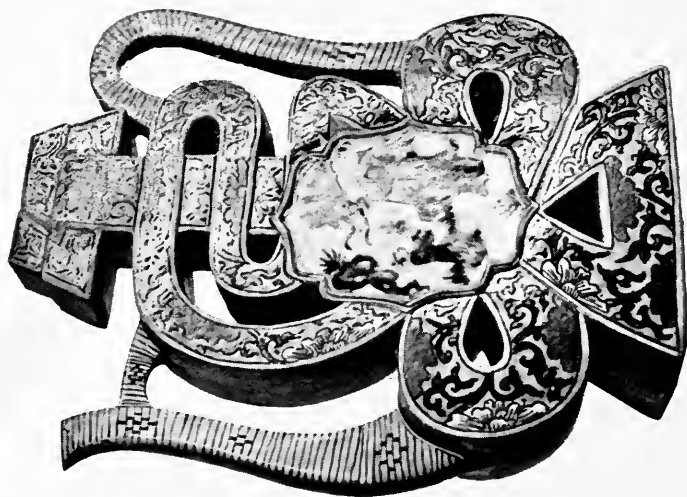


PLATE XVII

1. WINE POT modelled in the form of the Chinese character *Fu* (happiness). The handle and spout are painted yellow and are lined in black to represent wickerwork. The green ground is stippled with black, on which are detached groups of prunus blossom slightly coloured with overglaze blue. On either side is an oblong panel dentated at the corners and painted with a Taoist legend, the one shewn represents the Emperor Wu Ti of the Han Dynasty, over whom an attendant holds a banner, whilst another attendant offers him a deer on a dish.

Height. $9\frac{1}{8}$ in.

2. WINE POT modelled in the form of the Chinese character *Shou* (longevity). The handle and spout painted yellow and lined in black to represent wicker-work. On the sides are scrolls of conventional pæonies and foliage, which surround foliated panels in which are painted on a biscuit surface Taoist scenes in green, blue and yellow, the one shown represents an attendant offering fruit to an emperor.

Height. $9\frac{1}{8}$ in.

From the Salting Collection at South Kensington.

As a rule, the body is covered entirely, with the exception of white reserves, which are sometimes fan-shaped; these are either decorated underglaze in blue, or overglaze with flowers and other designs in coloured enamels. Sometimes the body is entirely covered with blue, over which a pattern is painted in gold. Sets of vases and beakers in good, rich powdered blue are much sought after; they were copied at Worcester and other English and foreign factories; those made at Worcester can be recognised by the amateur, if he examines the base, where the glaze will be found to have shrunk from the rim at the bottom, so that it does not go into the angles. Specimens of porcelain decorated underglaze in any pattern on white in the powdered blue shade are also much sought after.

Pierced blue and white of the K'ang-hsi period is very charming, the design showing through an outer covering of lattice-work. Plate XII. shows some fine specimens of this description. It is, however, another kind of porcelain, which has been copied of late; but modern pieces lack the finish and good shape which characterises older examples.

OTHER COLOURS USED UNDER THE GLAZE

SEVERAL colours were used under the glaze as well as blue, but they are not so frequently met with, nor are pieces so decorated as artistic as the blue and white. These colours are red, peach-colour, and a brownish red. Yellow is more uncommon, but is also sometimes found, and this colour and brown may be seen as ground colours, on which are painted (underglaze) flowers and branches of trees, with birds in low relief. (Plate XIII.) The dragon and kylin generally in a red brown colour, and fishes in red or spotted blue, also occur, as well as landscapes. Of flowers, the pæony and lotus are most usually seen, and these are generally arranged conventionally like the aster (Plate VII.), in blue and brown.

PLATE XVIII

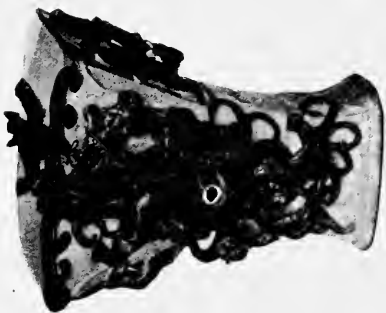


PLATE XVIII

Rare and very fine example of "Famille Verte" TEA-POT, moulded and coloured to represent bamboo, and brilliantly painted in enamel colours with flowers and birds.

Period, Early K'ang-hsi.

An octagon "Famille Verte" GOBLET on a foot, the panel, brilliantly painted in enamel colours with rocks, flowers, foliage birds, and insects on a white ground.

Height, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

VASE modelled as a four-sided Beaker with an archaic band round the waist, dentated bats projecting from the sides; above and below the waist are stiff projecting leaves; there are also nine dragons in undercut relief, painted in delicate enamel colours.

Height, 4 in.

Period, Ch'ien-lung.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.

BLUE AND WHITE "NANKIN" SERVICES

DURING the reign of K'ang-hsi a considerable trade in porcelain was carried on between China and Europe, at first through Holland, where the blue and white was largely copied in delft ware. As far as design goes, these fine delft copies are far more likely to deceive the amateur than any others, unless he bear in mind that Chinese porcelain is translucent, and is colder to the touch than stone or earthenware, however fine. It was at this period that the Chinese realised that for the European markets other shapes must be adopted than those which were in use in their own country, and they began to make plates with rims for salt and mustard, vegetable-dishes, sauce-boats, tureens, salt-cellars, cups with handles, and covered milk-jugs—articles hitherto unknown to the Oriental. The collector will therefore know when he meets these

articles in Chinese porcelain that they do not date back to a period anterior to 1690, and they may have been made as late as the end of the eighteenth, or in the early years of the nineteenth, century. Older plates were always saucer-shaped, and cups did not have handles.

These dinner- and tea-services are generally spoken of as "Nankin" china, though there is no evidence of their having been made there. They are as a rule not sought after by collectors, though they are useful for decorative purposes; but as services for use they are most desirable.¹

The body of this blue and white is thicker and heavier than any other. Teapots, covered milk-jugs, and cups and saucers, are often fluted, and the handles in the tea-services are twisted like basket-work, ending in floral designs (Plate XIV.); sometimes gold bands, or a "key" pattern, are found over the blue decoration on the inside of cups and saucers, and these are not considered so old as the plain blue and white. Coffee-cups are higher and narrower than the teacups, and have handles. On soup-tureens and vegetable-dishes animals

¹ Since writing this it has become the habit of the trade to describe all blue and white Chinese porcelain as "Nankin."

PLATE XIX



PLATE XIX

FAMILLE VERTE

PAIR OF "FAMILLE VERTE" BOWLS, finely engraved with five-clawed dragons, over which are painted in brilliant enamel colours the rose and other flowers through which the dragons can be distinguished.

Diameter, 6 in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.

and masks will be found as handles ; they are very heavy, and the body of all this " Nankin " china is a blue white, the decoration being generally a medium shade of blue. The pattern most frequently met with is the " Willow," of which there are many variations. This pattern is the one which furnished the English factories with the design from which the celebrated " Willow pattern " was taken ; and another well-known variety of " Nankin " blue,, made for the European market, is the " onion ' or Danish pattern, so called from its having been copied in Denmark in recent years.

ENAMELLED IN COLOURS OVERGLAZE

PORCELAIN which is painted or enamelled in colours over the glaze is often spoken of as being decorated in "vitreous enamels"; the reason for this is that many of these enamel colours have, as the name implies, a very glassy appearance, and they stand out from the body, emphasising this in a way that is not seen in the enamels used in European factories.

Overglaze enamelling did not come into general use till the Ch'ing dynasty, though it was certainly used during the latter periods of the Mings, and it reached perfection during the reign of Ch'ien-lung (1735-96). Until the reign of K'ang-hsi (1661-1722) it is certain that blue was always used *under* the glaze,¹

¹ Since this was written it has been clearly proved that blue as an overglaze enamel is sometimes met with upon Ming porcelain. The colour, however, is dull, heavy, and slatey, and lacks the vitreous appearance of the later blue enamel.



PLATE XX

FIVE COLOUR "FAMILLE VERTE"

TWO BOWLS of exceptionally fine quality, the first decorated with two red four-clawed dragons (Lung of the Sky) chasing a golden ball through red, green and blue clouds. Famille Verte border with diaper pattern in black and ovals in mauvy brown with a design in black traced upon them. This border is divided by white reserves containing shells and aquatic animals. On the inside is a band of sexagonal-shaped rice diaper divided by four reserves in which are painted "The book, the chess board, the scroll picture, and the lyre," representing the "four elegant accomplishments of the Chinese scholar." In the bottom of the bowl is a crab in mauvy brown.

Height, 4 in. Diameter, $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

THE SECOND BOWL is also a "five colour" piece with conventional flowers, in red with green centre, yellow outlined in green with red centre, and green with mauvy brown centre; leaves of a rich cucumber green. Mark, lozenge-shaped symbol with fillets (Fig. 26) within a double circle.

Height, $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. Diameter, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

Two bowls from Mrs. Hugh Verrall's Collection.

and, as I have already pointed out, other colours were sometimes employed with it in underglaze decoration; but even after blue became common as an overglaze enamel it was still frequently used underglaze in pieces decorated with other colours in overglaze.

A saucer in my possession (Plate X.) bears the somewhat rare K'ang-hsi, six marks enclosed in a double circle. The centre of this saucer is occupied by a five-clawed dragon (Li) of the sea, surrounded by shells and seaweed, and enclosed in a double circle all outlined in blue underglaze, and enamelled in red, green, yellow, and mauvy-brown overglaze. On the back are crested waves outlined in blue under the glaze, over which is a brilliant green enamel and five red bats, emblems of happiness.

In the British Museum is a large vase with the mark of the Wan-li period (1573-1620) on the rim of the neck. It is decorated in a more or less conventional design of flowers and leaves, five-clawed dragons, and phœnixes. The colours are blue underglaze, a rich deep blood-red enamel, and a little yellow or gold overglaze. The potting and painting of this piece is somewhat rough, but the red is deep

and brilliant. Other smaller pieces (labelled "Ming") are also to be seen in the Franks Collection. The decoration of these is somewhat similar, with the addition of dark green. The attraction of these pieces lies in their rich distinctive colouring, which arrests attention and calls forth admiration in spite of defects in body and painting.

During the Ming dynasty we first hear of "three-colour" and "five-colour" decoration, though such pieces are still manufactured. The "three colours" are yellow (which is often of a bright gamboge shade, but is sometimes quite pale), a bright green, and a colour which has been variously described as "mouse," "brown," and "mauve." It is really a mixture of colours, and I think a mauvy brown is the best description. As a rule, the yellow predominates, and is often used as a ground colour. These "three colours" are frequently met with on pieces of which they form the sole decoration, laid on in irregular patches;¹ but sometimes on these specimens a dragon or some other device will be found incised in the paste under the enamels. I have a cup and saucer of this kind (called by Mr. Cosmo

¹ Known to the modern collector as "spinach and eggs."

Monkhouse "tiger-spotted"), and the inside of the cup, which is white, is decorated with a design in underglaze blue. (Plate XV.)

To the "three colours" are added blue and red in the "five colours," and the older pieces may be known by the blue being under the glaze. Later on, a blue enamel was used over glaze, and on many specimens this takes the form of a blue rock, from which flowers and foliage spring, or on which may be seated some figure or animal. The shade of this blue enamel, however, is paler than those generally used under the glaze, being of a delicate periwinkle tone.

The "three" and "five" colours will often be found on statuettes and groups washed on in patches, as will be seen in the Lion and Lioness of Korea. (Plate XVI.)

A fine vase with yellow ground, enamelled with flowers and leaves in red, green, and mauvy brown, springing from a blue rock, may be seen in the Salting Collection at the South Kensington Museum. Indeed, there is a case full of vases decorated in these colours.

In addition to statuettes and groups, wine-pots of various shapes and designs are enamelled in "three" and "five" colours.

Sometimes these vessels are supported by a lion with a carved open-work ball, and at others they take the form of some Chinese character or letter, the word "Fuh" (happiness) or "Shou" (longevity) being favourite forms. (Plate XVII.) Teapots of bamboo design have generally a pale yellow ground, on which are enamelled sprays of small flowers in colours (Plate XVIII., No. 1), and kettles with up-standing handles lined in black to represent wicker-work, are very desirable; these also have generally a yellow ground, ornamented with coloured flowers and devices.¹

When green predominates in the decoration of "three-" and "five"-colour pieces, they are classed as belonging to the green family, or "famille verte," and Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse suggests that to this we might very well add a yellow or "famille jaune," as in many pieces the yellow colour is most prevalent. Although in the "three" and "five" colours the body is often found to be entirely covered, there is an equally large class in which these colours are used together on a white ground, as flowers and conventional or figure designs. Plate XIX.

¹ Bamboo teapots and kettles and the wine pots (Illus. XVII.) belong to the class known as enamelled *sur biscuit*. See p. 175.



PLATE XXI

FAMILLE VERTE

A CYLINDRICAL VASE, painted in brilliant enamels with rocks, trees, birds, and prunus blossom. Round the shoulders is a diaper pattern border enclosing panels containing emblems.

Height, 10 in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

FAMILLE VERTE CYLINDRICAL VASE of exceedingly fine quality. Two large panels painted in rich enamel colours with fishes, prawns, aquatic plants, and sea-weed. Four small panels containing butterflies, insects, and a cock, on a ground painted with a design of chrysanthemums and small flowers. At the base and on the shoulders is a band of diaper pattern divided by panels painted with emblems: these are repeated at the top of the neck, round the centre of which is a conventional scroll design.

Height, 18 in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.

shows some charming specimens of this kind from Mr. Trapnell's Collection, and in Case 66 at the British Museum can also be seen some similar pieces. They are of fine white porcelain, and have dragons incised in the paste, over which are painted roses, foliage, and butterflies in yellow, green, and mauve brown. Vases with arabesque designs pointing upward from the base and downwards from the shoulders and neck, with or without other decoration, are very handsome, and a conventional flower or wheel pattern, with green leaves and flowers in five colours, as seen on the bowl, Plate XX., are much sought after.

FAMILLE VERTE

FAMILLE NOIRE—CORAL RED

TO attempt to describe even a tithe of the many specimens which belong to this large and interesting family would be beyond the scope of any small volume. The name has been bestowed, like those of "Famille noire," and "Famille rose," in order that some kind of classification should be possible amongst thousands of specimens which were for the most part the production of the same periods.

Green is the prevailing tone of this family, whether it be that this colour stands forth as the most distinctive amongst flower or conventional decoration, or forms a complete covering to any specimen. The shade of green, however, is all important, for there are greens and greens. A washed-out yellowy shade, however prevalent, does not make a piece so decorated valuable, nor does a dull blue shade or a dirty brown. The green *par excellence* must be brilliant, iridescent, and clear, and what I should describe as cucumber, or camellia-leaf green.



