

of fuel *in the year* 1785, enable one to both identify the factory and to accurately fix the date. So, also, the three tiny equi-distant blemishes beneath the Chelsea dish or plate, taking one back to the primitive use of "spurs," for supporting the piece during the firing process; also the unsuspected duck-egg color which certain pieces exhibit when held against strong artificial light; the curious moon-like discs hidden in others until intense light reveals them; all these are in the nature of evidence of the strongest kind, amounting to proof positive in relation to the specimen under consideration.

The subject of marks naturally leads one to make reference to *defects* in certain pieces—defects which in most instances are more apparent than real. The writer has more than once seen an otherwise beautiful old Porcelain bowl excluded from a collection merely because its circular form was slightly irregular or elliptical, the very defect, if such it may be called, really adding to the interest of the piece, if only as illustrating the difficulties experienced by the earlier potters in the "throwing" and "moulding" of their wares. Then, again, a piece might leave the thrower's hands in absolutely perfect form, yet afterwards be changed in the baking and firing process. Not infrequently a figure subject, which before being "fired" was perfect in all its proportions, would undergo an uncalculated change in the kiln, which would alter the relative