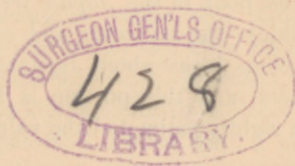


Morse (E. S.)

REVIEWS FROM THE NEW YORK NATION, BOSTON
TRANSCRIPT AND NEW YORK STUDIO OF
THE WORK OF JAMES L. BOWES, ESQ.,
ENTITLED "JAPANESE POTTERY."



SALEM PRESS PUBLISHING AND PRINTING CO.

1891.

NOTE.

The appearance of Mr. Bowes' richly illustrated book on Japanese pottery has called forth unstinted praise from a number of English journals of the highest repute. The *Academy* says, "It must always remain an indispensable authority;" the *Art Journal* pronounces it "remarkably free from mistakes," and the *Birmingham Post* says it is "invaluable for the purposes of identification and classification." How far this high praise is justified may be seen by the following pages. Were it not for the extravagant claims of the author concerning the all-embracing character of his collection of which this book is in a way an illustrated and descriptive catalogue, the accompanying reviews would never have been evoked.

The many plates illustrating the book are of such remarkable beauty and accuracy, and the marks are in most cases so well drawn that with extensive elimination and revision the book may be utilized for good service in identification.

As the discussion of the merits of this book has excited some interest among collectors, the following reviews from the *Nation*, the *Boston Transcript* and the *Studio* are republished and, at the same time, occasion is taken to correct a number of typographical errors in the *Studio* review, as this was published when the writer, being far west, was denied even the chance of a first revision. There is also appended extracts from a general notice of Mr. Bowes' book in the *Japan Weekly Mail*. In this notice Capt. F. Brinkley, the collector and expert, calls attention to Mr. Bowes' fallacious ideas about Japanese enamels, Satsuma ware and other matters, and this portion is here republished to show that others have rightly estimated the value of Mr. Bowes' book.

EDWARD S. MORSE.

FROM THE NEW YORK NATION—NOV. 13, 1890.

A GLANCE at the opening pages of Mr. Bowes' sumptuous book shows that the author claims to have brought together a collection of Japanese pottery so complete, as representing provinces, makers, and marks, that he ventures to imply that the Japanese themselves will in the future be obliged to appeal to it to learn about their own pottery. It devolves upon us, therefore, to determine, if possible, how far his claim is justified, and first of all by answering the question, What should such a collection include?

In any comprehensive study of the potter's art in Japan one must collect and study the common ware made for kitchen utensils, the vessels used by the better classes, and the brilliantly decorated and even gaudy vases, plaques, and grotesque figures made expressly for export. A museum of art or an ethnological museum would be justified in excluding the latter class of objects—a museum of art, in that the decoration would not represent the true art feeling of the people; and the ethnological museum, in that the objects are not such as the Japanese find use for. Pieces of this nature might find a home in some industrial art museum, though even here their influence, on the whole, would be pernicious.

Any complete collection of Japanese pottery, which is to furnish material for a work on the subject, should include only those objects made for the Japanese, and representing, of course, only things in accordance with Japanese taste and traditions; and these products should cover the whole range of fictile ware. A collection, even for an art museum, would not be true if it included only pieces having great intrinsic beauty; or, to put it in another way, if an art museum were to preserve only the beautiful pottery of any country, nine-tenths of the objects of this nature from England, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, and a goodly portion of the pottery of other countries, would have to be banished. Applying the same rule throughout a museum of art, other collections would suffer in the same way—rusty ironwork, rough glass and begrimed wood-carv-

(3)



ings, faded fabrics and fragments of ancient sculpture, pewter dishes and roofing-tiles, patina-covered coins and indistinguishable paintings of mediæval age—all would be discarded. The idea is at once so monstrous that no museum of art yet founded would listen to such a scheme for an instant. In the minds of many it has been found difficult to draw a hard-and-fast line between the collections proper for a museum of art and those for an ethnological museum. An acute student of classical antiquities regards as proper for an art museum all objects from nations which have been conspicuous as producers of art work in any line, and in these lines the collections should be exhaustive. The ethnological museum finds it still more difficult to draw the line, but its material comes usually from savage and barbarous peoples. This division does not, of course, exclude from the museum of art objects of savage and barbaric art.

Returning, then, to what a complete collection of Japanese pottery should be, a collector finds the following groups to study. First, the common ware of the masses, such as kitchen utensils, jugs, pans, etc. A few of these might well be got together to show how tasteful even common pottery is in an artistic country. This pottery, when of fair age, is usually the rarest to get, for, being in daily use and without value, it is when broken thrown away. Second, pottery for table use; objects used by the more refined classes for the tea ceremonies, for the writing-table, for the serving of wine, for flowers, and for house adornment generally, and for heating and illuminating purposes. The work of the amateur should also be collected, as showing a curious phase of the art; nor must be overlooked pieces noted for their age or ugliness, but which excite the admiration of the tea-lover, not for their beauty (for they have none), but because they come from the site of some famous kiln, or were used by some celebrated man in past times. Such specimens are breathlessly examined by the *chajin* in Japan in much the same way that an American, if it were possible to induce any reverence in him, might examine the boots of Christopher Columbus or the jack-knife of George Washington. The collection would not be complete without examples of the prehistoric and early lathe-turned pottery of the country.

If a collector were to limit himself to any portion of this scheme, he would obviously select the pottery made for the better classes—the poet, the artist, the scholar, the lover of tea and flowers—just as in collecting pictures he would not care for the painted signs,

the pictorial advertisements, and least of all for the stuff painted for the foreign market, but would collect paintings which had adorned the houses of cultivated people. Above all, no collection would be worthy the name that did not include as far as possible the marks of the various potters. In every important work on pottery, silverware, and the like, the marks have been assiduously collected and recorded, for, after all, if the piece is genuine, the mark is the first and last source of appeal.