PLATE XXII

BLACK

BLACK BEAKER-SHAPED VASE, with oviform body covered with a thin green glaze, decorated with a tall tree of quelder rose with white blossom : shorter trees of grey and white ruyou and white magnolia growing from green rocks at base. on the highest rock a yellow-breasted green and gray bird, with a white head of the pheasant tribe, is calling to its mate perched behind another rock lower down. On the shoulder of the vase two pairs of yellow finches in mid-air.

Period, K'ang-hsi.

Height, 2 ft. 3 in.

From Messrs. Duran Brothers' Galleries.

When used as a ground colour, green will very frequently be found to be decorated with designs in black; these are for the most part conventional, but they often take the form of dragons, phœnixes, and other animals finely incised in the paste, and etched in with black. Another well-known design is one in which the waves of the sea are represented by fine black lines on the green ground. Plate XV., No. 3, shows a cup in which reserves of white take the form of crested waves, outlined with black, and emblems in pale yellow and mauve brown are found on a brilliant green background, covered with black lines. Very beautiful "Famille verte" vases are painted with flowers and foliage naturalistically treated with birds and insects in the "three" and "five" colours, and the prunus blossom will frequently be found treated as white reserves, with veined petals, which gives a most charming effect to such specimens. Sacred and other symbols and emblems are often found as *motifs* introduced into the decoration in the "Famille verte" class, especially in "three-colour" pieces, as seen round the necks of vases. (Plate XXI.) They are generally found to be enamelled yellow and mouse colour, or as white reserves, and

specimens so ornamented are always desirable, such decoration being generally applied to fine porcelain, with the added interest that each symbol has a meaning which may be read by the owner. Other specimens have an entire scheme of decoration, carried out in green diaper, with the Swastika in each diaper, and Longevity and sacred symbols enamelled in other colours.

Amongst the flowers used in "Famille verte" decoration, the prunus is perhaps most frequently met with, but the pæony also takes a prominent place, for which lovely shades of pink and yellow enamel are used. The lotus, chrysanthemum, and almond, are also prevalent. Of animals, horses, lions, and kylins may be found. Storks, cranes, the phœnix, and smaller birds; also dragons, fishes, crabs, and shells. Figures are also met with, generally of ladies of the "long Eliza" type, and children, but mythical and other persons are also met with. The background may be the white porcelain, with "three-" or "five"-colour schemes of decoration, powdered blue with white reserves enamelled in colours, red or yellow; but whatever it is, if the prevailing tone of the decoration be the brilliant camellia, or cucumber green, the piece so decorated belongs to the "Famille verte" class.



PLATE XXIII

BLACK

LARGE BLACK OVIFORM JAR covered with an almost entirely green glaze, with incurved neck and slightly spreading mouth. The body decorated with four trees of gray-trunked hawthorn (so-called hawthorn), with red and white blossom growing from the branches at the foot of green rocks at the base. On the main branch of each a blue-backed, black-headed, gray and white bird. The neck decorated on a white ground with red, green, and blue diamond rice diaper studded with yellow, the lower portion at the bottom with narrow bands of blue and white, and at the top with a band of blue and white. Within the neck are six slanted white reserves, edged with red, containing single red and yellow, and red and blue chrysanthemum. Above these a band of pale yellow Joee-head ornament, outlined at the top with narrow bands of blue, and edged at the bottom with a thin band of red. The Joee-head-shaped reserves are decorated with alternate single yellow and double gray chrysanthemum.

Height, 1 ft. 6 in.

Period, Yung Ch'eng.

From the collection of the Dutton Brothers' Galleries.

Some magnificent vases which have a black background (Plate XXII) are classed as "Famille verte" from the fact that the background is entirely washed over with a thin iridescent green enamel, and that this colour is most prominent in the decoration. These are painted with flowers and leaves, branches, peaches, insects, and birds, and the effect is heightened and enhanced by the white reserves which take the form of flowers, or even, in some cases, gnarled branches, lined and shaded in black and grey.

Cups, saucers, and bowls with backgrounds of black, washed over with green enamel, are noticeable, not only for the bright green which forms so large a part in the decoration, but also by a brilliant shade of pink which is used in the flowers. This "black-green" porcelain is greatly in evidence in our National and other fine collections, but is not often met with in smaller ones. It is very valuable, and much sought after. Some of the finest pieces are ornamented with figures of the Eight Immortals, Si Wang Mu, and others, mystics, also with landscapes, birds (including the cock), beetles, and other insects, and the flower designs are treated both naturally and as running borders. Some pieces are decorated

entirely in white on the black background; these are even rarer than those decorated in colours, and they are often covered with a design of white prunus blossoms and branches, or with chrysanthemums.

Specimens of "Famille verte," including "three-" and "five"-colour pieces, date back to the middle of the Ming dynasty; these may be known by the rougher potting and by their less finished appearance, as well as by the blue being usually under the glaze. During the reign of K'ang-hsi "Famille verte" was at its best, but later pieces made during the reigns of Yung-chên and Ch'ien-lung, though desirable, are lacking in the vigour which marks earlier specimens, and the more chalky body which came into vogue does not form so good a background to these brilliant colours as its more vitreous forerunner.

During the K'ang-hsi period a form of decoration which is known as *po-ku*, "The hundred antiques," came into vogue. (Plate XXIV.) The surface of vases was covered with designs of fruit, emblems, symbols, vases in imitation of bronze and porcelain containing flowers and peacocks' feathers, incense-burners, pieces of coral, screens, and many other articles,



PLATE XXIV

BEAKER-SHAPED VASE, with bulbous body. Decorated in *Green Family* enamel colours, red sparingly introduced, ornamented with the "Hundred Antiques" (known as *po ku*). In the centre a high vase with four peacock feathers and piece of coral. On the neck another vase with two feathers, the emblems of officialdom. Encircling the neck a band in flowered diamond diaper, intercepted by four small reserves decorated with emblems. The body of the vase decorated with a folding and another screen, forming two reserves decorated with figure subjects, one an episode in the life of an official, and the other with a Feng-huang on a green rock, gazing upon a rising red sun. Encircling the base a diaper of formal wave pattern with prunus blossom.

Height, 29 in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Messrs. Duveen Brothers' Galleries.

PLATE XXV

CORAL RED GROUND

CYLINDRICAL JAR, with receding neck and spreading lid with knob. The body decorated with formal scroll and leaf pattern, with a double band of conventional white lotus. The shoulder and base decorated with a broad band of Joee-shaped reserves, bordered alternately with narrow bands of blue and gray edged with green. The smaller space between edged with a paler green. Red reserves so formed decorated with conventional chrysanthemums with brilliant green leaves. On the shoulder above, four circular, green-edged, white medallions, and four oval, green-edged, red spaces ornamented with chrysanthemum flowers. At the base, a narrow band of green and red diamond rice diaper on a white ground. The neck decorated with two shaped oval red medallions, edged with gray on a speckled green ground powdered with red chrysanthemum. The reserve decorated with coiled white fire dragons among white fire-forms on a red ground. Above and below this decoration, narrow bands of scroll and flower diaper patterns. Lid with a slightly decorated white knob, ornamented with similar pattern to that on the shoulder of the vase.

Height, 21 in.
Period, K'ang-hsi.

From Messrs. Duveen Brothers' Galleries.



and round the shoulders at the base of the neck, in medallions, may also be found the chess-board, scroll-picture, a book and the lyre, these last representing the "four elegant accomplishments of a Chinese scholar."

Coral red as a ground colour was also introduced, and very lovely it is, even when used sparingly in a scheme of decoration in which it sometimes forms *motifs* in conventional designs on a white background. The right shade of coral red, clear and pure, with no tinge of pink or mauve about it, is generally found on fine specimens, and when it forms a complete background on large vases, the effect is very pleasing and handsome. Such a vase is illustrated on Plate XXV. The conventional lotus pattern in white, and the introduction of a little blue, grey, and brilliant green, makes the colour scheme a most charming one, and the paste, potting, and painting, are of the highest order.

FAMILLE ROSE

DURING the eighteenth century, but at a time which has not been accurately defined, the reds and pinks derived from gold were first used. This may have been as early as the latter years of the reign of K'ang-hsi, but it was during the Ch'ien-lung period that these colours formed a distinctive note in the decoration of porcelain, and led to their being classified under the name of "Famille rose."

The Emperor Ch'ien-lung was an artistic soul and a poet, whose works were published in 360 volumes; he interested himself greatly in the encouragement of ceramic art, and whereas his father, Yung-chên, had made a speciality of copying old forms and the single-glaze decoration, Ch'ien-lung added to these many new forms and colours. In this he was most ably assisted by his superintendent, Tang-ying. This man had taken the place of Nien, who became superintendent of King-tê-chên during the latter years of K'ang-hsi, but who had



PLATE XXVI

FAMILLE ROSE

FAMILLE ROSE PLATE, of fine quality. Border of pale blue and pale pink enamel connected by smaller panels in yellow and with diaper patterns outlined in fine black lines. On the pink border are butterflies in white enamel beautifully painted in colours, and on the blue are pæonies in brilliant rose colour shading to shell pink. Sprays of pæonies and other flowers in the centre, with a pair of love birds on a branch and three large leaves in brown enamel veined in gold.

Diameter, $9\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

PLATE OF FAMILLE ROSE edged with a border of green and pink with diaper patterns pencilled in brown and red and divided by panels of pink, mauve, and blue flowers. Sprays of flowers and leaves in opaque white enamel on the rim. In the centre are peacocks, pæonies, and other flowers in green, pink, mauve, yellow, and blue, surrounded by a border in Joee-head design in brilliant yellow.

Diameter, $9\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

From Mrs. Hugh Verrall's Collection.

resigned his appointment after the Emperor Yung-chên "had flown up to Heaven like a dragon." To Tang-ying is due much of the perfection to which the art attained in the reign of Ch'ien-lung. Although a member of a family who, as he himself says, "for generations shared the Imperial favour," he became a common workman, taking his meals and even sleeping in the workmen's quarters in order that he might perfect himself in all branches of the art. He tells, also, how he received orders from the Emperor that at the works "funds should not be wasted nor the workmen's labour unrecompensed."

The Emperor Ch'ien-lung had discovered amongst ancient documents twenty water-colour paintings, illustrative of the process of porcelain manufacture. These he handed to Tang-ying, with the command that he should write from them an account of the process. Dr. Bushell has translated these, and some of them are most illuminating as to the sources from which the Chinese derived their inspirations. Thus: "In the decoration of porcelain, correct canons of art should be followed. The designs should be taken from the patterns of old brocades and embroidery; the colours from a

garden, as seen in springtime from a pavilion. . . . The elements of nature supply an inexhaustible fund of materials for new combinations of supernatural beauty. . . . The materials of the potter's art are derived from forests and streams, and ornamental themes are supplied by the same natural sources. . . . For painting of flowers and of birds, fishes and water plants, and living objects generally, the study of nature is the first requisite."

"Famille rose" porcelain is that in which a beautiful ruby colour is prevalent in the decoration. This generally takes the form of flowers, of which the pæony is most frequently met with; but the chrysanthemum, lotus, and almost every variety of flowers are also used. In these flower pieces the colour in many shades and half tints may be found, from a deep ruby to the faintest shell pink. The petals are first painted in an opaque white enamel, which is allowed to show through the pink as lights and veining, and the execution is so delicate and realistic on the best pieces that it would be hard to find its equal. (Plate XXVI.) Other flowers and foliage in blue, yellow, red, mauve, and green, are used with the rose-coloured ones, but generally with a view to

PLATE XVIII



PLATE XXVII

PORCELAIN COPIED AT WORCESTER

WINE CUP, enamelled in brilliant colours with figures and interiors.

SAUCER OF CHINESE PORCELAIN, enamelled in colours with ladies and children. vases and stands.

CUP OF WORCESTER CHINA, in exact imitation of saucer.

Ch'ien Lung period.

from Mrs. Hugh Ferrall's Collection.

accentuating these, as they are never so much in evidence. Domestic scenes and interiors were also used as decoration on a fine body. In my possession are a set or nest of five wine-cups, with figures and interiors very finely executed, and on these, where a white background is required, the opaque white enamel is used, where, in older pieces, the white porcelain would have been left as reserves. I believe white enamel as a decoration on white was first used during this period.

The drapery and costumes of these interior and figure pieces are very delicately treated, the enamels including pale turquoise blue, yellow, red, green, and mauve ; but always the rose pink predominates, and the same note is struck in landscape pieces. This kind of porcelain, with figures of ladies and children, vases and tables, or with interiors as a background, was very well copied at Worcester during its best period. Plate XXVII. shows one of the set of five wine-cups decorated with figures and interiors, a saucer of Chinese porcelain, and a cup in exact imitation in Worcester china. Such pieces illustrate the fact that a study of paste and glaze is most necessary to the right understanding of Chinese porcelain.

As in the "green family" so in the "Famille rose," there are good and bad specimens, and this decoration is frequently found on pieces which might be termed vulgar; such specimens, however, are probably of later date than the Ch'ien-lung period, during which technical skill, as applied to both potting and decoration, had reached a very high level. On fine examples, borders will be found to be very elaborate, every kind of scroll, butterfly, diaper, and flower patterns, being introduced. A mere edging to a piece was not sufficient, and these borders are known as "three," "five," and "seven" borders (Plate XXVIII.), and are generally carried out in delicate tints of pink, pale turquoise blue, green, yellow, and mauve on which are often found designs in pencilled lines of black or brown. A border carried out entirely in the petals of the lotus flower is sometimes met with. The petals are large, and have a ground of white enamel; they are shaded from almost white at the edges to a deep carmine pink, and are carefully veined. The centre of such pieces may be undecorated, or contain landscapes, figures, or flowers and foliage.

The lotus petals shading from pale to dark



PLATE XXVIII

RUBY-BACKED EGG-SHELL

DEEP CIRCULAR PLATE, ruby-backed egg-shell porcelain, with flanged rim decorated in brilliant enamel colours, enriched with the decoration known as the *seven borders*. The rim elaborately encircled with a band of black and rose flower diaper on mauve ground, intercepted by four oval white reserves decorated with ruby pæony and other flowers with green leaves. This band of ornament edged on the outside with a narrow band of golden flower-work outlined with black, on the inner side with a band of golden-edged Jooc-head-shaped black Y diaper on a turquoise ground. The slightly curved sides of the plate decorated with a broad band of deep rose colour ornamented with a dragon and scroll leaf pattern on pink intercepted by blue reserves with white flower and leaf ornament. The band itself bordered by a narrow band of black and red formal dragon pattern on yellow, and below, spreading to the bottom of the plate, a band of the same width of flowered star diaper on a turquoise ground. The centre of the plate decorated with a maple leaf-shaped white reserve edged with blue, and bordered with an elaborate green scroll-leaf pattern with rose-coloured rose blossoms (*rosa sinensis*) on a gold ground. The leaf finely decorated in brilliant enamel colours with a domestic scene—a lady of high rank seated close to a blue jar with an elaborate central band of white flowered ornament on a dark blue ground. She is dressed in rich brocades, and is instructing her two children, one of whom holds a sceptre and the other a pink lotus flower. In the background an open-work table, the top of lapis-lazuli, with official and other emblems indicating the elegant accomplishments. The back of the flange and side of the plate a deep ruby colour.

