

service, with its harmonious decoration, to the magnificent vase, brilliant with the best efforts of man's skill in modelling, painting, and gilding, we derive some satisfaction, even if we are not interested in the actual collection of the treasures of the days that are gone, but, if we are collectors, how much more is our delight in tracing the history of that service or vase, in knowing how they were evolved from the crude products of earlier times!

We may judge of the estimation in which the ceramic art is held by the collections which the nations have formed, at great cost, to meet the needs and gratify the tastes of those students and enthusiasts whose perception leads them to an ever-increasing devotion to that art, and in this connection I venture to make a suggestion that our Museum authorities should acquire specimens of the later nineteenth-century productions of the excellent factories whose proprietors have done so much to maintain the national reputation of English earthenware and china. In the course of years such pieces which we now call modern, would take their due place in a series, and they would have one great advantage over the existing collections—they could be made thoroughly representative. The Minton masterpieces of Solon's *pâte-sur-pâte*, Wedgwood's vases painted by Lessore, Tinworth's Doulton ware, and the like, are somewhat expensive, but by and by they will be much more costly, and surely they ought to be represented in the Museums. I feel sure that the manufacturers would welcome such a proposition, and such a recognition of their art would be to them no less gratifying than stimulating.

I said we may judge of the estimation of ceramic art by the Museums, and, whilst that is true, it is not all. There are thousands of people who have their own collections; sometimes very valuable and complete; at others, not so valuable, but specialised; at others, again, small but eminently pleasurable. There are thousands more who treasure the old earthenware and china, which have been kept in the family from generation to generation. And there are other thousands whose good taste attracts them to old china, as part of the