With these brief suggestions as to what a collection of Japanese pottery should embrace, let us examine the beautiful work before us. We are not concerned with the statement on the title-page that the author is "His Imperial Majesty's Honorary Consul for Japan at Liverpool," but we are with the statement that he is the joint author of "Keramic Art of Japan," for, in the ten years that have elapsed since the publication of that work, he should have awakened a sadder and a wiser man. A casual survey of the objects figured prepares one to understand why he is at variance with nearly all collectors and artists who have been fascinated by the intrinsic beauty of genuine Japanese pottery. Not only does he find their tastes in this respect unaccountable, but he criticises a little manual issued in 1878 by the National Museum in Japan as being singularly deficient in information in regard to the brilliant development of the artistic taste of the country at an epoch to which he assigns many of his pieces. In his preface he acknowledges his indebtedness to a number of Japanese friends for assistance in verifying or correcting his classification, and he thanks them for specimens, some of them heirlooms, which were necessary to complete the sequence of several of the groups; Government departments even aiding him in this.

From these positive statements one prepares himself to enjoy a book which for the first time is to ascribe Japanese pottery to its rightful dates, makers, and provinces; to expect, also, that all the important makers at least, and all the provinces in which pottery was produced to any extent, are to be represented either by figures, marks or descriptions. It is true, the author has never been in Japan, has never come in contact with Japanese connoisseurs, or spent days poring over the treasures in some musty *kura*; has never sat down with the amiable Rokubei, the dignified Dohachi, the good-natured Yeiraku; has never had the opportunity of gathering words of wisdom from the lips of Kohitsu, Machida, Tanemura,

Maida, Ninagawa, and other experts. It is amazing to learn, however, that this not only makes no difference, but that such an experience is rather a hindrance to the proper forming of a correct judgment in regard to the subject. According to this dictum, then, we are to believe that Professor Fenollosa's profound knowledge of Japanese art would have been more trustworthy had he obtained his information by roaming about England and the Continent; and that Dr. Anderson's collection of *kakemono* in the British Museum would have been far better if he had picked it up from bric-à-brac shops and auction sales.

Let us see the result of this confidence on the author's part as affecting the proper identification of the specimens he figures. The following corrections we make with the kindest—nay, the most sympathetic—feeling, knowing the insuperable difficulties one must encounter so far away from the "base of supply." We pass over for the present Mr. Bowes' numerous mistakes in confounding the name of the kiln with that of the potter, the marks which have been wrongly read, and, above all, the erroneous dates assigned to so many specimens, and come at once to the vital question as to whether the attribution of many of his pieces is correct or not. If correct, then his book may be taken as a guide, as far as it goes. More than a third of the specimens figured come under the category of export goods, many of them exceedingly beautiful, but we are concerned only with such as truly represent native pottery. And here we might apply the author's own words, which are quite just in regard to the old Japanese porcelain in the Dresden Museum, made, as every one now knows, by the Japanese expressly for export. Mr. Bowes says: "Turning, now, from this old Japan porcelain, which, as regards the form of the objects and their decoration, is at variance with the taste of Japan," etc.

Fortunately for the student, the plates, some of which have done service before in "Keramic Art of Japan," are marvels of the chromolithographer's skill, and the book is also illustrated by many excellent heliotypes. The pieces are so well depicted that one can tell at a glance the character of the specimen figured. On the plate lettered as Satsuma are specimens from three other provinces, a bottle from Tamba, a square bottle of old Kiyomidzu (called *amamori* by the Japanese, from a peculiar staining which resembles the rain stains on the paper *shoji*), and a *choku* from Higo. On the plate marked Province of Higo there are figured six specimens, only

one of which belongs to that province: two and probably three of them are Chikuzen, and two of them are Satsuma (Mishima, white on gray). Of the nine specimens figured and described as Higo, only three are from that province and one of these has been defaced by subsequent decoration. On the plate marked Suruga not one of the specimens figured was made in that province. The two specimens figured as Awaji of the eighteenth century were made within thirty years at Shido, Sanuki. (This will add an important province to Mr. Bowes' list, and if he can get examples of the beautiful work of Minzan and Nawohachi and of the Tomita, Yashima, Takamatsu, and other ovens, the province will be fairly represented.)

Nine specimens are catalogued as belonging to the province of Nagato, four of which appear on Plate lviii, one on Plate lvii and one on Plate lxvi. Following the catalogue numbers in the description, we find No. 1 is Shino, Owari. No. 2 is an exceedingly rare and old specimen of Onohara, Tamba. (The figure of this specimen is so accurate that we venture to say its bottom is unglazed and bears the impression of cloth on a dark-red clay.) No. 3 is Mishima Satsuma obscured by subsequent decoration. Nos. 5 and 6 are not Nagato. No. 7 is questionable, and Nos. 8 and 9 from the description alone should be recognized by the novice as Kiyomidzu, Kioto, and if further proof were needed, the mark is given which, though unintelligible to the author, is that of Kitei, one of the typical Kiyomidzu makers.

Why go further? Yet it is impossible to pass over such a glaring error as in the case of the specimen figured in Plate lxvi, as belonging to the province of Kii, and made by Sanrakuyen. Shades of Zengoro! It was not made within three hundred miles of that province, and there is no such maker as Sanrakuyen. On the decline of a ware made at an oven in Kii, a potter was hired to revive, if possible, the ware in Tokio, Province of Musashi. The oven was called by the poetical name of Sanrakuyen. The essay of this oven proved such a dismal failure that, after a few years, it was abandoned. The pieces bear either the large or small mark, and sometimes the painted mark of Sanrakuyen. As this specimen was figured in a plate that has already done service in the work of Audsley and Bowes, published nearly ten years ago, time enough has elapsed to have corrected the error.