Diameter, $8\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

From Messrs. Duveen Brothers' Galleries.

PLATE XXIX

TEAPOY OF CH' IEN LUNG period, decorated in brilliant enamel colours on a white ground, with a peacock perched on a flowering branch. The cover surmounted by a lion in gold and sprays of enamelled flowers.

Height, $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.

SAUCER of semi egg-shell porcelain, enamelled in colours and gilt, with a flowering tree and five kinds of fruit in a blue dish on a coral red stand.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

TEAPOY with a moulded and gilt design at the base, moulded enamel design above. Decorated with sprays of leaves and grapes in relief, enamelled in colours and gilt, with two red squirrels. A design in gold round the neck and edging the cover.

Height, 6 in.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

PLATE AXIA



pink, with outer petals of green, may also be found somewhat heavily and thickly potted to form basins with covers, and such pieces are enamelled in pale blue on the inside. The base of teapots also are sometimes met with, formed of an open lotus flower in brilliant pink enamel, of which the upper part is slightly fluted and decorated with grapes, leaves, stems, and red squirrels in high relief, as seen in the tea-poy. (Plate XXIX.) This kind of porcelain is sometimes called "mouse china"; the paste is a grey-white, it is heavy and not really artistic, but it is interesting as showing how the Chinese, during the eighteenth century, interpreted European porcelain decorated with flowers and other devices in high relief. I am of opinion that the tiny red squirrels are meant for foxes; they are generally seen upon the vine, and I think it quite possible that they were first used by some convert to Christianity or student of the Bible under the Jesuit Fathers, who wished to give expression to the words, "Little foxes spoil the vines."¹

It is only when such pieces are found to be decorated with a prevailing tone of pink enamel in addition to the raised ornamentation that they are classed as belonging to the rose family.

¹ Cant. ii. 15.

There are many in which this colour is not introduced, and there are other designs in this kind of porcelain besides the vines, which also date from the Ch'ien-lung period.

The best-known device for which pink enamel was used is seen in the beautiful egg-shell porcelain with ruby backs—"ruby-backed china," as it is called. In this the enamel was blown on to the back of the piece by means of a tube covered at the end with silk gauze, and this is the reason of its granular or *soufflé* surface.

All the enamels used on specimens of "Famille rose" and on egg-shell porcelain are the soft enamels of the Muffle Kiln, and the shades used are of the most delicate description. Perhaps this is one reason why there is a lack of tone and character about "Famille rose" decoration when compared with "Famille verte," which has such striking and distinctive characteristics. The perfect harmony and wonderful technical skill becomes almost monotonous in its minute details, and makes one long for a dash of colour, a twist, or curve, to attract the eye from such perfect symmetry. Of the colours used on ruby-backed porcelain, the pale yellow is perhaps most often seen as a ground



PLATE XXX

YELLOW RUBY-BACK EGG-SHELL

PLATE, saucer-shaped, the sides decorated with octagon and square diaper of ruby and green on a brilliant canary ground. The ornament intercepted by three white shaped reserves decorated with ruby and green peony, pink rose, white prunus, and pink Chinese rose. Between, three small circular medallions edged with black and ornamented with formal green scroll dragons. The bottom of the plate decorated with a large circular white reserve edged with a border of square and octagon diaper on mauve green, the border edged with lines of gray. The reserve ornamented with a pair of quails, the cock bird looking up at a brilliantly coloured butterfly. Rose and white chrysanthemum growing near blue rocks in the background. The back of the side ruby colour.

Diameter, $7\frac{7}{8}$ in.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

From Messrs. Duveen Brother's Galleries.

PLATE XXXI

FAMILLE ROSE

A semi-egg-shell "Famille Rose" BOWL decorated with fruit, foliage, and insects, both outside and inside.

4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter.

Period Ch'ien Lung (mark 17, in double circle).

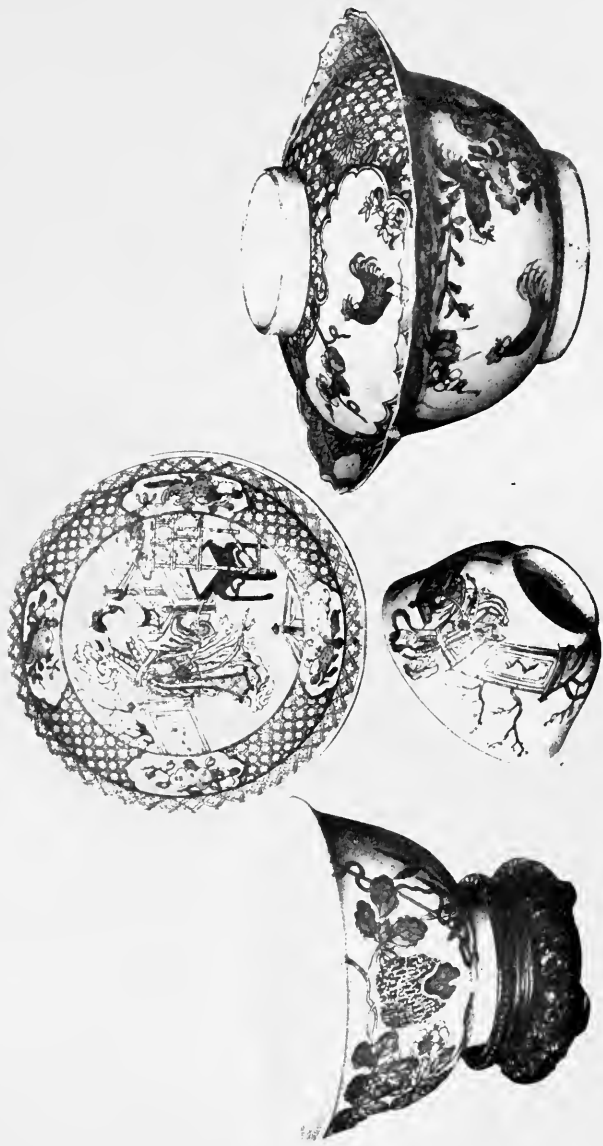
Egg-shell "Famille Rose" BOWL AND COVER with dentated edge, brilliantly painted with cocks pæonies, and rocks in four leaf-panels on a sepia hexagonal diaper pattern ground on which are painted chrysanthemums and pæonies.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

Very fine quality egg-shell CUP AND SAUCER with diaper pattern border divided into panels painted in enamel colours with flowers. In the centre is the interior of a room with the figure of a dancing girl gorgeously appressed and delicately painted in colours and gold. The inside of the cup has a similar border to that round the saucer.

Period Ch'ien Lung. (From the Goncourt Collection.)

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.



colour, on which a minute design in black or brown has been pencilled, and which is frequently used on pieces in which quails are beautifully and realistically painted. (Plate XXX.) Cocks and hens (symbolical of love for country life) are also often met with (Plate XXXI.), and such pieces were originally copied from the "chicken cups" of the Ch'êng-hua period (1464-87), which were so famous, and for which, even in those early days, large prices were given. They are described as painted "with a hen and chickens by the side of a flowering pæony bush."¹

The centre panels or reserves in "ruby-backed" plates are often shaped like maple leaves (see Plate XXVIII.), outlined in colour, on which are painted domestic scenes, ladies in beautiful brocaded robes, with children sometimes depicted as playing with rabbits and other animals. On others the panel is occupied with a landscape, mountains, rocks, and figures, or with rivers, seas, islands, houses, and boats, all beautifully painted; but it is the wonderful borders used with these, and which often cover all but the centre of these saucer-shaped plates, that are perhaps their most interesting feature.

¹ See p 8.

There is a good deal of egg-shell porcelain which is not ruby-backed, and of which the two pieces illustrated on Plate XXXII. are fine examples. For delicacy of colour and fine painting it would be difficult to surpass these two specimens. The attention bestowed on minute details in the fish-plate, the expression on the faces, the scales of the fishes, and the feathers of the birds, are wonderfully lifelike. The other plate is covered with what is known as the Y design, carried out in fine brown lines on a gold ground. It is often met with in the scheme of decoration on egg-shell porcelain.

Those fine vases and beakers with pale pink or rose-hued grounds belong to the rose family. They are very valuable, and are generally ornamented with flowers, blossoms, and foliage, in delicate shades of blue, yellow, purple, and red, with conventional borders and white reserves filled with flowers or landscapes and figures, in which the prevailing tone is ruby pink. Another branch of "Famille rose" is that in which the ground is Powdered or Mazarine blue, with white panels decorated with flowers in coloured enamels, with the pink peony or chrysanthemum much in evidence.

During the reign of Chi'en-lung birds were

PLATE XXXVII



PLATE XXXII

SAUCER-SHAPED PLATE in semi-egg-shell porcelain with diaper border in white and black enamel and gold. Six oval panels containing fish beautifully painted in grey, pink and gold, surrounded by a design in green scale outlined with white enamel. Between the panels are storks and mandarin ducks (emblems of longevity and wedded bliss), an inner border of gold bamboo pattern. The beautifully and minutely painted scene shows three sages in magnificent brocaded robes examining a fish. On a stand in the centre is a blue and white dish, and in the background are a peacock and a flowering tree. Round the plate at the back is a band of diaper pattern in black and white enamel and gold.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

PLATE of semi-egg-shell porcelain in the centre of which is a peacock with tail spread, in enamel colours on a white ground outlined with a border of Joee-head design in pink. Four panels of flowers and birds in colours, the fifth containing a coat of arms. Background of Y design in brown on gold.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

From Mrs. Hugh Verrall's Collection.

more generally introduced into the schemes of decoration than the dragon, though it is also met with; fighting cocks, in various attitudes and colours, sometimes form the sole decoration to some fine examples; quails, which were copied in England at Bow and Chelsea and Worcester, are almost as common, and the peacock, with tail spread or hanging down, is perhaps the most beautifully painted. Some thin cups and saucers, which I have seen, have a peacock standing on a branch of pæony as sole decoration, as seen in the tea-poy. (Plate XXIX.) A form of decoration on desirable porcelain of very fine body has a decoration of flowers and branches in which pink predominates, and a stand on which may be seen a dish of five or seven kinds of fruit enamelled in colours. (Plate XXIX. Fig. B.)

OTHER VARIETIES OF PORCELAIN DECORATED IN COLOURS

OTHER kinds of porcelain, which were not included in the "Familles verte and rose," were produced during the eighteenth century; these include that interesting variety in which the body is cut away in patterns and then glazed over and decorated. The holes seen through the translucent glaze have a charming effect, which is enhanced when the light shines through them. (See Plate XXXIII.)

Some writers have given the name of "Mandarin porcelain" to specimens decorated principally with large groups of figures, with landscapes or interiors as backgrounds. The mandarin always wore a pigtail, and this is not often met with amongst these figures. The scenes depicted are generally those in which mythical personages are introduced, or ceremonies and public functions, and if by the aid





of some record of the mythology of China and of Chinese deities, we can read these scenes, the piece becomes doubly interesting and valuable.

There are three kinds of "Mandarin" porcelain. That which was painted on the best quality will be found to be surrounded by variously shaped panels filled in with fine designs in gold, and divided by smaller panels filled with designs, in pink monochrome, of landscapes or branches and birds. (Plate XXXIV. Fig. B.) The second quality has the larger panels filled with diapers in red and black. Whilst in the third quality the diaper design of the larger panels will be found to be painted in black. "Mandarin china" is also the name given to pieces in which figures may be found on porcelain, with borders of conventional design in a brilliant deep shade of underglaze blue, divided by small panels of landscapes, in bright Indian red overglaze enamel, which colour is repeated in the scenery surrounding the figures, whose costumes are painted in various colours in more vitreous enamels. (Plate XXXIV. Fig. A.)

GRAVIATA OR PEKIN WARE

THIS kind of porcelain is said to have been first made during the latter years of the reign of Ch'ien-lung, but it was revived, and became famous, during the Taou-Kwang period, 1821-1850. The name "Pekin ware" was bestowed upon it because at first it was understood to have been made in that place, but it was afterwards explained that the large collection belonging to the Emperor, and from which he made presents to European visitors, was sent to Peking as tribute.

The decoration in this class of porcelain consists of a background of some brilliant or delicate shade of enamel, over the whole surface of which a pattern is engraved in fine lines, representing fish-scales, circles, or other devices. On this, in some cases, coloured flowers are enamelled, others are decorated with conventional flowers or dragons over the graviata background, and with landscapes



PLATE XXXV

GRAVIATA OR "PEKIN" WARE

A BEAUTIFUL BOWL engraved with designs on a pink enamel ground. Four circular panels contain finely etched landscapes in monochrome. Between the panels are conventional designs of flowers and leaves in raised white enamel.

Chien Lung Mark, but probably of the Taou-Kwang Period.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection

beautifully painted in white reserves. . (Plate XXXV.)

The colours of the ground of graviata porcelain are remarkable for their delicacy. Pale yellow is perhaps the most common, but pink, blue, pale mauve, and a bright crimson, were also used, and a background of white enamel entirely covered with incised lines to represent fish-scales, on which are painted red dragons, is very charming.

Graviata rice bowls are much sought after in China by the Chinese, where a small specimen will fetch as much as £8; the colour most esteemed by native collectors being blue.

FEN-TING, SOFT PASTE PORCELAIN

AS a whole, Chinese porcelain is "hard" paste or "true" porcelain, but there is a small class which is called Fen-ting, and is known as "soft paste." The name Ting-yao, as I have said before, was given to the beautiful white porcelain of the Sung dynasty, which was largely copied during later periods. It is generally ornamented with designs incised in the paste, but a small proportion is decorated in blue, and is covered by a soft lead glaze which is usually crackled.

The paste of Fen-ting (or "flour"-ting) porcelain is no doubt hard, and it is to the soft quality of the glaze that it owes its description as "soft" paste. This porcelain is much sought after by American collectors, and old specimens are greatly in demand in China. These generally date from the reign of K'ang-hsi, though a limited number of older pieces,



PLATE XXXVI

FEN-TING, SOFT PASTE PORCELAIN

A PILGRIM BOTTLE OF FEN-TING or soft paste, with crackled glaze, decorated in "Famille Verte," red and blue. The circular panels on the flat sides of the bottle are each painted with a five-clawed dragon in blue underglaze, and two other dragons—the one in red and the other in green overglaze enamel—decorate the sides beneath the handles.

Height, 8 in.

Period, Ch'ien Lung.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.

showing signs of wear and stains which look like grease-marks under the glaze, are occasionally to be met with. In the British Museum are a set of plates bound with metal, which have an appearance of great age. These are said to date back to the Sung dynasty.¹ Plate XXXVI. shows a beautiful and characteristic piece of Fen-ting made during the Ch'ien-lung period, and decorated in blue under the glaze, and in red and green overglaze.

¹ These bands were no doubt designed to preserve the fragile porcelain, but as the plates were often baked face downwards they served the double purpose of strengthening the piece and hiding the unglazed edge of the rim.

CHINESE PORCELAIN WITH EUROPEAN DESIGNS

THAT very large class of so-called "Lowestoft" porcelain was made in China and decorated in enamels at Canton as early as the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. At first, according to Mr. Dillon,¹ the pieces so decorated were plates or dishes, on which the captains of ships lying in the Canton roads employed native artists to paint pictures of their ships. How this ware should ever have been believed to be English is a mystery, but for many years it was supposed to have been manufactured in this country, and even when this was proved to be a fallacy, there were people who maintained that it was decorated in England. The collector has, however, only to compare carefully any pieces of English porcelain painted over the glaze in colours with a piece of this class

¹ *Porcelain*, by Edward Dillon.

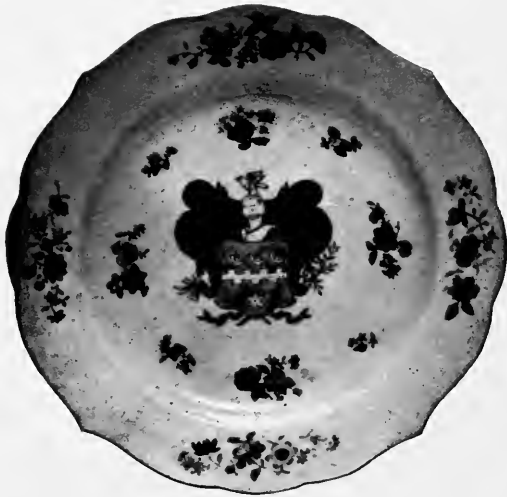
of ware, to see the great difference, both in the treatment of the design and in the enamels used. Take for instance the English rose, as depicted on a piece of Chelsea or Bristol porcelain, and compare the shape and painting with that on a piece of Chinese "Lowestoft." Close the eyes, and pass the hands over first one piece and then the other, and note how the Chinese enamel is raised; then again note the absence of a flower, stem, or leaf here and there on the Chinese, where the vitreous enamel has cracked right off, leaving a decided mark where it had been. Designs on our English porcelain become worn or entirely obliterated by age and use, but they do not chip off like those executed on this china.

There is a great similarity between the decoration of Lowestoft soft paste porcelain and the Chinese hard paste, so-called "Lowestoft"; but which of the two copied the other it is impossible to say. Borders of pink diaper in various designs, wreaths of small roses and foliage united by lines of dots in red or black, and tied with ribbons, are seen in both, and a basket of flowers at the bottom of a cup and in the centre of saucers and plates is as often met with in the one as in the other. Tall

Chinese covered vases and beakers decorated with detached sprays of flowers remind one forcibly of those made at Plymouth and Bristol, and it is quite possible that a specimen from one of these factories was sent out from our country to be copied. This seems the more likely as these vases and beakers will often be found to be ridged, and this may very well have been done in order that the copy should be a faithful one. Plate XXXVII. shows one of these vases.

There is no doubt that at the time this porcelain was made, large orders were sent out from Europe, for it must be borne in mind that many of the articles made and the shapes used are not Chinese, either in use or design. Plates of older periods were always made in saucer shape, whereas these have rims for salt and mustard: salt-cellars, sauce-boats, milk-jugs, and cups with handles, were all manufactured exclusively for the European market, but though they date from the beginning of the eighteenth century, those generally met with are probably not older than the middle or end of the century.

The armorial china also belongs to this period. It was made for most European



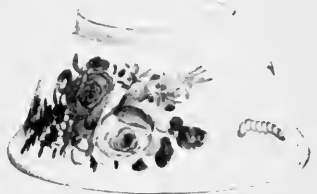
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PLATE XXXVII

CHINESE ARMORIAL "LOWESTOFT"

1. PLATE with wavy edge, Chinese porcelain, painted in China in European taste, with detached sprays of coloured flowers; in the centre a coat of arms.

Diameter, $8\frac{3}{4}$ in.

2. VASE with swelling body and dome-shaped lid, painted in China with coloured sprays of flowers and a coat of arms.

Height, 12 in.

From the Frank's Collection at the British Museum.

3. BOWL of Chinese porcelain decorated in China; inside a deep band of pink diaper and coloured flowers; outside are panels outlined by sprays of small flowers and enclosing groups of roses and foliage.

Height, 4 in.

Diameter 8 in.

4. BOWL of thin Chinese porcelain painted with pink and yellow roses, red and blue flowers, a butterfly and caterpillar; edged with brown. Painted at Chelsea or Bristol.

Height, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Diameter. $4\frac{3}{4}$ in.

18th Century.

countries, and services were ordered for several crowned heads. The decoration of tea- and dinner-services generally consists of a border of some simple design in gold, outlined with a red or black line, or of a brilliant sapphire blue in dagger or Jooe-head design with a coat-of-arms in colours and gold in the centre of plates and dishes. Sometimes a crest and motto only are seen on the rims of plates where the centre is undecorated; and vases—bell shape—and other mugs, are often similarly decorated. The services were generally very large, comprising two or three hundred pieces. Soup-tureens and vegetable-dishes have handles formed like masks of kyilins and other animals, and these also surmount the covers. Basket-shaped dishes and stands with open-work or pierced borders belong to some of the finest services.

When an order for this kind of porcelain was sent to China, a drawing of the coat-of-arms was also sent, and Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse tells an amusing story of a service ordered long years ago by the then representative of an old Guernsey family named Andros. The service was to be painted with the family arms, "and for the guidance of the artist a pen or pencil

drawing of them was sent with the name of each colour written in the appropriate compartment. The service returned duly painted, but the artist took the words 'red,' 'green,' 'blue,' to be part of the decoration and copied them exactly as written. They are still to be observed under the enamel, which is never of the right colour. Thus, under the red is the word 'blue' and *vice versa*. The family ordered another service, taking the precaution to send out a drawing of their arms carefully emblazoned in the right colours." Armorial china is of course more interesting from a genealogical than from any other point of view, but it is decidedly decorative, and has been much sought after of late years.

The porcelain known as "Jesuit china" is quite the most interesting of all that was decorated with European designs, as Plate XXXVIII. shows. This was made to the order of the Jesuit Fathers, to assist them in converting the Chinese. It is, however, sometimes distinctly painful, for it is impossible to disguise the fact that the Oriental could never master the rudiments of perspective, and some of the sacred scenes depicted are consequently most gruesome. These are sometimes painted in colours,



PLATE XXXVIII

“JESUIT CHINA”

TWO PLATES of Chinese porcelain with European designs executed in China. This kind of porcelain was decorated at the instigation of the Jesuit missionaries with copies of sacred subjects taken from engravings.

These plates, which represent the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, are pencilled in black with touches of gold. The scroll and floral border is also carried out in gold and black.

18th Century.

From the Frank's Collection at the British Museum.

but are for the most part in monochrome, and are finely executed, with occasionally a little gold introduced into the design.

Scenes from the life of Confucius are also met with in porcelain of this period, enamelled in colours over the glaze and with a simple gold design on the rims of plates. In these the costumes are of early European character. A most interesting and varied collection of the different kinds of porcelain, decorated with designs in European taste, can be seen in the Franks Collection at the British Museum.

CHINESE PORCELAIN DECORATED IN ENGLAND

DURING the eighteenth century a certain amount of white Chinese porcelain was imported into Europe, where it was decorated in the English and Continental factories. In our own country this porcelain has led to a good deal of controversy, but of late I think this has all been explained away. The porcelain was generally fine and thin in texture, and was decorated at Bow, Chelsea, and Bristol, with the same designs as were used on their own china. One, and, I believe, only one, specimen of this porcelain was decorated at Derby by Hancock in transfer,¹ but as a rule the designs used were floral, and were drawn from nature. The difference between Chinese porcelain decorated in China from European designs is that the flowers, though copies, are not treated in exactly the same way, and the

¹ See *How to Identify Old China*, page 122.

vitreous enamels stand out from the body in a way that is not seen on English porcelain. At Chelsea, groups of roses and other flowers were painted on this china, also butterflies, various insects, and caterpillars; the edges were generally brown or gilt, and but for the fact that the body is hard paste it might pass for genuine Chelsea china.

HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

IT is obviously impossible in so small a book as this to deal thoroughly with such a vast subject as Chinese porcelain. I have endeavoured, however, to simplify and to say something about each of the well-known classes, in order that when the amateur meets with them in other and more learned books, he may be prepared to understand them.

I would suggest that the reader should treat this little book as the *hors-d'œuvre* to the feast of good things which other writers have prepared for him. Although at first difficult, he will not find the subject a dry one. The attitude of the Chinese towards their art was entirely different from that adopted by any European country, and it cannot therefore be approached in the same way, nor can Chinese porcelain be properly understood or appreciated till a study of the methods, the mythology, and religious ceremonial of these people has been made. The time spent in this way will not be wasted, for apart from the help and interest

which it will add to collecting, there is much to be learnt from the people themselves, and to study their art is to bring oneself face to face with the life of a nation whose soul was instinct with poetry, and whose main inspiration was Nature herself.

To visit fine collections is of the greatest importance, for it is in these that the best specimens can be seen by the ordinary collector. At South Kensington Mr. Salting's Collection will be a never-failing source of interest and admiration, but the Franks Collection at the British Museum is more helpful to the amateur. It is classified and arranged in a most admirable manner, and the large labels containing a concise account of the specimens in each case are exceedingly useful; it is the want of these which one feels to be a drawback at South Kensington.¹

The question which is most frequently put when a piece of porcelain is admired is "What is it worth?" The real answer is, of course, "What it will fetch." Unfortunately the value of a piece of china does not always lie in its beauty, but in the demand or fashion of the hour. In order that the reader may see for

¹ Since this book has been written this defect has been rectified, and the student will now find labels giving useful and reliable information in all the cases at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

himself some of the prices which Chinese porcelain has realised of late,¹ I have appended some recent sale prices. It is quite possible that there may be very valuable specimens in any collection, however small, because in so many of our country houses pieces of old Chinese porcelain are to be found, remnants of a time when china-collecting was almost as fashionable as it is to-day, a time, too, when really fine porcelain was being imported into Europe. There is one point, however, which I should like to impress upon owners who wish to dispose of their old china—namely, that high prices are only realised for fine specimens, and of these there are unfortunately only a limited number which are at present known; but there are undoubtedly many more which have yet to be brought to light.

I have said elsewhere that marks are not to be relied upon as a guarantee of age unless there are other indications that specimens so marked belong to that period. A large proportion of the Chinese porcelain in our country was made during and since the reign of K'ang-hsi, and genuine pieces bearing an older mark

¹ Written in 1905. Prices have rather increased than declined during recent years.

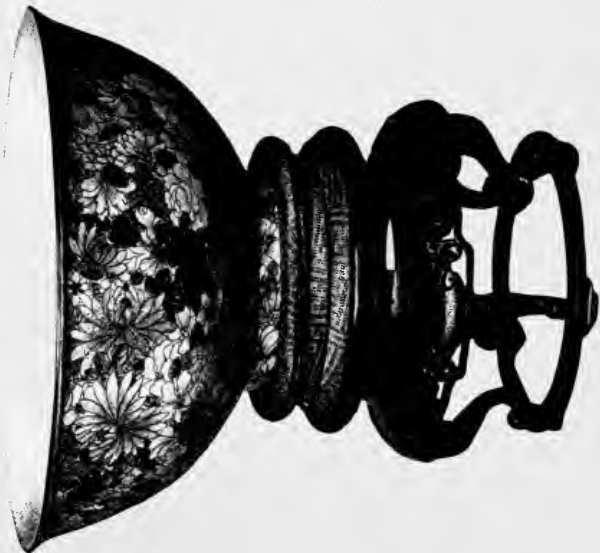


PLATE XXXIX

“THOUSAND FLOWER” DESIGN

A BOWL of the rare “Thousand Flower” design painted in enamel colours. This bowl is supposed to have been part of the loot of the Summer Palace at Peking. The mark has been carefully rubbed out so that it could not be traced.

Diameter, 7 in.

BACK OF A DISH of “Thousand Flower” design, bearing a rare Ch'ien Lung Seal mark.

Only a few examples of this style of decoration are known.

Diameter, $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.

are few and far between. The forger has perhaps been more busily engaged over Chinese porcelain than that of any other country. When these forgeries hail from France, they should not be difficult to detect if the collector has made a study of the characteristics of Chinese porcelain, which I have pointed out in the chapter on "How to Distinguish between English and Chinese Underglaze Blue." The French body is milk white, and has, to my mind, an appearance of iced blancmange. When, however, these forgeries come from Japan, it is necessary to call in the help of an expert, and even he may sometimes be deceived.

I think a perusal should be made of the meanings of the marks on Chinese porcelain; this cannot fail to be interesting and enlightening, because they show the estimation in which it was held; and when a piece bearing some ceremonial scene, or painted with landscape and figures, has been interpreted by the aid of a knowledge of Chinese mythology, it is wonderful how its interest is enhanced. We must also remember that almost every design and flower used by these wonderful people had some meaning, poetic or artistic, or was in-

tended to convey some good wish to the owner.

I am sure that the deeper our knowledge of Chinese porcelain becomes, the more we shall incline to Charles Lamb's love for old china, and the deeper will be our wonder at the severe censure passed by Lord Macaulay, who spoke of the hobby as a "frivolous and inelegant fashion for grotesque baubles."

SOME DYNASTIES AND PERIODS

THIS list does not comprise the names of all the Emperors, but only those whose names may be found in connection with Chinese porcelain.

HAN DYNASTY, 206 B.C. TO A.D. 220.

According to M. Stanislas Julien, the translator of old Chinese documents, porcelain was invented under this dynasty between the years 185 B.C. and A.D. 87.

WEI DYNASTY, 220-64 A.D.

TSIN DYNASTY, 265-419 A.D.

SUI DYNASTY, 581-617 A.D.

T'ANG DYNASTY, 618-906 A.D.

Modern authorities believe that porcelain was invented during this dynasty.

HEOU TEHEOU DYNASTY, 954-9 A.D.