On Plate xl, a piece is figured as Omi, whereas it was made in

Ofuke village, Owari. A plastic figure is described as made by Nagami Iwao, Province of Yamashiro, whereas it was made by a potter named Nagami in the village of Yamashita, Province of Iwami. (This will add another province to Mr. Bowes' list.) With the exception of two tea-jars, the ten specimens described as Idzumo are all of the yellow, buff, and mottled brown glazes. The example No. 981 was not made in the early part of the century, but within thirty years, evidently under Government direction, as the decorated model may be seen in the National Museum, Tokio. There is not a suggestion in Mr. Bowes' collection of the vigorous work of Zenshiro, the beautiful productions of the Rakuzan oven, or the remarkable white glaze and blue decorated wares of two hundred years ago. Similarly, under the province of Settsu, the poverty of his collection is shown by cataloguing eleven pieces of Sanda celadon, mostly modern; one piece of Kikko; a trap for cuttle fish, and two pieces made in Kobe for export. Not a word, however, about the brilliant glazes of the Sakurai oven, the pure white and quaintly decorated pieces of Kosobe, the varied and remarkable products of Kiuzan, and the æsthetic work of the early Naniwa oven. Mr. Bowes' estimate as to the artistic quality of the pottery of Tamba, Tôtômi, and certain other provinces is invalidated because his material, as revealed by his catalogue, is altogether too meagre and imperfect upon which to base an opinion.

The work, for what relates to the identification of pottery, is a striking example of how far one may go astray who undertakes to study the products of a country from just the opposite side of the globe.

FROM THE BOSTON TRANSCRIPT—DECEMBER 30, 1890.

To the Editor of the Transcript: I have to thank you for making public a reply of Mr. Bowes to a review of his work on Japanese pottery which appeared in the *Nation* of Nov. 13. So long as this reply lurked about in the form of a circular it was impossible to find a sufficient pretext for noticing it. Now that it has shown its head the way is plain. I regret to say that the richest portion of this circular, namely, his attempt to defend one of the many specimens involved in the *Nation's* criticism, is unaccountably missing in your paper. That your readers may get an insight into some of the features Mr. Bowes counts as essential in identifying pottery I am compelled to reproduce it here.

Mr. Bowes alludes to the tone of the *Nation's* review. The tone, severe or otherwise, was naturally evoked by the preposterous pretensions and inexcusable blunders of Mr. Bowes.

There are different grades of errors. One may perhaps be excused for assigning a wrong date to a specimen, unless in every case hundreds of years are added where tens would do. A more serious blunder is to wrongly read a mark, as willing Japanese are always accessible to aid in its interpretation. A still grosser blunder is to assign a piece to the wrong province; it could only be greater by assigning it to the wrong country. In the *Nation's* review, twenty-four blunders of the latter class were corrected. Naturally believing that the more important specimens were figured, and the figures themselves being unmistakable, attention was mainly given to these. Observe now what Mr. Bowes says: "Your reviewer questions the correctness of the classification of about a dozen pieces, mostly of minor importance!" Mr. Bowes seems about as unable to count as he is to identify. Of these twenty-four specimens he attempts to justify the correctness of his attribution of one only, and as he is willing to take this as a test, let us abide by it.

He says, "Take a single instance as a test of your reviewer's judgment; the piece of Nagato ware which he classified as Shino, Owari, was also so placed by Professor Morse, whose attention, as I see by my notes, it especially attracted. This specimen I find has burnt into it the crest of the Prince of Nagato, which conclusively proves the correctness of my classification. Is it necessary for me to further pursue these over-confident so-called corrections, in face of such evidence as this?" Well, yes; I should say we had better go a little further, since he is willing to take this as a test case. It is necessary to tell Mr. Bowes, with what gravity one can command, that the proper identification of a specimen is not at all affected by whatever crest or other decoration it carries upon it. His book would indeed have been "confusion worse confounded" had he followed this unique method of classification. If he binds himself to this method, let him turn to his book, page 187, and he will find a piece of Hizen that will have to be removed to Tsushima; on page 258 a piece of Kaga, decorated in red and gold, will have to be removed to Bizen; on page 301 a piece of Kyoto will have to be carefully broken into two pieces, one of which must be classified with Mino and the other fragment with Bitchiu; on page 310

another piece of Kioto (Awata of Kinkozan) will have to be placed with Tôtômi. All these pieces have "burnt in," as he expresses it, the crests of the princes of these respective provinces. Could the force of absurdity go further?

Mr. Bowes says in his circular that the photographic representations of the objects, however perfect they may be, are altogether unsafe guides where glazes are concerned. What, then, is the reader to depend upon? He will look in vain for even a brief allusion to the fact that the crest of a Nagato prince is to be seen on this typical specimen of Shino. If his excuse is that he has not seen it before, he shows how superficially he has examined his specimen.

We come now to examine a more serious blunder committed, one might say, without excuse. In his book he quotes in full an article from the *Japan Mail* in reply to one in the *Boston Herald*. In the circular now issued by him and published in the *Transcript*, he leaves out all reference to the *Herald* and mendaciously attributes the extracts quoted as being directed against my illustrated article on "Old Satsuma" which appeared in *Harper's Magazine* for September, 1888. As Mr. Bowes has probably never seen the *Herald* article we shall reproduce it. The article in question was written by one of the staff of the *Boston Herald* who has for years been familiar with my collection. He has brought artists and art-potters to view the collection and has noticed the fact that wares decorated only by their delicious glazes, and beautiful in their graceful shapes have always excited immediate admiration.

A reference to the intrinsic merits of these kinds was made in my Satsuma article. Captain Brinkley, who has never seen my collection, takes exception to this, and his article being shown to the *Herald* correspondent, he felt called upon to write the article which prompted the reply in the *Japan Mail*.