Emperor Chin-tsung, 954, gave the name T'ch'ai to the highly prized "blue as the sky after rain" porcelain.

SUNG DYNASTY, 960-1279.

Emperor Ching-tê, 1004-7. During this reign the famous factory at King-tê-Chên was founded. A mark was first used.

Emperor Yuen-fung, 1078-86.

YUAN DYNASTY, 1260-1367.

Emperor Kublai Khan, 1260, during whose reign the art flourished, and trade with Europe received encouragement. Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, lived twenty-seven years in China at this time.

MING DYNASTY, 1368-1643.

Emperor Hung-wu, 1368-98. Date-marks first began to be used.

Emperor Yung-lo, 1403-24. Egg-shell china is said to have been invented during this reign.

Emperor Hsüan-tê, 1426-35. Celebrated for the Mohammedan blue and white, also for a brilliant red colour.

Emperor Ch'êng-hua, 1465-87. Famous for the technical skill of drawing and painting.

Emperor Hung-chih, 1488-1505. Overglaze decoration is first mentioned during this reign.

Emperor Ch'êng-tê, 1506-21.

Emperor Chia-ch'ing, 1522-66.

Emperor Lung-ching, 1567-72.

Emperor Wan-li, 1573-1619. The glazed surface of some of the wares of this period resembles orange-peel, and is much prized.

Emperor Tien-chi, 1621-27.

Emperor Ch'ung-chên, 1628-43. Owing to the wars with the Tartars, ceramic art fell into decay during the latter periods of the Ming dynasty.

THE GREAT CH'ING DYNASTY, 1644.

Emperor K'ang-hsi, 1662-1722. The second Emperor of this dynasty, during whose reign porcelain reached the zenith of its beauty.

Emperor Yung-chên, 1723-35. Celebrated for many new inventions and the clever imitations of the old single-glaze pieces.

Emperor Ch'ien-lung, 1736-95. During this reign technical skill and decoration in the overglaze enamels of the Muffle Kiln reached perfection.

Emperor Chia-ch'ing, 1796-1820. Gold backgrounds and finely finished monochrome decoration are the distinctive features of the products of this reign.

Emperor Taou-Kuang, 1821-50. Enamelled bowls, known as "Pekin bowls," belong to this period, and are highly prized.

MYTHICAL PERSONS

A HISTORY and description of all mythical persons who are depicted on Chinese porcelain would fill a volume. I propose, therefore, to describe only those which are most generally met with, and must refer the reader for more information to Mr. Mayers' *Chinese Reader's Manual* and to *The Middle Kingdom*, by Mr. S. W. Williams.

THE EIGHT TAOIST IMMORTALS are most frequently seen, and may be recognised by the symbols which they carry.

NO. I. HAN CHUNG-LI, the first and greatest of the Immortals, is said to have himself found the Elixir of Life, and to have lived under the Chow Dynasty, 1122-249 B.C. He is represented as carrying "THE FAN" (Shan) with which he revived the souls of the dead. Sometimes a fly-whisk is substituted for the fan, as is seen in Plate XL. He became a genii, and was sent to earth as a messenger from heaven.

No. 2. LEU-TUNG-PIN, carries "THE SWORD" (Keen). He learnt the mysteries of the Elixir of Life from Han-chung-li. The sword was bestowed upon him after he had overcome ten temptations to which he was exposed; with it he traversed the earth, slaying dragons and evil spirits, for 400 years.

No. 3. LE-TEE-KWAE is represented as a lame beggar supporting himself on a staff. His emblem is "The Pilgrim's Gourd" (hu-lu). He holds in his hand a staff. This being was frequently summoned to interviews with Lao Tsze himself in the celestial regions, and in order to obey these summonses his spirit was obliged to quit the body, which he left in charge of a follower. On one occasion his body was missing on his return, and his spirit took refuge in the body of a lame beggar, in which shape he continued his existence.

No. 4. TSAO KWO-KIU is always represented as carrying "The Castanets" (pan). He was the son of a warrior who died in 999 A.D., and is depicted as wearing a court head-dress.

No. 5. LAN TSAE-HO. Supposed to be a woman, who is represented as carrying "The Basket of Flowers" (hwa-lan).



PLATE XL

RUBY-BACKED EGG-SHELL
TAOIST IMMORTALS

TWO SAUCER-SHAPED RUBY-BACKED EGG-SHELL PLATES beautifully painted in brilliant enamels.

No. 1 represents Chung-li, the first and greatest of the immortals, who is represented as riding a strange animal and carrying in his hand a fly-whisk ("The Fan"), with which to revive the souls of the dead. He is followed by an attendant. (*See* Page 120.)

No. 2 represents Han Seang-Tsze, the seventh Immortal riding upon a mythological creature and playing upon "The Flute." He is accompanied by an attendant carrying a vase of flowers. (*See* Page 131.)

Period Ch'ien Lung.

From Mr. Trapnell's Collection.

No. 6. CHANG-KO-LAOU, said to have lived in the seventh or eighth century. He rode upon a white mule which carried him thousands of miles a day, and when he halted he folded this animal up and hid it in his wallet; when he wished to resume his journey, he squirted water upon the wallet, and the beast at once appeared. The Emperor Ming Hwang, according to tradition, wished him to become a priest, and summoned him to court, but could not induce him to give up his erratic life. On receiving a second summons from court, he expired, and "entered on immortality without suffering bodily dissolution." He is represented with "The Bamboo Tubes and Rod" (yu-ku), a kind of miniature drum, with the rods to beat it.

No. 7. HAN SEANG-TSZE. He is said to have been the nephew of the philosopher Han Yu, who lived about 820 A.D., and a favourite pupil of the second Immortal, Leu-tung-pin, who placed him in the branches of the fabulous peach-tree of the Genii, from which, however, he fell. He is represented as playing "The Flute" (tieh), which is his emblem. (Plate XL.)

No. 8. HO SEEN-KOO. A beautiful damsel, stated to have been the daughter of HO-TAI,

who lived near Canton. She is represented as carrying "The Lotus Flower" (leen-kwa), which is her emblem. This damsel wandered alone about the hills, and lived on the powder of mother-of-pearl, which produced immortality. She disappeared when summoned to the court of the Empress Wu, 690-705 A.D.

CHUNG KW'LI. A legendary personage, said to have spent his life in exorcising demons. He is represented as an old man, clad in rags and attended by a bat, which was the symbol for happiness.

CH'AO-FU, a mythical person who lived in a nest in a tree. When he was informed by his friend Hü Yeo that the Emperor wished him to become a governor, Ch'ao-fu "washed his ears and eyes in order to cleanse himself from the taint of worldly ambition which had invaded his senses."

CHIANG-HÜ. One of the "Eight Immortals of the Wine Cup," who wrote highly-prized inscriptions in "the cursive hand whilst in a state of exalted inebriety."

SI WANG MU, Queen of the Genii, who dwelt upon Mount Kw'ên Lun, and held inter-

course with favoured mortals. She received the Emperor Muh-wang at the Lake of the Gems in the West. Her messengers were azure-winged birds. She became the consort of Tung-wang-kung. She is depicted as a beautiful woman attired as a Chinese princess and attended by two young girls, one of whom holds a basket of peaches which conferred the gift of immortality, and the other carries a fan. She is sometimes represented as riding upon a phœnix.

FU HSING, the Taoist Star-god of Happiness, is represented carrying a boy on his arm, in whose hand is a lotus-blossom. He wears a cap on his head, and rich robes, and has a moustache and beard of strands of black hair.

LU HSING, the Taoist Star-god of Rank, is generally represented as seated, and holding in his hand a jewelled sceptre. He also has long drooping moustaches and whiskers. His robes and cap are brocaded and ornamented with flowers, the pæony being his special emblem.

SHOU HSING, the Taoist Star-god of Longevity. He is represented as an old man with a flowing beard; his mouth is open in a broad grin, and his brow is lofty and protuberant.

His rich robes have hanging sleeves and are embroidered all over.

These three Taoist gods and several others may be met with as statuettes, beautifully enamelled in colours.

KWAN-YIN, the Buddhist Queen of Heaven. Her name means "Hearer of Prayers." She is generally represented as seated on a lotus flower, clad in flowing robes and holding on her knees a child, or in her hand a peach, and with boy attendants on either side.

KUAN TI, the God of War, was deified a thousand years ago as a hero of the wars of the third century. He is represented as seated on a carved chair, and surrounded by sprays of pines and branches of prunus. He has frowning features, and is clad in a cloak which covers a coat of mail; his girdle is studded with jade.

These two figures, Kwan-yin and Kuan-ti, are often met with as statuettes in "blanc de chine" porcelain.

SHOU-LAO, the God of Longevity, is always represented as having a very tall bald head. He holds in his hand a "Jooe" or "sceptre of Longevity," and sometimes, also, the fruit of the fabulous peach-tree Fan-tao, which blooms

once in three thousand years, and yields its fruit three thousand years later. Shou-lao is generally represented as leaning, or riding, upon a stag; occasionally he is found upon a tortoise; sometimes he is represented as accompanied by other gods.

CHUH YUNG, a legendary being, one of the "six monsters" of Kwang Ti. He is represented as having the body of an animal, and a human face, and has two dragons for chargers. He is sometimes called the "Red God of the Southern Regions."

TUNG, the God of Porcelain. Père D'Entrecolles relates that during an early period of the Ming dynasty, the large Dragon bowls which were made for the palace failed over and over again, greatly to the annoyance of the Emperor. At last Tung, the potter, leapt into the furnace. When after this the kilns were opened it was discovered that the bowls were perfect in shape, and brilliant in colour. The Emperor deified Tung as the God of Porcelain, and as such he has been worshipped ever since. Tang-ying, the superintendent of King-tê-chên during the reign of Ch'ien-lung, relates that during his day one of these very bowls, "compounded of the blood and bones of the deity," could

still be seen standing in the courtyard of the Temple.

The sixteen Arhats, who were the disciples of Buddha, are frequently found on Chinese porcelain. They are:—¹

“1. PIN TU LO POH LO TO SHÖ, who is represented as an old man on a rock on the seashore, tablets, and a fly-brush.

“2. CHIA NOH CHIA FA T'SHO, seated on a priestly chair with a fly-brush in his hand.

“3. POH LI TO SHÖ, with MS. scroll; an attendant with a gong accompanies him.

“4. SU PIN SHO is seated on a mat, his hands on his knees.

“5. NOH CHÜ NA, on a priest's chair, and a rosary in his hand.

“6. PO-SHO-LO, on a rock, a crouching tiger by his side.

“7. CHIA LI CHIA, on a rock, a scroll in his hand.

“8. FA SHÖ LO FO SHO LO, on a stool, a knotted staff in his hand.

“9. SHU POH CHIA, in a chair before a lotus pedestal; sometimes a lion with him.

¹ *History and Description of Chinese Porcelain*, by Cosmo Monkhouse.

“ 10. PAN SHO CHIA, on a rock, with a gem which a crouching dragon endeavours to get from him.

“ 11. LA HU LA, his hands folded before a lotus pedestal.

“ 12. NA CHIÈ SI NA, with a begging bowl from which flowing water ascends.

“ 13. YIN CHIÈ SHO, with Buddhist sceptre; a staff capped with fish, carried by an attendant.

“ 14. FA NA PHO TSY, before a vase with peach-branch without leaves.

“ 15. O SH'TO, with a staff; vase with pæonies before him.

“ 16. CHU SHU PAN SHO CHIA, with a fly-brush, and seated on a mat.”

FABULOUS AND OTHER ANIMALS

THE Kylin, or unicorn, is the fabulous animal most commonly met with painted on Chinese porcelain, modelled as a statuette, or more often surmounting the covers of fine vases. This animal is an emblem of wise government, and made its appearance before the birth of sages or good rulers. It exhibited a benevolent regard for other animals, and is represented as being covered with scales, has thick legs, cloven hoofs, and a bushy tail; the mouth is open, showing rows of teeth, and between the ears is a single horn.

The Dragon is often met with moulded or incised in the paste, or painted on porcelain. Two forms of this fabulous monster are well known, namely, that of the sea called Li, and that of the sky called Lung. The former has the face of a monkey, and the horns of a deer, behind which the hair stands out like little

wings; it has a scaly snake-like body, and bird's claws, and is generally represented as surrounded by scroll-shaped shells or seaweed, and with crested waves.

The Dragon Lung has a head like a camel, eyes like a hare, the horns of a deer, and the ears of a cow; its body is covered with fish-scales, and the claws are like those of the hawk. At each side of the mouth are whiskers, and in the beard is sometimes seen a pearl. The Oriental believed that this animal was capable of breathing out fire or water, and that its voice was like the jangling of metal pans.

The Dragon is the emblem of the Emperor, and on pieces of porcelain made for the Imperial use it is represented as having five claws, whilst on that made for princes and nobles it had four claws, and on specimens made for the use of ordinary individuals there were only three.

Mr. Mayers¹ writes of four kinds of Lung dragons, which he describes as:—

“The Celestial Dragon, which guards the mansion of the gods and supports them so that they do not fall.

“The Spiritual Dragon, which causes the

¹ *Chinese Reader's Manual.*

wind to blow and produces rain for the benefit of mankind.

“The Dragon of the Earth, that marks out the course of rivers and streams.

“The Dragon of the Hidden Treasures, which watches over the wealth concealed from mortals.”

All these vary slightly in form, though they retain a dragon-like appearance.

A less important animal is the Tortoise (kwei), whose shell was used by the Chinese soothsayers. It is an emblem of long life. A well-known Chinese saying runs thus. “May your days be as long as the tortoise and stork.” The Tortoise is said to have been in attendance on Pwanku when he chiselled out the earth.

The Phœnix or Fêng-huang is a fabulous bird often seen on blue and white and on more elaborately decorated porcelain. This graceful bird is depicted as having the head of a crested pheasant and a long neck; the wings are generally spread, and the wonderful tail is sometimes almost conventional in design. The plumage of this bird was said to be of five brilliant colours, representing the five cardinal virtues. The Phœnix is the emblem of the

Empress of China, and is sometimes called the Ho-ho bird or the Fong-hoa, but the oldest name is Fêng for the male and Huang for the female. This bird is probably based on the Argus pheasant, and is said to be of so benevolent a disposition that it will not peck or injure living insects or tread on growing vegetation. A Chinese writer describes the Fêng-huang as "resembling a wild swan before and a unicorn behind; it has the throat of a swallow, the bill of a cock, the neck of a snake, the tail of a fish, the forehead of a crane, the crown of a mandarin duck, the stripes of a dragon, and the vaulted back of a tortoise. It has the five colours of the five virtues, and is five cubits in height; the tail is graduated like Pandean pipes, and its song resembles the music of that instrument, having its modulations."

The eight horses of the Emperor Muh-wang are often met with on porcelain, both in the blue underglaze and on pieces decorated in overglaze. It is said that in all his wanderings and many campaigns these horses, driven by the charioteer Tsao-fu, drew the Emperor "wherever wheel ruts ran and the hoofs of horses had trodden." A narrative of these journeyings, contained in the *Annals of the*

Bamboo Book,¹ dates from the second or third century. The horses were finally released from labour, and allowed to end their days in well-earned rest.

The Deer (luh) is often depicted on Chinese porcelain, and denotes honour and success in study. Sometimes it carries the yü-í or Buddhist sceptre in its mouth, signifying success in literature.

A Goose means domestic felicity.

A Mandarin Duck is an emblem of wedded bliss.

A Cock and Hen on an artificial rock signifies the pleasure of country life.

The Stork is emblematical of long life.

The Bat signifies happiness.

A Hare is an emblem of the moon.

Crickets are generally represented as fighting.

¹ A book written on tablets of bamboo and still in existence.

SOME DATE-MARKS EXPLAINED¹

“THE Chinese have two modes of indicating a date:—1st, by a cycle of sixty years; 2ndly, by the *nien-hao*, or name given to the reign of an emperor, or to a portion of such a reign.” The former is, however, rarely found on porcelain.

“On ascending the throne a Chinese emperor loses his personal name, and fixes on two words, termed *nien-hao*, to indicate his reign, and by this title he is known during his life, or until he chooses to alter it. After his death he receives another title, or *miao-hao*, by which he is described in history, though often, especially in later times, and among foreign nations, the *nien-hao* has been retained as his name. In ancient times the *nien-hao* was frequently changed during the reign, on any important

¹ *Catalogue of a Collection of Oriental Porcelain and Pottery*, by the late Sir W. Franks.

event occurring. But since the accession of the Ming dynasty in 1368, there is only one instance of such a change, viz., in the reign of the Emperor Ying-Tsung, who, having been dethroned in 1450, and recovering power seven years after, found it necessary to make a new *nien-hao* for the latter portion of his reign. The *nien-hao* is supposed to signify the qualities of the Emperor, thus Taou-kwang, the name assumed by Meen-ning, on ascending the throne in 1821, signifies 'Reason's lustre'; Kwang-hsiu, the late Emperor's name, 'Inherited lustre.'

"In order to convey an exact date, the number of the year of any *nien-hao* should be inscribed, but this does not appear to have been done on porcelain. The fullest date appearing on porcelain consists of six characters, the upper one on the right hand being *Ta*, 'great,' a title conferred on most of the later dynasties; then follows the name of the dynasty, then two characters signifying the *nien-hao*, then the word *nien*, 'year' or 'period,' and finally, *chi*, 'made.' In some cases the two first characters, indicating the dynasty, are omitted, and the characters reduced to four. These date-marks are written in two columns of three

words, three columns of two words, two columns of two words (where the dynasty is omitted), or six columns of one word, when the inscription forms a horizontal band, to be read from right to left.

“The dates on the older specimens are generally written in the plain character, but during the present dynasty an angular seal character has been often employed, forming a square; in the seal character the name of the dynasty is rarely omitted, excepting on very small specimens for want of space.

“As a general rule, all marks in the angular seal character of periods anterior to the present dynasty are to be regarded as forgeries.”

Amongst the marks given, five will be found in both character and seal forms:—

Fig. 1 and Fig. 15.—*Ta Ming Seuen-tih nien chi* [“Made in the period Seuen-tih of the great Ming (dynasty)”]: A.D. 1426–36.

Figs. 2 and 3.—*Ta Ming Ching-hwa nien chi* [“Made in the period Ching-hwa of the great Ming (dynasty)”]: A.D. 1465–88. This gives the two forms; the name of the dynasty being omitted in fig. 3.

Fig. 4.—*Ta Ming Hung-che nien chi*

["Made in the period Hung-che of the great Ming (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1488-1506.

Fig. 5.—*Ta Ming Ching-tih nien chi* ["Made in the period Ching-tih of the great Ming (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1506-22.

Fig. 6.—*Ta Ming Kea-tsing nien chi* ["Made in the period Kea-tsing of the great Ming (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1522-67.

Fig. 7.—*Ta Ming Lung-king nien chi* ["Made in the period Lung-king of the great Ming (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1567-73.

Fig. 8.—*Ta Ming Wan-leih nien chi* ["Made in the period Wan-leih of the great Ming (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1573-1620.

Fig. 9.—*Ta Ch'ing Shun-che nien chi* ["Made in the period Shun-che of the great Ch'ing (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1644-61.

Fig. 10.—*Ta Ch'ing Kang-he nien chi* ["Made in the period Kang-he of the great Ch'ing (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1661-1722.

Figs. 11 and 16.—*Ta Ch'ing Yung-ching nien chi* ["Made in the period Yung-ching of the great Ch'ing (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1723-36.

Figs. 12, 17, and 18.—*Ta Ch'ing Ch'ien-lung*

nien chi ["Made in the period Ch'ien-lung of the great Ch'ing (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1736-95.

Figs. 13 and 19.—*Chia-ch'ing nien chi* ["Made in the period Chia-ch'ing of the great Ch'ing (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1796-1821.

Figs. 14 and 20.—*Ta Tsing Taou-kwang nien chi* ["Made in the period Taou-kwang of the great Ch'ing (dynasty)"]: A.D. 1821-51.

SOME MARKS IN THE FORM OF DEVICES

Fig. 21.—A pearl.

Fig. 22.—A shell generally found on fine porcelain, and signifies a "prosperous journey, or voyage."

Fig. 23.—A musical instrument.

Figs. 24, 25, and 26.—Three varieties of lozenge-shaped symbols.

Figs. 27 and 28.—Show two varieties of fish symbols which were emblems of domestic felicity.

Fig. 29.—The Swastika symbol, or "Hammer of Thor," which symbolises all happiness that humanity desires.

Fig. 30.—A palette, brush, and the sceptre of longevity; emblems of a literary person.

Fig. 31.—A hare or rabbit, emblem of the moon. On some pieces a crescent moon is included in the mark.

Fig. 32.—A pair of horns.

Figs. 33, 34, 35, and 36.—Four varieties of leaves; the fourth has fillets. This mark is also generally found on porcelain of good quality.

Figs. 37 and 38.—Two varieties of flower symbols found on fine porcelain.

Figs. 39, 40, 41, 42.—Four varieties of a kind of fungus called *Che*, an emblem of longevity.

Fig. 43.—A bat and a peach; the former is an emblem of happiness, and the latter of longevity.

Fig. 44.—A three-legged pot, in which are three implements.

Fig. 44A.—A four-leaved flower.

Fig. 45.—A seal character, *Shou*, "Longevity."

Fig. 46.—A five-leaved flower.

Fig. 47.—The head of the Jooe sceptre, often found in borders on porcelain vases.

Fig. 48.—A seal character.

Fig. 49.—A symbolical ornament, *Chin*, the pearl with a ribbon twined round it.

Fig. 50.—An insect.

Fig. 51.—A square mark in imitation of a seal character. This mark was copied at Worcester.

Fig. 52.—Another variety of the Swastika with ribbons.

Figs. 53 and 55.—Two varieties of four-legged vases. This mark was copied at Derby.

Fig. 54.—Vase on three feet, containing implements for writing. Found on porcelain of good quality.

Figs. 56, 57, 58, and 59.—Four varieties of seal characters.

Fig. 60.—A symbol formed of four circles. Found on old specimens, decorated with single-colour glazes.

Fig. 61.—A shell.

Fig. 62.—A tailless stork.

Figs. 63 and 64.—Two varieties of the character *Yuh*, "Jade."

Fig. 65.—A seal character. *Shou*, "Longevity," called in Holland the "Spider" mark.

Fig. 66.—A flower.

Fig. 67.—A stone of honour for magistrates. Often found in borders of plates.

SOME SYMBOLS

THE Eight Symbols—Nos. 68 to 75—are called the *Pa paou*, or eight Precious Things, and are often met with as marks and in the decoration of porcelain, and are the kind which I have mentioned as being found especially in “three colour” and “Famille verte.”

No. 68 represents “The Pearl” (*chin*), and is sometimes white and at others yellow; it has a ribbon round it, and is frequently depicted in the air with dragons. The pearl was believed to be the “concrete essence of the moon distilled through the secret workings of the secondary principle in nature within the shell of the mussel which produces it, and hence the pearl acts as a charm against fire, the development of the active or primary principle.’¹

By the Taoists the pearl was supposed to

¹ Mayers' *Chinese Reader's Manual*.

shine at night. It is related of Wen Ti, of the Wei dynasty, that a pearl of great size, being an inch in diameter, was given him as a present by the ruler of another Eastern country. The Emperor took counsel with one of his statesmen as to the advisability of sending an envoy to seek and purchase others. The councillor at once replied, "It is something to be proud of that such a pearl should come unsought from beyond the sandy wastes, but if obtained by being sought for, wherefore should it be prized?"

No. 69. This circular symbol encloses a square, and is called by Mr. Williams¹ "a tablet with rounded top and square base, made nine, seven, or five inches long, according to the bearer's rank."

No. 70. A lozenge-shaped frame, with fillets, called also *Kouei* or *Kwei*.

No. 71. A lozenge-shaped object, with lines on the upper side, and with fillets.

No. 72. An object like a mason's square, supposed to be a sounding-stone or bronze plate, used instead of a bell, and called *King*.

¹ *The Middle Kingdom.*

This emblem represented the different characters of the same sound, and signifies "goodness," "happiness," or "luck."

No. 73. Two oblong objects, meant to represent books—an emblem of literary success.

No. 74. A pair of curled horns.

No. 75. A leaf of the celebrated peach-tree of the gods, which grew close to the palace of Si Wang Mu, Queen of the Genii, whose fruit conferred immortality.

Other symbols sometimes occur, such as the "Umbrella of ten thousand people."

No. 76. A seal character for *Shou*, "Longevity," which is arranged in different ways, and is sometimes surrounded by bats.

No. 77. The bat *Fuh* is often found on Chinese porcelain, and is the emblem for happiness. When five bats occur, they are symbolical of Longevity, Riches, Peacefulness, Love of Virtue, an End crowning the Life.

No. 78. The set of eight trigrams called *Pa-kwa*, which are said to have been first used by Fuh-hi, a legendary person stated to have lived B.C. 2852-2738, to whom they were

revealed by a dragon horse. The circular centre represents Yang and Yin, the male and female elements in nature.

The Book, the Scroll-picture, the Chess-board, and the Lyre, represent the "four elegant accomplishments of the Chinese scholar."

HAN AND T'ANG WARES

UNTIL about the year 1909 very little was known of the products of the potter during the Han dynasty, and even Chinese writers are almost silent on the subject. This may partly be explained by the fact that the Emperor Cheng of the T'ing dynasty (265-419) attempted to burn all old records, in order that he might style himself and be handed down to posterity as the first Emperor of China. He had served his country well in defeating the tribes of marauding Tartars who invaded it, and he was the builder of the Great Wall of China—a truly colossal undertaking—which was designed to guard against these warlike incursions, and which stretched along a frontier of twelve hundred and fifty miles, remnants of which still survive.

It was, however, the opening up of tombs and caves in Northern China during the construction of railways in recent years which has brought to light quantities of the wares be-

longing to the Han (206 B.C.—220 A.D.), T'ang (618—906 A.D.), and intervening dynasties. From the earliest of these periods the Chinese traded in many Eastern lands, and even contemplated establishing an Embassy at Rome, where they carried on a thriving trade in silk. In Korea, India, Persia, Egypt, and as far south as Zanzibar, evidences of the old Chinese potter have been unearthed, and there is little doubt that he owed to the Egyptian the introduction of glaze, which had been employed by the potter in that country from times immemorial, and which would seem to have been first used on Chinese pottery during this dynasty. Earlier specimens, of which a few may be seen in our National collections, are all unglazed, and have in consequence a rough, unfinished appearance.

Han pottery has for the most part a red body, but this varies from a dark to a brick-red and a pale buff colour, and is so hard that it can hardly be scratched with a knife. It is generally covered with a camellia leaf green glaze, which has become beautifully iridescent with a silvery sheen, produced by the action of the earth in which it has lain for so many centuries. Sometimes it is coated with a



PLATE XLI

1. MORTUARY OBJECT. Model of a Han Watch Tower.
Han Dynasty 206 B.C., 220 A.D.

2. PORCELAIN MODEL OF A TEMPLE, with sliding
front.

Sung

Victoria and Albert Museum.

brownish yellow and a dark brown mottled or splashed ; and at times there are indications of a white slip, which was used to emphasize ornament or detail. On some unglazed specimens we find traces of black or red pigment used as decoration. As a rule, however, ornament took the form of moulded applied low reliefs, and sometimes, though rarely, incised decoration may be met with. The reliefs, which were formed by stamps and dies, frequently consisted of strips of paste moulded before they were applied to the piece. These form a very interesting study, consisting as they do of mythological subjects and figures, mounted on horses or dragons with drawn bows in their hands, pursuing tigers, boars, monkeys, or birds. The conventional tiger-head mask, with ring attached, may frequently be found on vases, and suggests that they were copies of more ancient bronzes.

In no country has religion exercised so potent an influence on Art as in China. At the commencement of the Han dynasty Confucianism and Taoism were the two schools of religious thought. The first of these, from its cold philosophical outlook, exercised far less influence than Taoism, with its appeal to

nature, its worship of longevity, and its search after immortality—so productive of legend, of sages, demons, dragons, gods, goddesses, fairies, and other delightful myths, all of which were portrayed in the arts of these wonderful people.

It would seem that during this dynasty pottery was for the first time used as a means of expressing the artistic feelings of the potter, and the possibility of employing his wares for this purpose was then first realized. So it has come about that collectors of Chinese pottery and porcelain may read upon their treasures fairy tales beautiful in conception and at times pervaded with high idealism.

Green glazed pottery similar to that of the Han dynasty would seem to have been made also during the T'ang dynasty, but we have little written evidence or information about the wares of this period, though Chinese writers speak of two kinds, Hsing and Yueh, the first being likened to "silver and snow," and the second to "jade and ice," the Yueh being green and the Hsing white. Another green ware is described as "imitation jade;" a rather dirty yellow and a white ware are also mentioned. In the British Museum are two fine

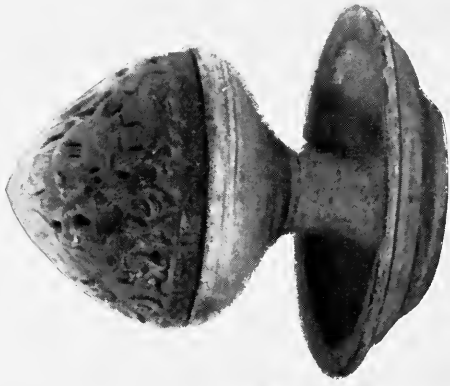


PLATE XLII

HAN MORTUARY OBJECTS

1. MODEL OF A WELL HEAD.
2. A TROUGH moulded with dragon forms.
3. A HILL CENSER OR PO-CHAN-LU.

red bowls and a black glazed jar, found in a tomb with a T'ang mirror. The porcellaneous body was generally covered with a green or with a brownish yellow glaze with large patches of green. On some pieces the glaze is a mottled black in conjunction with a yellow shade of brown. Many pieces are only partially glazed, an outstanding feature of this ware being the large, bold patches of contrasting colour which have been laid on as ornament.