Before reproducing the *Herald* article, it may be well to make a few extracts from Brinkley's "History of Japanese Ceramics" and the Brinkley-Greey catalogue, to show that he is not wholly blind to the beauty of rich glazes. Of Takatori Captain Brinkley says, "The rich color of its glaze and skilful blending make it worth a place in any collection." Of Zeze, Omi he says, "Of such excellent finish that their reputation is scarcely second to the Takatori *chef d'œuvres*." Of Tosa, that "Specimens are also found whose miniature designs, executed with great care and taste in colored

enamels, recall the style of old Satsuma." References to monochrome and flambé glazes of Satsuma, and of other wares, are in the same spirit.

Now I wish emphatically to state that it is to specimens of this nature that I had reference in my Satsuma article, and not to the *Horidashi*, the quaint, deformed and often plain objects that one sometimes sees among the utensils of the *chajin*. It is an ignorant aspersion on the taste of the Japanese and an outrageous aspersion on the tastes of American collectors to imply that they see beauty in such objects. Truth compels me to say, however, that many of these odd pieces are more attractive to persons of refinement than the mass of export goods which have unaccountably found their way into some collections abroad.

The following is the *Herald's* article to which the *Japan Mail* refers. It will be seen by this that Captain Brinkley's estimate of the Satsuma article is somewhat at variance with that of Mr. Bowes.

EDWARD S. MORSE.

FROM THE BOSTON HERALD—JAN. 21, 1889.

The *Japan Weekly Mail* for Dec. 1, the English newspaper published at Yokohama, has an appreciative comment on Professor E. S. Morse's article on "Old Satsuma" that appeared in Harper's for September. This comment is particularly notable from its being from the pen of Mr. Brinkley, the maker of the well-known collection of Japanese pottery and porcelain bearing his name, brought to New York and sold piece by piece, a few years ago. Mr. Brinkley, who is the editor of the *Japan Mail*, ranks high among pottery connoisseurs, but has collected not so much for the sake of representative specimens as for conspicuously attractive articles. Mr. Brinkley says—

"An essay on 'Old Satsuma' by Professor Morse, in Harper's Magazine for September, is incomparably the most interesting and exhaustive contribution yet made to the public's knowledge of this greatly prized and greatly misunderstood ware. We have already alluded at some length to the opening paragraphs of the essay, and expressed the opinion that Professor Morse's faithfulness to the canons of the tea clubs seemed likely to betray him into an exaggerated estimate of the sober and sombre types of Japanese ceramic productions—types which the world ought not to be taught to consider representative of the country's best art. This necessary criticism, however, should be tempered by the admission that Professor Morse has been the first to direct Western attention to the groove in which the taste of ninety-nine per cent. among Japanese virtuosi has travelled since the days of Yoshimasa (1490). He has corrected the very mistaken notion that the gaudy, elaborately decorated and imposing wares

exported from this country since its ports were opened to the outer world are worthy examples of its true art. He has also collected an immense number of specimens fit to form a frontispiece to the gospel of the Cha-no-yu, and these specimens enable him to illustrate the excellent theses which he publishes from time to time on his favorite subject. * * *

* Nothing could be more useful than his exposure of the frauds practised in obedience to the mania for highly decorated 'Satsuma,' that prevailed in former years, and still prevails in Europe and America. Among the numerous specimens of so-called 'Satsuma-yaki' sent abroad since the opening of the country, probably not one in every ten thousand was really 'old Satsuma,' and certainly not one per cent. was 'Satsuma' at all. Professor Morse explains all this fully, and with the authority of an expert. It is really pleasant to find the subject of Japanese ceramics treated by one who knows what he is talking about and is not compelled to trust to the dicta of superficial observers and presumptuous charlatans. We sincerely hope that Professor Morse will succeed in educating American collectors to a true sense of the beauties of Japanese ceramic products, to which end we would fain see him lead them a little beyond the austere conservatism of the Cha-no-yu ethics."

Concerning the foregoing remarks, it should be said that Mr. Brinkley has, in some respects, an erroneous notion of the character of the collection of Professor Morse, which he has never seen. He appears to have mistakenly conceived that the entire collection consists of tea jars and sombre bowls, whereas it includes many hundreds of the most fascinatingly beautiful specimens in decoration and glaze. In other words, it is a complete representation of Japanese ceramic art, from the most charming forms of Kioto, Satsuma and Kaga, through the delicious glazes of the Cha-no-yu taste down to the common utensils of the lower classes, and beyond to the early and prehistoric forms. This is what makes the collection absolutely unique. It would have, indeed, been one-sided if it had contained only the utensils of the Chajin, or, worse still, if it had been merely made up of the objects termed "pretty." Again, Mr. Brinkley is mistaken if he supposes that the Cha-no-yu forms and colors are not attractive. It is a noteworthy and significant fact that the best artists who have seen Professor Morse's collection—men like Vedder, Coleman, Chase, Vinton, Ross Turner and others—are immediately fascinated by the very school of art that Mr. Brinkley seems, as yet, to have been unable to appreciate. It is also a significant fact that American collectors, such as Mr. Havemeyer, Mr. Dana, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Walters, Mr. Hastings, and many others have been equally enraptured over the enduring charms of just the kind of pottery that Mr. Brinkley seems most unaccountably blind to. Had he followed the sale of his collection in New York, Mr. Brinkley would probably have been amazed at the promptness with which the quaint bowls and tea jars were snatched up; and he would probably find among those yet remaining unsold the very specimens that seemed pretty in his sight.

FROM THE STUDIO—JAN. 10, 1891.

To the Editor of the Studio :

Since you have deemed it of sufficient interest to publish the reply of Mr. Bowes to the *Nation's* review of his book, together with my answer to that reply in the *Transcript*, it may be of interest to your readers to pursue the matter a little further.