Perhaps the chief interest in these old pieces of pottery lies in the fact that they are specimens of the real things which surrounded their owners in life, or models of these things brought from the tombs of the dead, and designed long ages ago to allow the spirit to pursue the habits of his lifetime. In still more remote times the human and animal belongings of a man had perforce to die and be buried with him. To-day his spirit wants are supplied by paper models, which reach him by means of the fire in which they are burned. In Han times models of male and female retainers (the dress of the latter bearing striking resemblance to that worn in our own country during the fourteenth century), the horse, dog, camel, cattle, sheep, poultry; his shrine, house, farm-yard, threshing-floor, rice-pounder, granary

tower, pig-sties, and draw wells, were copied in clay and were buried with the owner. Nor was this all. Sacrificial vases, incense burners, and beautiful wine vessels have been found in the tombs by the side of miniature cooking stoves, with shovels, tongs, and cooking utensils attached; also ladles and wine and pickle jars. A pathetic interest attaches to the figure of a child in a miniature "high chair," with stick across in front, the whole standing about one inch in height, and a rattle composed of unglazed clay cockle-shells, which when shaken give out a musical note.

Mortuary objects of considerable interest may be seen in our illustrations. The "Hill Censer," the perforated cover to which is said to represent Mount P'êng lai, one of the Taoist sea-girt "Isles of the Blest," is called by the Chinese *Po shan lu*; and, writing in the twelfth century, Lung-ta-Zuan says that it was originally a vessel made for Han palaces, "whence it came;" also that "when the heir-apparent is in mourning he has a *po chan lu* of bronze, when he marries he has one of plated silver." A curious figure found amongst these mortuary objects is one half human, which may have represented the guardian spirit of the dead. It is of terra-cotta, squatting on its haunches;

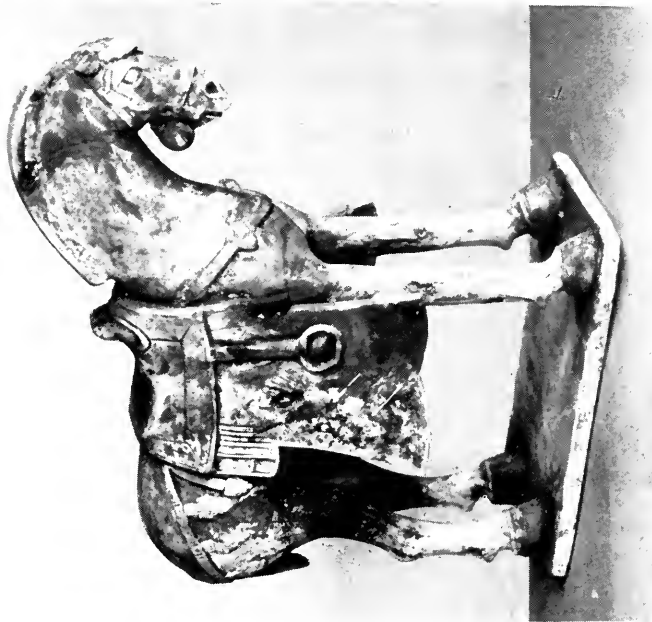
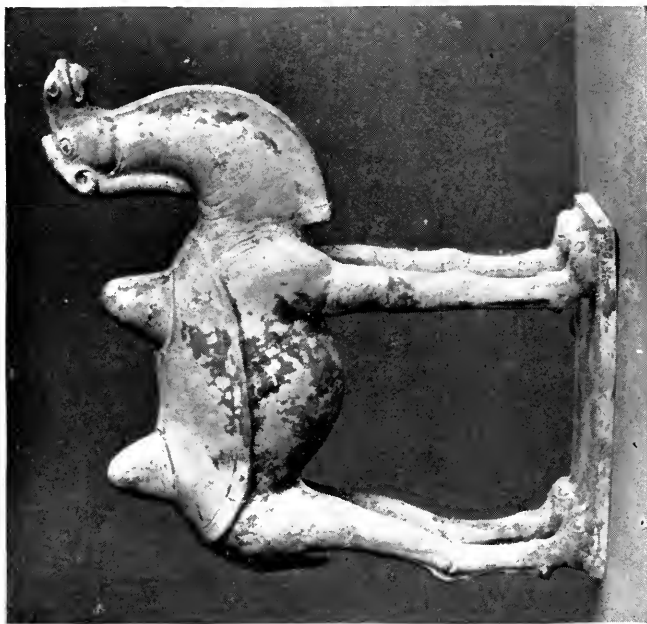


PLATE XLIII

1. FIGURE OF A HORSE with saddle and trappings
buff coloured earthenware, unglazed, painted in red and black.

T'ang dynasty 618-906 A.D.

Victoria and Albert Museum.

2. FIGURE OF A DROMEDARY, buff coloured earth-
enware, with pale yellow glaze.

T'ang Dynasty

Victoria and Albert Museum.

a horn projects from the crown of the head, the large winglike ears are outstretched, and it has a human face and cloven hoofs.

From an artistic point of view, these objects are extremely interesting as exhibiting the aptitude in modelling and the wonderful idealism which the potter brought to his work, whereby he imparted beauty to the commonest articles of everyday use. There is a force and movement in his modelling of the human and animal figure, the fierceness portrayed by his warriors, the proud tilt of the head of the camel, and the sense of strength and movement in his horses cause one to marvel at his skill. The same skill is exhibited in the moulded ornaments which decorate his vases. There is swift movement in the forms of hunted and hunting animals and men, and the shapes of these large pieces are, if not graceful, distinctly dignified. Add to all this the mellowing hand of age, which has invested these things with an iridescent and silver glory, and we shall realize that the handiwork of the potter of over two thousand years ago is to-day of very real artistic value, and should certainly not be without interest both to the collector and to those in search of inspiration for the making of beautiful pottery to-day.

PORCELAIN OF THE SUNG DYNASTY

DURING the Sung dynasty the most famous potters were the brothers Chang. *Ko* ware, made by the elder of the two and known as the ware of "the Elder Brother," was manufactured at Lung-ch-uan and afterwards at Liu-t'ien. It is distinguished by its "iron foot" (caused in the baking) and its crackle decoration. The colours of the glazes used to cover the dense buff stone ware body were Céladon-green, pale blue, rice-colour, and stone-colour, the two last being the most prized.

The ware of the younger Chang is known as *Lung-ch-uan*, after the place where he continued to make it when the elder brother had moved to Liu-t'ien. This is the familiar Céladon ware, covered with a green glaze, which varies in tone from a grey-green to a deep olive. The glaze is very smooth and translucent. The body turns red in baking, as may be seen at



PLATE XLIV

1. PORCELAIN VASE. Tz'u-chou ware with decoration cut in reserve through a brown glaze. Design two fishes with a lotus-flower and leaf in the intervals between them.

Sung Dynasty 960-1279 A.D.

2. VASE of cream-coloured porcelain; incised with figures and chrysanthemums.

Sung

Victoria and Albert Museum.

the base, where it is unglazed and where a rusty red ring is generally visible. A similar red spot may also sometimes be met with in the centre of dishes and those shallow three-footed bowls which are so much sought after for decorative purposes to hold flowers or bulbs. The decoration of this ware takes the form of moulding and carving, and sometimes small *motifs*, such as fishes or rosettes, are left free of glaze.

Of the two kinds of Céladon believed to have been made by the Chang brothers, those pieces which are attributed to the elder are finer in shape and potting and are of more varied form than the other. A globular vase in a well-known collection has a small mouth carved to represent a lotus-bud; it is covered with a pale Céladon-green glaze, with close-meshed irregular crackle, the crackle being a vermilion-red. Another piece, which is marked over the glaze in brown "Pao yung," meaning "Precious object for use," is a bowl of six-leaf shape, slightly bulging towards the rim, and covered with a bright, thin, greenish brown crackled glaze.

The body of the Sung wares differed, ranging from white translucent porcelain through

semi-porcelain to a dark brown stone ware, some pieces being of a coarse brick-like pottery. The glaze which constituted the outstanding beauty of these wares was generally of astonishing richness and lovely colouring. It varied from a thin transparent gloss to that thick unctuous coating which has been so well likened by the Chinese to "massed lard." These glazes frequently supplied the sole decoration; but carving, reliefs, and mouldings were also used, and white specimens were painted in brown pigment and with coloured slips, the former on a cream-white body being very pleasing and effective.

The most celebrated wares of this period were the *Ju*, *Kuan*, and *Ko*, the identification of which is more or less conjectural. A study of Chinese literature upon the subject, whilst it has assisted such well-known authorities as the late Dr. Stephen Bushell, Mr. Berthold Laufer, and Mr. R. L. Hobson in their researches, has also caused some mystification; for it proves that they all had features in common, that the differences were very subtle, and that the highest aspiration of each was to rival the wonderful Ch'ai ware, manufactured between 954 and 959 A.D., and so picturesquely



PLATE XLV

1. CYLINDRICAL STAND. Cream coloured "Ting"
Ware.

Sung Dynasty

Victoria and Albert Museum.

2. BOTTLE SHAPED VASE of white Tu-Ting porcelain
with crackled glaze. Engraved design.

Ming

described as "blue as the sky seen in the intervals of the clouds after rain."

Having been privileged to study the finest collection of old Sung porcelain in this country, the writer is of opinion that for beauty of colour it would be impossible to find anything more lovely and satisfying to the artistic colour sense than the turquoise blue of this period. The colour, as rendered by the old Sung potter, is not the bright greenish turquoise of latter days, but a soft, warm greyish tint, clearly intended to represent the "blue of the sky." The glaze is thick and unctuous, ending near the base of the piece in an irregular waving line. It has a wonderful depth, is generally crackled, and in the heart of it there is a red or pink glow, which sometimes imparts a lavender tint, or it may be a splash of crimson, bursting forth here and there.

Ju ware was made at Ju-chou (hence its name), and is described as being of fine grain and of a copper-red tint, covered with a thick glaze, like congealed fat, smooth and bright. The colours were sky blue, a pale greenish blue (described as being the colour of the film inside an egg-shell), pale emerald, "onion sprouts," grass and moss green, and a bluish

green, most of the specimens being ornamented with crackle.

The Chinese connoisseur, Hsiang Yuan-p'ien, writing in the sixteenth century, thus described a vase of Ju porcelain of the Sung dynasty: "Of slender horn-like form, with wide spreading mouth (beaker-shape); with ornaments in relief, grotesque heads with scrolls engraved on the body, palm leaves with scroll pattern on the neck; copied from an ancient bronze—covered with a pale bluish green glaze coarsely crackled." He adds, "Specimens of Ju-chou porcelain are very rare, and when met with usually, plates and bowls. A perfect unbroken flowers vase like this is almost unique; and as it excels both Kuan and Ko porcelain both in form and glaze it is far more valuable. I saw it at the Capital in the collection of Huang, General of the Guards, and they told me that he had given 10,000 cash for it."

These remarks give us an insight into the value set upon the beautiful wares of the Sung dynasty and their scarcity at a time when the potter's art in our own country was in its infancy. The same writer, in his MSS. (a translation of which by the late Dr. Stephen Bushell may be seen in the British Museum),



PLATE XLVI

1. "POISON PLATE" of green celadon.

Ming

From the Hon. Mrs. C. Molyneux's Collection.

2. BACK OF A CELADON "POISON PLATE,"
showing the red ring.

Early Ming

From the Collection of Lord Ralph Ker.

is responsible for an interesting little tale of a vase, an illustration of which he gives. This vase belonged to the celebrated collection of K'no Ch'ing-lo, who bought it for fifty taels without the cover. It is described as "a vase of onion green," of the Sung dynasty. The writer says, "The owner happening to be one day on a fishing-boat, found there by chance a cover, which had been pulled up by the net, and bought it for ten strings of cash. It proved to be the original cover, and he wrote some verses in commemoration." He adds, "I was once shown the piece and still remember it. Although now Ch'ing-lo is dead, I know not what has become of it."

Kuan, which was an Imperial porcelain made for the use of the emperor, is described as a thin body covered with a blue or green glaze, dark or light, and plain or crackled. It had a slightly rosy tinge and a "broad mouth and iron-coloured foot," caused in the firing of the red-brown body. Chinese writers use the word *Ch'ing* to describe both blue and green, and it is therefore difficult to distinguish which is meant when a piece is thus described. Other varieties of *Kuan* porcelain are "moon-white" (the *claire-de-lune* of French writers), pale blue

or green, dark green, and "ash colour" or grey.

Hsiang described an incense burner of Imperial Kuan thus:—"Of rounded body, with loop ears and three cylindrical feet, the body composed of three monstrous ogre-like faces, with prominent features and protruding eyes, with the intervals filled up with thunder-scroll pattern finely engraved. . . . The glaze is of pale green colour, clear and lustrous, like a precious emerald in tint, the whole surface covered with marks like those of crackled ice. It is a rare example of the Imperial ware of the period, and also came out of the Palace. I saw it at Nanking, at the Palace of the Governor, Chu Hung, Grand Tutor."

The same writer gives a description of an "Ink Pallet" of Kuan porcelain, made for the use of the Emperor. "The outline is like that of a vase, with loop handles for passing string through to hang it on the wall. An oval is left unglazed in the centre for rubbing the ink on, showing the red paste; below, the margin is unglazed; the centre is decorated with the figure of an elephant, and with a mystic diagram above engraved under the glaze, which is of light green colour and coarsely crackled."

The greatest variety of Sung coloured glazes were produced at the factory at Chun-chou. A Chinese writer speaks enthusiastically of vermilion-red; and certainly for lovely colouring it would be hard to beat a bowl which came from the Bewdeley Collection. Of a dense buff stone ware, the body is covered with a thick vermilion-red glaze, which overlaps the rim, forming an irregular outline inside the bowl, the interior of which is washed over with a crackled *clair-de-lune* glaze.

At this factory were also produced nine other varieties of glazes, described by the Chinese as rose-crimson, pyrus-Japonica pink, aubergine, purple, plum-colour, asses-liver mingled with horse's-lung, sky-blue, rice-colour, dark purple, and furnace-transmutations (the *flambés* of the French collector).

According to a Chinese writer, whose *Treatise on Pottery* was translated by the late Dr. S. Bushell, Chun flower-pots and saucers for growing sword grass were the most beautiful. Many of these pieces were marked with numerals from 1 to 9, showing that they had been made in sets of varying sizes. Hsiang thus describes a small jar of Chun porcelain of this dynasty:—"Of globular form, with two

boldly-designed Phœnixes moulded in high relief as handles, interrupting a border of spirally ornamented medallions. The source of the design is unknown and probably was original, yet the workmanship and form are alike excellent, such as certainly could not have come from a common artificer. Chun-chou porcelain is put at the bottom of the Sung potteries, yet a jar like this one, of elegant form, good colour, and fine engraved work, equals, if not excels, as a flower vase, one of Ju, Kuan, Ko, or Ting pottery. It is marked beneath with the numeral *wu* (five), an additional proof that it is really a Chun piece."

Ting wares, so-called from the celebrated factory of Ting-chou, where it is believed that porcelain was made from the Tang dynasty, are known as Pai-Ting or white Ting, Tu-Ting or earthy Ting, and Fen-Ting or flour-Ting. The first is very fine and translucent, with a smooth glaze, apt to run in tears over the backs of bowls and dishes. It was sometimes ornamented with carved designs or fine etchings, beautifully executed with a sharp pointed instrument. Such pieces are highly prized in China and in other countries. Impressed designs on the inside of some specimens are

elaborate and intricate and are in pronounced relief.

Some of the earliest and finest Ting plates and bowls are mounted round the rims with metal, which was designed to hide a blemish caused by the pieces being fired upside down. Tu-Ting is of a deeper cream colour, the glaze being frequently crackled ; and another variety has a dull creamy surface, the texture of which closely resembles the shell of an ostrich egg.

A dark purple and a black Ting were also manufactured, the purple glaze being described as a beautiful tint, with a bloom like ripe grapes, the decoration taking the form of engraving. Black Ting was exceedingly rare even in the sixteenth century, and the writer Hsiang mentions this fact. Describing a " Duck-headed Vase " of this ware he says :— " Bottle-shaped, with swelling body and ringed neck, which curves over to end in a duck's head, a round orifice with small cover being on the convexity of the curve. The black colour is painted on the head and neck, gradually fading away on the body of the vase, which is enamelled white. The black glaze is extremely rare in Ting-chou porcelain. I have seen hundreds of specimens of white, scores of

purple-brown, but only this one of black in my whole life."

In addition to the plain white Sung wares, a very beautiful form of ornament was produced by skilful sketches in dark brown, which were shaded by etching with a fine point through the brown colour, exposing to view the cream-white body. Sometimes the whole groundwork was cut away, leaving the decoration to stand out on a background which varies according to the nature of the clay body. On some specimens the glaze is black, and this when cut away leaving a buff background is very effective. The old Sung traditions are still carried on almost unaltered at Tz'u-chou, in Chih-li, where the factories founded in that dynasty still flourish and supply articles in a cream-white ware, ornamented with sketchy designs in brown and purple.

Very interesting are the Sung tea-bowls of metallic appearance, covered with a thick black glaze speckled with fine golden or silvery streaks. These are the "partridge" or "hare's fur" cups which were made at Chien-an, in the province of Fuchien, during this and the Yuan dynasty. They are highly prized by Japanese tea-drinkers, and are really fascinating little

pieces, the streaks and spots which ornament them being as fine as hairs, painted so closely as to resemble fur. Very high prices are paid for these little cups, which in ancient China played a part in the ritual of tea-drinking. The Japanese mount them in silver, and when broken piece them together with gold lacquer.

GLOSSARY

BLANC-DE-CHINE.—White porcelain on which there is no coloured decoration.

BISCUIT.—Porcelain which has been baked, but which is not glazed.

BODY or PASTE.—The substance of which pottery or porcelain are made, and which may be hard or soft according to the ingredients used in its composition. Chinese porcelain is hard paste, and is composed entirely of a clay derived from rock or granite, and called by the Chinese *kaolin* and *petuntse*. There is a small and rare proportion of so-called “soft paste,” which, however, owes its character to the soft glaze which covers the hard paste.

CÉLADON. A pale sea-green colour. The term is applied to pieces of porcelain covered with a “single” glaze in this colour, and is also sometimes applied to “single”-glaze decoration as a class.

DEMI-GRAND FEU. The heat of hard kiln.

ENAMELS. This term is generally used to signify decoration in colours over the glaze.

- FAMILLE VERTE.** A term applied to decoration in enamels over glaze in which green predominates.
- FAMILLE ROSE.** Decoration in which rose or pink is the prevailing colour.
- GRAND FEU.** The heat of the oven.
- GLAZE.** The liquid covering which is put on to the body or paste. In China three methods of glazing were employed; in the first, the piece to be glazed was immersed; in the second, it was painted on with a brush; and in the third, the glaze was blown on to the body through a tube covered with gauze.
- KILN (muffle kiln).** An oven in which the soft glazes and enamels used in overglaze decoration were baked.
- MANDARIN CHINA.** A term applied to a class of Chinese porcelain decorated with figure subjects.
- PETIT FEU.** The heat of the muffle kiln.
- SLIP.** A form of decoration in which paste which has been diluted to the consistency of cream is either poured or painted on over the glaze.
- SOUFFLÉ.** Glaze which has been blown on through a tube covered with gauze, and which forms a granular covering in minute rings.
- ENAMELLED *SUR BISCUIT*.** Porcelain which, contrary to the usual method practised by the Chinese, has received a preliminary firing before being enamelled, and which has in consequence a less vitreous appearance.

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CHINESE

	£	s.	d.
Beakers, pair, powdered blue, pencilled with dragons in gold, and enamelled with ladies on a terrace in Famille verte in upright panels, 11 in. high. Christie, April 14th	409	10	0
Bowl, powdered blue, enamelled with chrysanthemums and other flowers, vases and utensils, in mirror-shaped panels, the groundwork pencilled with flowers in gold 7½ in. diameter. Christie, April 14th	46	4	0
Bowl and cover, Famille verte, cylindrical, enamelled with panels of vases and utensils on stippled green ground, 7½ in. high. Christie, April 14th.	52	10	0
Bowl and cover, old Nankin, with marbled blue and white ground, and vandyke panels containing scrolls in white on blue ground, 6½ in. high. Christie, April 14th	22	1	0

178 OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

	£	s.	d.
Canisters and covers, pair, Famille rose, square, enamelled with figures and flowers in Famille verte in shaped panels on pink ground, pencilled with flowers in gold, and with stippled green shoulders, 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Christie, April 14th	136	10	0
Dishes, pair, Famille verte, enamelled with chrysanthemums and other flowers in the centre, and with panels of flowers and utensils on the border on diaper ground, 15 in. diameter. Christie, April 14th	30	9	0
Dishes, pair, the centres painted with flowers in blue, and with Famille verte borders, enamelled with flowers on stippled green ground, 14 in. diameter. Christie, April 14th	27	6	0
Ewer and cover, Famille verte, enamelled with flowers in colours, and with striped bands; on either side is a heart-shaped panel, containing a boy and lotus flowers, enamelled in colours on black ground, 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high. Christie, April 14th	50	8	0
Ewer and cover, Famille verte, with bamboo-pattern centre and spout, enamelled with leopard-spots in green, yellow, and black, and panels of flowers on the neck and cover, 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. high. Christie, April 14th	173	5	0

SALE PRICES IN 1905 179

	<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Teapot, old Chinese, powdered blue, enamelled with flowers, 3¼ in. high. Christie, June 21st	215	0	0
Ewers, pair, Famille verte, enamelled with ladies and children on a terrace, in panels, on a brilliant green diaper ground, with mask, spouts, and pierced necks, 9 in. high. Christie, April 14th	220	10	0
Figures of kylins, pair, Famille verte, enamelled green, yellow, and mauve, 9 in. high. Christie, April 14th	29	8	0
Figures of parrots, pair, enamelled green and mauve, mounted as candelabra, with Louis XV. ormolu flower-branches for two lights each, and ormolu plinths chased with reptiles, 10¾ in. high. Christie, April 14th	141	15	0
Saucer-dishes, pair, powdered blue, enamelled with pæonies, chrysanthemums, and other flowers, in Famille verte, in circular and fan-shaped panels, 10¾ in. diameter. Christie, April 14th	44	2	0
Vase, oviform, with brilliant black enamelled ground, with fine metallic lustre, enamelled in Famille verte with silver pheasants among rocks, upon which are growing pæonies and other flowers, and branches of bamboo, 17¼ in. high. Christie, April 14th	2,047	10	0

180 OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

	£	s.	d.
Vase, with mythical horses and flowers, in mauve and buff, upon green ground, painted with annular designs in black, early Kang-he. Christie, April 7th	26	5	0
Vases and covers, pair, old Nankin hexagonal, with vandyke borders, and oval panels round the centres containing formal scrolls in white on blue ground, 11½ in. high. Christie, April 14th	81	18	0
Vases, set of three oviform, enamelled porcelain, painted with bamboos, birds, and chrysanthemums, in blue, red, and white, on mauve ground, 9¾ in. and 7¼ in. high. Christie, April 14th	141	15	0
Vases, set of three, Famille verte, enamelled with ladies, buildings, and vine-branches in vandyke borders, 18 in. high. Christie, April 14th	483	0	0
Vases, pair, Famille verte, oviform, and a beaker, enamelled with flowers in mirror-shaped panels on rouge-de-fer ground, with arabesque foliage in reserve in white, and with lam-brequin-shaped panels round the shoulders and feet, with green scrolls on yellow ground, 10 in. and 9¼ in. high. Christie, April 14th	178	10	0

SALE PRICES IN 1905

181

	£	s.	d.
Vases and covers, pair, Famille rose, ovi- form, and a beaker, enamelled with cocks, pæonies and other flowers, and with pink scroll borders, 11 in. and 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high. Christie, April 14th .	50	8	0
Vases and covers, set of three, and a pair of beakers, with powdered blue ground, marbled with gold, enam- elled with pæonies in Famille rose in leaf-shaped panels, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. and 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high. Christie, April 14th .	68	5	0

THE HUTH COLLECTION

Vase, with yellow ground, enamelled with a pheasant, pæony, and rocks in green and mauve, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. high. Christie .	900	0	0
Bottle, triple-gourd shape, enamelled with bright green ground, and decorated with flowers and foliage. Christie .	600	0	0
Lanterns, egg-shell, oviform shape, finely enamelled	1,200	0	0
Bowls and covers, pair	336	0	0
Bottles, pair, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high	450	0	0
Jug, barrel-shaped, with cover, 7 in. high	370	0	0
Bowl, apple-green ground, 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. diameter	370	0	0
Bowl, dark green wave pattern	350	0	0
Jar, cylindrical, with pale green ground and flying cranes in black and white	260	0	0

182 OLD CHINESE PORCELAIN

	£	s.	d.
Bottle, pear-shaped, black ground entirely decorated with formal flowers and scroll foliage reserved in white .	651	0	0
Bottle, gourd-shaped, 12 in. high . . .	300	0	0
Vase, oviform, prunus-pattern, finely painted branches of blossom on a rich marbled blue ground . . .	6,195	0	0
Vases, set of three, oviform, with covers, and a pair of beakers . . .	1,627	0	0
Plate, egg-shell, with ruby back, 8¼ in. diameter	280	0	0
Bowl, 10¾ in. high, 17½ in. diameter . . .	600	0	0

德 大
年 明
製 宣

FIG. 1
Seuen-tih, 1426-36

化 大
年 明
製 成

FIG. 2
Ching-hwa, 1465-88

年 成
製 化

FIG. 3

治 大
年 明
製 弘

FIG. 4
Hung-che, 1488-1506

德 大
年 明
製 正

FIG. 5
Ching-tih, 1506-22

靖 大
年 明
製 嘉

FIG. 6
Kea-tsing, 1522-67

慶 大
年 明
製 隆

FIG. 7
Lung-king, 1567-73

曆 大
年 明
製 萬

FIG. 8
Wan-leih, 1573-1620

治 大
年 清
製 順

FIG. 9
Shun-che 1644-60

熙 大
年 清
製 康

FIG. 10
K'ang-hsi, 1661-1722

正 大
年 清
製 雍

FIG. 11
Yung-chêng, 1722-36

隆 大
年 清
製 乾

FIG. 12
Ch'ien-lung, 1736-95

嘉慶
年製

FIG. 13
Kea-king, 1796-1821



FIG. 15
Seuen-tih, 1426-36



FIG. 17
Ch'ien-lung, 1736-95



FIG. 19
Kea-king, 1796-1821

大清
道光
年製

FIG. 14
Taou-kwang, 1822-51



FIG. 16
Yung-Ch'eng, 1722-36



FIG. 18
Ch'ien-lung, 1736-95



FIG. 20
Taou-kwang, 1821-51



FIG. 21



FIG. 22



FIG. 23



FIG. 24



FIG. 25



FIG. 26



FIG. 27



FIG. 28



FIG. 29



FIG. 30



FIG. 31



FIG. 32



FIG. 33



FIG. 34



FIG. 35



FIG. 36



FIG. 37



FIG. 38



FIG. 39



FIG. 40



FIG. 41



FIG. 42



FIG. 43



FIG. 44

MARKS IN THE FORM OF DEVICES 18,



FIG. 44A



FIG. 45



FIG. 46



FIG. 47



FIG. 48



FIG. 49



FIG. 50



FIG. 51



FIG. 52



FIG. 53



FIG. 54



FIG. 55



FIG. 56



FIG. 57



FIG. 58



FIG. 59



FIG. 60



FIG. 61



FIG. 62



FIG. 63



FIG. 64



FIG. 65



FIG. 66



FIG. 67



FIG. 68



FIG. 69



FIG. 70



FIG. 71



FIG. 72



FIG. 73



FIG. 74

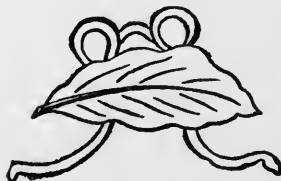


FIG. 75



FIG. 76

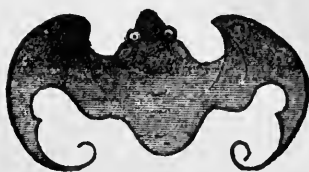


FIG. 77

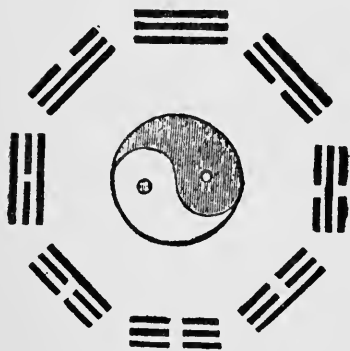


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