With the extravagant claims of Mr. Bowes and the praise bestowed upon the book by reviewers in reputable English journals, there is really no other course to pursue than to follow the matter up, disagreeable as it is, and to show how unreliable the book is as a guide to a knowledge of Japanese pottery.

Instead of an exhaustive collection which Mr. Bowes claims to possess, the poverty of its material is far more apparent than the richness of it. The only explanation of this condition of things is that Mr. Bowes has been woefully deluded, and, judging from the lavish praise bestowed upon his book, he has successfully deluded many others. It is hopeless, of course, to undertake to dispel this delusion in Mr. Bowes, but it is a pity that others are to be deceived by this pretentious display under the guise of the book-maker's art and lithographer's skill.

Mr. Bowes states that the *Nation's* review calls attention to about a dozen errors, mostly of minor importance. In reality twenty-four errors of major importance were shown, one only of which he attempts to defend.

Judging as far as one can from his meagre descriptions, from the names of the objects such as cups with saucers, etc., and the admissions he makes regarding many of them, it would be safe to say that at least half the specimens figured, and a large number of those described, come under the definition of "export" goods, many of them doubtless very beautiful, but as much out of place in a collection of Japanese pottery, as representing the people and their tastes, as would a lot of Manchester-made Java sarongs be in a collection of typical English cotton prints. There may be left three or four hundred examples which, from their genuineness, are worthy of attention. To classify the bulk of these properly, requires but little skill or credit. With the admirable South Kensington Hand-book of Japanese Pottery edited by Dr. Franks, an ordinary collector should be able to assign most of these to their

rightful dates, and provinces, as for example, such wares as Kanzan, Dohachi, Toyosuke, Hozan, Iwakurazan, Mimpei, Kenzan, Kinkozan, Kitei, Rokubei, Kenya, Ninsei, Seifu, Rengetsu, Taizan, Tanzan, Tozan, Yeiraku, Yusetsu, Zoroku, Akahada, Banko, Inuyama, Kameyama, Kuwana, Minato, Ohi, Kutani, Soma, Asahi, Tōtōmi, Idzumo, Idzumi, and many others. In fact, to know these wares is to learn the alphabet of the study.

Having subtracted the above wares from Mr. Bowes' list, a still smaller residuum remains, and on this the real work of identification and classification begins. In fact it is among these alone that any one claiming to be an expert in such matters should show some knowledge.

Unfortunately Mr. Bowes has made a number of grave blunders among those of the simpler class as was pointed out in the *Nation's* review. In his reply he says that as the *Nation's* review does not point out any errors in the translation of the numerous marks, he feels no doubt that the renderings are essentially correct. The limits of the *Nation's* review probably permitted only the pointing out of the grosser blunders, and since he felicitates himself upon the idea that the remainder of his work is substantially correct, it becomes an unpleasant duty to point out many other errors in identification, classification, etc.

The errors on Plate I, which acts as a frontispiece, are prophetic of what is to follow; a glance at this plate shows an extraordinary division of what is called decorated and undecorated wares. The refined decoration in blue on a Karatsu bowl is evidently no decoration in his eyes; loud colors, gold, red and blue in emphatic and crowded masses are what he understands by decoration. As to the other four specimens, the tea-jar is not a Toshiro, and the Seto-Kusuri Satsuma has no resemblance to that ware and, right or wrong, they give no idea whatever of the beautiful running and mottled glazes of Chikuzen, Tamba, Omi, Iga, Buzen and other provinces.

On Plate VII, out of forty-seven different objects represented as utensils used in the ceremony of Cha-no-yu, twenty of them are never used in the ceremony; these are used in another tea-service called *Sen-Cha*, in which the tea, instead of being ground to a fine powder and drunk from a large bowl in which it is made, is prepared in the ordinary leaf form in a tea-pot and drunk from

small cups. The cloth labelled finger-napkin is not used to wipe the fingers upon, but to wipe the bamboo spoon and the top of the tea-jar. The fingers of the *Chajin* are supposed to be clean.

On page 63 Mr. Bowes complains of Dr. Ernest Hart, who in a lecture before the Society of Arts made the statement that he did not know of half a dozen pieces of genuine Satsuma in England. Mr. Bowes writes "and this he said without having informed himself on the subject by an inspection of the series here catalogued, a series which is as well known in Japan as it is in this country." I must confess that in a somewhat extended acquaintance in Japan with collectors, antiquarians, dealers and others likely to be interested in such matters I never heard this series mentioned. I did see an allusion to the Satsuma figured in the "Ceramic Art of Japan," and as half the specimens are there marked as being in the possession of James L. Bowes, Esq., and as a number of the Satsuma plates of that book are called upon to do service in the present volume, it is no injustice to quote the words in question, particularly as they are by one to whom he so often approvingly appeals. Captain Brinkley in his "History of Japanese Ceramics" says, "it may be worth noticing that in the beautifully illustrated work of Audsley and Bowes pains are taken to divide a series of Satsuma specimens — representing at most a period of twenty years—into three sections, which are distinguished as *Old*, *Middle* and *Modern*, but which in reality represent nothing more than different degrees of medication. In truth, these evidences of age, the amateur is so much disposed to trust, are of all things most deceptive, and he has profited well by his experience on whom the first impression their presence produces is one of suspicion." Steeping in strong infusions of tea, boiling in decoctions of *yashi* and sulphuric acid, or exposure to the fumes of damp incense are among some of the methods mentioned.

His statements on page 80 are quite ridiculous in their absurdity. In speaking of the Raku ware he expresses surprise that this ware should have taken "so strong a hold on the minds of the Japanese, and still more that connoisseurs in other countries have so blindly accepted such objects as the highest outcome of that nation in Ceramic Art."

In a somewhat extended study of the subject I have met many of the leading connoisseurs in Europe and America and do not remember hearing a word of praise or otherwise in regard to this cu-

rious ware. Some of the earlier bowls have a remarkable deep black glaze and this has been commented upon. It is curious to observe, however, that among the few specimens in the possession of Mr. Bowes are some that have "soft Raku glazes and were of varied and brilliant hues, and were applied with skill and taste producing very satisfactory results." (Page 83.)

In this connection it may be mentioned, as an odd coincidence, that when the work of any potter of whom he may have heard is wanting in his collection it is generally referred to as not only inartistic but absolutely of no value. (Page 83.) He is equally emphatic in his expressions concerning the pottery of those provinces of which he has but few examples. The Japanese prefer Raku bowls to drink tea from, not because they impart a delicate flavor to the tea, as Mr. Bowes says, but because being of soft pottery and thick, they are non-conducting, thus keeping the tea hot and enabling the bowl to be held in the hand without pain.

Page 127. He speaks of Takatori ware as having beauties apparent only to the eyes of the native connoisseurs!

Page 130. Mimpei was an Awaji potter and not a Kioto one.

Page 134. His remarks about Koto ware and date assigned are erroneous, as will be seen further on.

Page 136. The province of Buzen is dismissed in eleven lines.

Page 140. He describes Chikugo pottery, of which he has none, as having a soft, light-colored clay, somewhat similar to that employed in Minato ware. Typical pieces of Chikugo, bearing the mark of Yanagiwara and also a *kakihan*, are made of a dense hard grey or dark brown clay, and give out a ringing sound when struck. The pottery described by Mr. Bowes has no more resemblance to Minato ware than it has to Royal Worcester.

Page 143. Mr. Bowes derives his estimate of Tamba ware, presumably, from the two specimens catalogued. He concludes that these specimens "serve only to show how rude the objects were which fascinated the minds of the Chajin." Capt. Brinkley has occasion to remark that tea-utensils of considerable merit were manufactured in this province towards the end of the 16th century, and that early in the present century pieces of greatly improved description were turned out at Sasayama. The paste was carefully manipulated, and the decoration, sometimes applied in the form of *pâte sur pâte* to an unglazed surface, and sometimes enamelled in the ordinary method, was generally of a very artistic nature.

Page 144. Mr. Bowes considers the pottery made at Shidoro particularly inartistic and rough, both as regards pottery and glaze. We judge from this that he has been particularly unfortunate in his selection of the two examples he has in his collection.

Page 145. We are told that the introduction of the industry in Tsushima appears to be of recent date, for nothing is heard of it until the period of Bunkwa (1804–1818). He should see some of the examples of Yaheda, made in 1680 or thereabouts.

Page 148. He has one specimen of Tosa, and this example leads him to express the opinion that “no great proficiency was attained during the time the kiln had been in existence.”

Page 152. Mr. Bowes, after confessing his meagre information on the subject, says in regard to the pottery of Suwo, “it is improbable that it was pursued to any extent beyond the making of common wares for daily use, or for the *cha-no-yu* ceremonial.” Chancing, however, to have an unsigned and undecorated example of ware from this province which he ascertains is rare, he says it “is one of the rarest and most beautiful of Ceramic wares of the country. . . . It is a dish of buff pottery of very fine texture, covered with an opaque grey glaze, which is crackled in an altogether perfect manner.” If these expressions of admiration are not animated by the rarity of the specimen, then Mr. Bowes is slowly—very slowly—beginning to appreciate what the *Chajin* admires.

Page 152. His erroneous conceptions of Akahada ware, based upon the possession of a few specimens, will be shown further on.

Page 160. A piece bearing the mark of Sanrakuyen is said to be a typical piece of Yeiraku. The laughable absurdity of this blunder is shown up in the *Nation's* review.

Page 161. Equally erroneous is the statement that *Zuisido* is the potter's name. *Dzuishi* is a poetical name for the oven, and *do* means house. Meppotani ware usually bears the impressed mark of *Dzuishi*.

Page 208. The specimen catalogued as *Seto-Kusuri Satsuma* has no resemblance to that ware whatever. If any of his *Mishima* and *Seto-Kusuri* are signed, he fails to note it.

Page 208. Cat. No. 169 is not late in the 17th century, but possibly middle of 19th century. It is recent in form and decoration.

Page 230. Mr. Bowes would have shown his wisdom in deferring to the views of his Japanese friend. It is certainly not Sat-

suma. Judging from the meagre description, it will probably turn out to be Fukagawa, Nagato.

Page 248. A dish regarded as Kaga is sandwiched between a piece said to be an example of early ware and one made in the earlier years of the eighteenth century. He says, "some difference of opinion has been expressed as to the origin of this piece, but the balance inclines to this classification." Capt. Brinkley, however, says in regard to this piece: "As for Messrs. Audsley and Bowes' 'oldest example, a large, deep dish, of rather crude manufacture, clearly denoting its early date, decorated with archaic figures and conventional ornaments in a peculiarly dull red,'—a dish proposed to the readers of the *Keramic Art* as a means of enabling them to 'identify ancient pieces which may hereafter come to hand'—we can only say either that it belongs to the last period of the above three, or that, as seems not unlikely from the illustration and accompanying description, this dish, 'many centuries old,' is one of the many pieces produced in Owari within the past few years especially for the purpose of deceiving unwary collectors."

Capt. Brinkley further says: "It may be well to mention here that the soft, ivory-tinted *pâte* described by Audsley and Bowes as peculiar to the early Kaga yaki belongs essentially to the last period of manufacture" (1860-1880).

Page 225. Seiundo is not the name of the potter, but *Seiun* is a poetical name, and *do*, house.

Page 291. A solitary specimen of Ohi, Kaga prompts him to say, "this rude work affords a fair example of the ware made at the factory of Ohimachi for the use of the *Chajin*."

Page 295. The mark Kiuraku is rendered by Mr. Bowes Keiraku, and this blunder causes another one, as the author suggests that *Kei* may signify that the piece was made by Keiniu, the eleventh Chojiro! whereas the mark is that of a potter named Yasuke, who lived at Shinmachi, Kyoto, and made Raku ware up to 1860. He bears no relation to the Raku family, and, of course, the mark has never appeared in the Raku generations.

Page 298. Shosai is the name of a Raku maker in Settsu, not in Yamashiro.

Page 300. The seal Ninsei is a false mark, and therefore the bowl is not genuine.

Page 314. We are here informed that a clumsy-looking teapot was not only made by Kenzan, but that in doing this he had the

modest affectation to inscribe upon it that he copied it from Makudsu. Makudsu was born many years after Kenzan died. The teapot in question was made by the modern Makudsu at Yokohama, who has marked it a copy of Kenzan.

Page 318. A piece of genuine Dohachi, judging from the description and characteristic marks, is commented on as follows: "Stated by connoisseurs to have been made by Dohachi about 1850, but it bears the following impressed marks." Why shouldn't it?

Page 336. The simple mark Seiniu is rendered Seikiyoshiniu, which combines in a novel way the Chinese and Japanese pronunciation.

Page 337, Cat. Nos. 545 and 546. The author says, probably made by Kitei and possibly used by the Mikado. These were not made by Kitei, and the other statement is probably equally erroneous.

Page 337, Cat. No. 547. Not Kioto, but Shigaraki, Omi.

Page 338. Mark Seifu, is upside down.

Page 339, Cat. No. 554. The mark Shawa is not Kioto, nor even the province of Yamashiro, but belongs to a village in Ise; date 1858, or thereabouts. This ware also bears the marks Sekitokuan, and Unkinan.

Page 340. The mark of Mimpei is not that of the original Mimpei, but a later period—say 1870.

Page 364, Cat. No. 666 has no resemblance whatever to an early form of Inuyama, but is nearly the last—say 1850.

Page 365. The mark Genzan should be read Kenzan.

Page 365, Cat. No. 671, is not Owari, but Ise.

Page 368, Cat. No. 681. We are told that the mark Horaku is the name of the maker, whereas it is one of the numerous marks of the Toyosuke pottery.

Page 431. A vessel called *Yojitate* is said to be made to hold chop-sticks. *Yoji* means toothpick!

Page 432. The same blunder is repeated in Cat. Nos. 915 and 916.

Page 435. Mr. Bowes gives the date of Koto as 1800, and says, page 134, that native records give no account of the ware. It would be interesting to know what native records he consulted. Had he referred to the Brinkley-Greey Catalogue he would have found the date 1840 quite correct.

Page 441. His piece of Tozan is accredited to the year Kwan-

yei—1624-1643. Capt. Brinkley says that the ware was first produced in 1840. My own date places its origin in 1826. If there is any doubt about it I should incline to the later date. Which ever proves correct, Mr. Bowes should take off about 200 years.

Page 442. A large vase is placed with Harima, for what reason only the extraordinary methods of Mr. Bowes can explain. He catalogues only two specimens besides this one — not enough by fifty to judge of a ware. A good guess would be Akahada, Yamato. He says some connoisseurs have been inclined to place it with Rokubei, but none of the generations of Rokubei have ever used a mark even remotely approaching this. A further study of the specimen will probably reveal the fact that it is one of a number of specimens that have within a few years turned up in New York and Paris, each specimen different in matter of surface and glaze, but all bearing the spiral mark and either *Ho* or *Sei* in addition. These are so recent in the market that they are almost warm from the oven.

Page 443. The bottle described under Catalogue No. 953, said to be seventeenth century, is not over forty years old. We venture to say that there is no spiral thread mark on the bottom; clay, slate-colored and fine, and the bottle slightly constricted in the middle.

Page 444. A bowl marked Shidoro is placed somewhere between the years 1596 and 1614. The mark Shidoro was not used until a hundred years after Mr. Bowes' date, and the mark he figures is a recent form, perhaps fifty years old. The mark used on Shidoro before the time of Yenshiu (1680) has never been deciphered by Japanese antiquaries.

Page 452. The first mark on this page should read Unyei, not Wunsui. The second mark should read Unzen, not Unki.

Page 453. Second mark should read Unyei, not Wunsui.

Page 454. Under the province of Suwo, Mr. Bowes catalogues one specimen, unsigned. He also makes public a private letter from a Japanese friend, which reads as follows: 'Prof. Morse has been in my province two months looking for Tada ware, with what success I know not. Nowadays specimens of this ware are very scarce.' A reference to my journal shows that I was in that province just two days; in that time, however, thanks to the high officials to whom I had been commended by a gentleman (who, if the Shogunate had been prolonged, would have been Daimio of the province), I had placed in my possession forty-six specimens of

Tada and other Suwo wares, many of them with impressed and written marks. No wonder the ware had become scarce!

Page 460. His specimens of Akahada do not date back between 1751 and 1763; they are all recent, as proved by the marks. In the early part of this century the mark Akahada was first used in a symmetrical gourd-shaped figure. In 1830 a potter from Koriyama made pottery at Akahada and added the impressed mark Moku-haku. The round stamp Akahada on Mr. Bowes' specimens is the very latest and may be twenty years old. The characteristics of this ware, as described by Mr. Bowes, refer only to the recent productions.

Page 463. The character, when alone, should read *Chi*, not *Ji*.

Page 465. The work of Zuisido is again referred to.

Page 466. The mark Sanrakuyen, as belonging to Kii, fittingly terminates this unique catalogue.

As to typographical errors, a fair reading of the work would have eliminated Harria for Harima; Takagamire for Takagamine; Kin Kozan in one part of the book and Kinkozan in another. In the earlier part of the book, Rukubioye can drink out of a Kando-tskuri, later on Rokubei uses a tokkuri.

The errors thus far pointed out do not by any means complete the list. There is no reason to believe that the ages attributed to his Hizen and other porcelains are not in many cases as wide the mark as in those to which attention has already been called.

The circumstances that have led Mr. Bowes to systematically lengthen the ages of so many of his specimens naturally incline one to believe that he increases their value in his eyes by so doing.

With a lamentable lack of material he has attempted to judge the merit of the products of many provinces. He has mixed up a host of objects with his many good specimens — objects that have no more place in a collection of Japanese pottery than the Malay *Kriesses* made at Birmingham have in a collection of British weapons.

He is, however, wedded to this material, and finding the market exhausted of those specimens that truly merit attention as being made for the Japanese, used by the Japanese, and in strict accordance with Japanese tastes, he is exceedingly reluctant to be undeceived. The poverty of his own collection, however, cannot be concealed by his attempt to belittle the tastes of American collectors.

EDWARD S. MORSE,

SALEM, MASS., January 7, 1891.

FROM THE JAPAN WEEKLY MAIL—JAN. 10, 1891.

“Mr. Bowes has never been in Japan, we believe. In reviewing one of his previous works, we alluded to this fact as a drawback to perfect knowledge, but we now find that our sympathy was misplaced, for Mr. Bowes asserts very emphatically that Europe is the proper place to study Japanese Ceramic art. His theory about this is so curious that we venture to quote it in full.” (Here follows a long quotation from Mr. Bowes’ book.)

“We admire the boldness of this announcement and its originality. But at the same time, we at this end of the water cannot consent to be thus quietly relegated to a back seat. It may be frankly admitted that a student of Japanese Ceramic art in Europe possesses some advantages. He can study the collection made by the Elector of Saxony between 1698 and 1724, that brought together in Madrid, and those assembled in more recent times for museum purposes. At Dresden he can be quite certain of seeing what kind of work Japanese potters were capable of doing at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, whereas in Japan there exists no collection of correspondingly authenticated date. But surely this is a very small stage on the route to complete knowledge. The collections in Dresden and Madrid are virtually confined to one class of ware. They tell us nothing whatever about the hundred varieties which complete the Japanese repertoire, and the information which they do convey is not only partial but misleading, since there are the strongest reasons for believing that these exported specimens of Hizen porcelain owed much of their decorative motive to foreign inspiration. Further, Mr. Bowes is mistaken in his ideas as to the routes by which Japanese Ceramic specimens travelled westward. It is entirely erroneous to suppose that the Ceramic exhibits, sent by Japan to Paris in 1867, were taken from the Tokugawa collection. Of not a single specimen can this be stated. They were one and all procured in the open market, and similar pieces might have been obtained by anyone whose fancy lay in that direction. Truly, we can scarcely suppress a smile when we read that the real purpose of these exhibits was to raise funds wherewith to carry on the war.

Mr. Bowes has evidently very little conception of what the Tokugawa Regents were even in 1867. Equally glaring in his misconception about the manner in which the collections of the feudal barons were dispersed. There was no hesitation whatsoever about

offering these collections in the Japanese market. In fact, no other way of getting rid of them existed. The invariable method was to call for tenders from Japanese tradespeople, and as the highest tender was unhesitatingly accepted without reference to the real value of the article, many extraordinary bargains were made. But foreigners had no share in this spoil. They were not even suffered to know that such sales took place. Not until after the specimens came into the hands of Japanese dealers were they offered to foreigners. It is a mere myth to imagine that they were privately sent out of the country, or that collectors abroad had better opportunities of procuring them than collectors in Japan. Mr. Bowes must abandon this silly theory, entirely inconsistent as it is with the sound judgment he displays in other directions. We wish, too, that he could be induced to recognize the truth about those curious enamels upon which he now builds another wonderful argument. Early in the Meiji era an enterprising exporter conceived the idea of turning to account the enamel-making capacities of Japan. With this object he had a number of specimens manufactured. Being intended for the western market, they differed from previous specimens of the same class, both as to size and decorative design. These enamels have perplexed Mr. Bowes ever since. He cannot reconcile himself to the fact that they were a new and special manufacture, and since he fails to find any Japanese connoisseur who can identify them as old work, he concludes that they are specimens which were secretly spirited out of Japan, having lain there for decades hidden from public gaze. Even the paper pasted over them at the time of shipment helps to confirm him in this view, though in point of fact the use of Japanese paper in this manner has been a common device of careful packers for the past twenty-five years, and is a common device to-day."

Giving Mr. Bowes the credit of unsparingly exposing some of the shameless frauds practised on collectors, Captain Brinkley says:—

"We note, however, with regret, that Mr. Bowes himself clings to some fallacious ideas. He still thinks that large, boldly decorated specimens of Satsuma faience were manufactured in old times, and he still maintains that objects of art were often made in pairs in Japan. With regard to the former point we can only say that we have never ourselves seen, nor have we ever met a Japanese who had seen a large vase or censer of old Satsuma decorated

with peonies and phenixes in the *nishiki* style. Perhaps such things existed, but it will certainly be safer for the foreign collector to assume that they did not. As for pairs of vases, censers, etc., they were never made in this country for Japanese service. There could have been no use for a pair of anything, whether on the shelves of an alcove or before a temple altar. The evidence adduced by Mr. Bowes—namely, that flower vases are depicted in pairs in *maki-mono* of the seventeenth century—possesses no value; for the vases shown in such pictures are almost invariably Chinese, and everyone knows that the Chinese potters constantly manufactured pairs. We do not say that a perfect pair may not be occasionally found in ancient Japanese ware. Five or ten identical specimens were not infrequently potted, and two or three of them sometimes survive intact."